

Grand Isle Select Board
Grand Isle Town Office 9 Hyde Rd, Grand Isle VT
Minutes of the SPECIAL Meeting for Tuesday July 30, 2024

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

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

Community Members Present: Colleen Bushway

Community Members via Zoom: Sue Lawrence

Add to Agenda: Josie Leavitt adds “Procedures for calling a special meeting” under new business.

(50:15) Review and Sign Warrants: *Jen Morway motions that the Chair sign the warrants with possible corrections regarding the constable. Ron Bushway seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard Chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.*

New Business

(50:40) New road crew employee hire: Ron Bushway (Ron) explains that they had two applicants for the open position and one of them backed out. Ron says they interviewed the remaining applicant, John Lafayette (John), and his references have been checked. Ron says the references reported positive reviews. Jen Morway (Jen) asks if he has his CDL, Ron confirms he does. Jen asks if he checked the CDL driving records, Ron says he has not. Jeff Parizo (Jeff) notes that he has a Class A license. Ron Bushway notes that he has been working for the state with his CDL for about 5 years. The Selectboard discusses how long the job has been advertised, that it’s been a couple of months advertising the job position on Front Porch Forum, The Islander, the Town Website, and Facebook. Jeff asks what the rate of pay would be, Ron says he makes \$24 per hour now and explains he wants to discuss what the offer rate should be. Josie Leavitt (Josie) asks what has been budgeted for this position, Ron says \$25 per hour if they were to base it off of Steve More’s starting rate. Jeff notes that Brad Sheridan makes about \$33 per hour and Steve More makes about \$28 per hour. Jeff says that, in the future, they will need to review the pay structure for the road crew, noting that construction pay rates elsewhere are much higher. Ellen Howrigan concurs, noting that they are lucky to be able to find someone for this position because they are in high demand. Ron says that John has some questions about the benefits, Jeff explains that he spoke with John and answered his questions. Jen asks Ron if he recommends hiring John, Ron says yes. Ron explains that the reason a special meeting was called for this is due to the applicant needing to give his current employer proper notice and they didn’t want to wait another week to get the efforts underway. Ellen explains that she has had a positive experience working with John in the past on her farm, that he is motivated, he can fix things, he’s dependable, and he’s easy to get along with. The Selectboard discusses starting John at \$25 per hour, reviewing his performance after 90 days, and discuss a raise at that time. ***Jeff Parizo makes a motion to hire John Lafayette at \$25 per hour once his two weeks’ notice is up at the State. Ellen Howrigan seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard Chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

(59:45) Excavator Rental: Ron goes over the projects that the highway department needs to complete. Ron explains that he met with Brad Sheridan (Brad) and Steve More (Steve) about plans for completion. Ron says he spoke with Steve about the project on East Shore South on replacing the three culverts, excluding the big one, will take at least two weeks. Jeff asks which is the big one, Ron answers the one at the Mill Pond. Jeff asks if the Mill Pond is a separate project, Ron confirms that it is. The Selectboard discusses logistics of closing off the road for that project. Jen asks if there is money for these culverts. Ron says these are part of that grant they were approved for. Jeff notes that this was approved in 2023, Ron explains that it was put on hold due to the flooding last summer. Jeff says that they had the excavator rented for 3 weeks during that time. The Selectboard discusses the questions that they have about these projects, noting that they feel the rest of the road crew should be providing details about these projects' timelines. Josie notes that the Selectboard should be provided with a written project plan for each project that breaks down each step. Jeff agrees and explains that if they need to close a road down for construction, they will need to know ahead of time in order to provide the public with enough warning. Jen asks Ron about the grant, Ron says they are still waiting for the Mill Pond piece. The Selectboard discusses possible projects to prioritize. Jen says she has contacted CRW and asked about the availability of renting an excavator the same as or equivalent to the excavator that was previously rented. Jen explains that CRW would be able to rent them the same or equivalent excavator at any given time this summer within a week of the request, that CRW has 4 excavators identical to the one previously rented and five AC140s which are close in features to the previously rented excavator. The Selectboard discusses other rental companies they could also contact. Jeff says that they will have to check with Melissa Boutin for the amount in the highway surplus fund. The Selectboard decides they will request Brad Sheridan to attend the next meeting with project plans. Ron says they should invite Steve More as well, that he has the plans. Josie notes that having project plan documents will help with grant reporting after the projects are complete.

(1:18:30) Procedures for calling a special meeting: Josie explains that they should have a procedure for scheduling a special meeting to ensure all selectboard members are part of the process. The Selectboard agrees. Jeff says they will have Angie Low add that to the Selectboard Rules & Procedures.

Old Business

(1:19:20) Personnel Policy: The Selectboard discusses the revisions they made to the personnel policy with the help of the attorney. Jen explains that the confusion came from the question they asked the attorney regarding sick time and that the attorney stated that they did not have enough employees to qualify for that. Jen explains that in subsequent correspondence, that answer did not seem to hold. Jen explains that in the footnote, it explains an eligible employee for PTO is anyone who is over 18 years of age and works at least 20 hours a week. Jen states that it says it will be based on a pro-rated amount and the most someone can earn is 40 hours a year. Jen says that she would like to add that accrual rate on it as well as the accrual rate for part time employees. Jen says that for every 52 hours an employee works, they earn 1 hour of PTO. Jeff asks if they need to have everyone re-sign the personnel policy. Jen says that since this revision may disqualify people who do not work enough hours per week, citing the Listers as an example, that they need to be notified about the revision and that they should be given the option of whether they want to opt in or out since they may not qualify for PTO. Josie says that once they receive the final version that they should send it out to everyone, explain the changes and that they

will not be held to it if they no longer qualify and given the option to sign. Sue Lawrence says they do not work 20-hour weeks and asks that, if they chose to sign it, what would the benefit to them be. Jen answers that they would be able to receive Holiday pay by signing it. Sue Lawrence clarifies that if they work on a holiday, they would receive holiday pay for that, Jen says yes. The Selectboard decides to put this on the August 19th agenda to give the attorney time to make those revisions and hope to have this start on September 1st.

Administrative Check-In:

Jeff: Contact Brad to attend the August 5th meeting. Contact Melissa regarding the VMERS warrant.

Ron: Contact Brad & Steve about having a plan ready.

Jen: Contact Melissa about the Constable rates. Contact Melissa about stipend employee pay. Contact Angie about adding language in the Selectboard Rules & Procedures about scheduling a special meeting. Contact attorney about the policies and contacting employees.

(1:32:32)Adjournment: *Josie Leavitt makes a motion to adjourn at 6:45pm. Ron Bushway seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard Chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.*