

Grand Isle Select Board
Grand Isle Town Office 9 Hyde Rd, Grand Isle VT
Minutes of the Meeting for Monday May 6, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: Selectboard Chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the meeting to order at 6pm.

Board Members Present: Ron Bushway, Jeff Parizo, Jen Morway, Ellen Howrigan

Board Members via Zoom:

Community Members Present: Glenda Leake, David Leake, Jean Prouty, Denise Abbott-Douglass, Colleen Bushway, Emily Clark, Melissa Boutin, Angie Low, Sue Lawrence

Community Members via Zoom: Joe Longo, Esther Blow, Mike Donoghue

Add to Agenda: Jen Morway adds Town Clerk/Treasurer Pay Allocation to New Business. Jen Morway adds Town Election Poll Workers to New Business.

Public Comment: Denise Abbott-Douglass (Denise) discusses trash that is being dumped in a drainage ditch in her neighborhood. Denise acknowledges that trash being dumped in her neighborhood has been an on-going issue for years and that there might not be a solution to this problem. Denise mentions that neighbors have resorted to making signs asking people to stop dumping their trash in inappropriate places. Jen Morway (Jen) asks if anyone has suggestions on what could be done about this issue. Denise asks if they could apply a fine for littering. Jeff Parizo (Jeff) says that the State of Vermont has a littering fine. Jen explains that Sheriff Ray Allen would be the one to enforce that. Denise asks if the mobile home park is owned by the state, Jeff says they do. Denise asks if someone could reach out to the person at the state who oversees that property and notify them of the problem. Jeff asks Ron Bushway (Ron) if he can contact the mobile home park's manager and discuss this problem with them, Ron says he will. Emily Clark recommends that the mobile home park get a dumpster.

Denise brings up a second issue, dogs-at-large. Jeff asks if Denise has called the animal control officer about the issue. Denise said she's been in touch with Melissa Boutin but will call Trevor Boutin next time.

Jean Prouty asks if Ron Bushway's contact information can be added to the selectboard page of the town website. Ron asks Angie Low (Angie) to add that information.

Review and Approve Minutes:

April 15, 2024: Ellen Howrigan makes a motion to approve the minutes of April 15, 2024. Ron Bushway seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.

Guests:

Highway Department Update: Ron gives an update on the highway department, highlighting that they have completed painting the wings on the plows, have been digging out stumps, enrolled in a program to help with ditches/roads, and that Don Waller has been trained on the Square system.

Highway Department Employee Search: Jeff suggests that they add to the Standard Operating Procedures that the Selectboard hire all town employees and asks the other board members how they would feel about that. Ron says as of now, the highway department conducts its own interviews and then goes to the Selectboard for approval. Jeff explains that he feels that it would generate a healthy rapport to have the Selectboard be the ones to go over the Personnel Policy and expectations with a new hire. Jen asks if the Selectboard would be the ones to conduct the interviews. Jeff says yes, and be the ones to advertise the job opening as well. Jen says that she likes the concept but is not sure if having the Selectboard conduct the interviews is a good idea, noting that it would be intimidating to the applicant. Jeff says they will have to do more research on whether they would conduct interviews during an executive session. Jen notes that they have meetings every two weeks, that the hiring process might take longer than normal due to waiting for a Selectboard meeting to take place. Jen proposes the idea of having two selectboard members be in charge with assisting in hiring, giving the example of two selectboard members joining in on the interview. The selectboard members discuss options of how they could be involved the hiring process. Melissa Boutin suggests that the first interview be with the members of the department that is hiring and invite the applicant to a selectboard meeting for their second interview. Jeff says he will contact VLCT and ask them about interviews during meeting and whether it should be done during an executive session.

Buildings Facilities Manager Update: Ron says that Alan Landry is investigating the School House box to see if it's pine or cedar. Ron says he spoke with Travis Boutin about servicing the air conditioner at the Town Office. Ron announces that Free Metal Day at the Transfer Station is May 18th. Ron asks Angie to post it on the website. Jen asks Angie to also post that on the town's Facebook page as well. Ron says that the Transfer Station was having issues with the Square system last weekend and that Comcast come out and discovered that there was too much power being supplied to the modem via Comcast, that Comcast fixed that issue. Ron says the culvert for East Shore South has been delivered and is at the Transfer Station. Ellen Howrigan (Ellen) asks what the current rate at the Transfer station, Ron says .25¢ a pound. Emily Clark says they plan to run an analysis on those rates. The Selectboard discusses rates at the Transfer Station.

IT Update: Jen says that many town employees have been transitioned to the .gov emails. Jen says that need to figure out who in town would like to use a token rather than their cell phone for two-step authentication. The selectboard discusses the options. Jen says she will contact everyone to see which option they choose. The selectboard discusses the comcast outage, noting that Comcast sent out a warning that the work was going to take place and service would be disrupted. Melissa Boutin notes that she did not receive a call or email that service was going to be out. Emily Clark suggests that Melissa Boutin contact Comcast and updates the contact information they have for her, that they will need her new email address.

New Business:

Liquor Licenses: Melissa Boutin says that there are three first class licenses- Island Hub, Emmon's, and Ellison Estate Vineyard, two second class licenses for Emmon's and Ladd's Landing Marina, and one third class for Island Hub. Jeff discusses traffic issues with the Island Hub, that there have been times that people going to Island Hub have parked along the shoulder of Route 2 and have caused traffic issues. Jeff says that they may need to address the Island Hub, that the DRB decision was clear that they need to ensure their patrons park in the parking lot next to the Island Hub or up Hyde Road in the library or

town office parking lot. Jean Prouty notes that in all Island Hub advertisements, they announce where their acceptable parking areas are located. ***Jen Morway makes a motion to approve the liquor licenses. Ron Bushway seconds. No further discussion.*** Jeff Parizo comments that the new way the state handles liquor licenses is difficult, that it does not give them any documentation to review, that the website process is cumbersome. ***Selectboard chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

DRB training- May 23rd: Jeff announces that there will be DRB training on Thursday May 23rd from 6-8pm via Zoom, hosted by Northwest Regional Planning Commission.

Allowance for Doubtful Accounts & Delinquent Taxes: Ellen Howrigan (Ellen) explains that this is from the audit, that there was big jump in the budget for delinquent taxes, that it was \$20,000 and jumped to \$33,000. Ellen spoke with the Auditor about the idea of creating an allowance for doubtful accounts. Melissa Boutin explains that there is one account that is up to \$18,000 in taxes owed, that this account has been delinquent since 2015, that no one has bid on that at a tax sale, that the lot cannot be built on and would only be of value to someone with abutting land. Melissa Boutin says they created an allowance for doubtful accounts last year for \$17,000.

Town Clerk/Treasurer Pay Allocation: Jen says they need to get some data about how many hours go into the town clerk position and how many hours go into the town treasurer position. Jen asks Melissa Boutin to give that some thought so that they can discuss that at the next meeting.

Town Election Poll Workers: Jen says that they received an email from the town attorney regarding the last election, the school budget re-vote. Jen says the selectboard was asked why they were not at the last election to count ballots. Jen says that she investigated what the BCA requirements of the selectboard are, that she found that school votes are a bit different in that it is the school board's responsibility to notify the members of the BCA of when and where to be for elections/ballot counts.

Old Business:

Livestock Ordinance: Ellen sent a revised version of the Livestock Ordinance to the selectboard prior to the meeting, the selectboard reviews the changes. Ellen says she corrected the waiver fees. ***Jeff Parizo makes a motion to approve the updated Livestock Ordinance. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

Northwest Communications District Appointment: The selectboard says they have already settled this item.

Credit Card Auto Payments: The Selectboard goes over which accounts they would like on auto-payments- Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Comcast, Consolidated, Northeast Delta Dental, M&T Bank, SymQuest, and Vermont Electric Co-op. Melissa Boutin explains that it should be ACH and not on a credit card, that there is no fee for ACH. Jen asks Melissa Boutin to add AT&T to this list. ***Jen Morway makes a motion to approve the vendors listed in the April 19th email from Melissa Boutin, as well as AT&T, for AHC payment. Ellen Howrigan seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

Financials:

Administrative Check-In:

Ron- Contact the manager of Champlain Estates to discuss the trash issue.

Jeff- Ask VLCT about interviews during selectboard meetings.

Jen- Find out which town employees would like to use a token for 2-step authentication. Talk to the Island Hub with Ellen. Email Melissa re: BCA issue.

Review and Sign Warrants: *Ron Bushway makes a motion that the Chair sign the warrants. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.*

Adjournment: *Ellen Howrigan makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:32pm. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.*

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