

**Grand Isle Select Board**  
**Grand Isle Town Office 9 Hyde Rd, Grand Isle VT**  
**Minutes of the Meeting for Monday December 2, 2024**

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

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

**Board Members via Zoom:** Josie Leavitt (Josie)

**Community Members Present:** Colleen Bushway, Melissa Boutin, Marie Prescott, Adam White, Carol Egan, Emily Clark

**Community Members via Zoom:** Sue Lawence, Lynda Morgan, Lucille Campbell, Jess Neubelt, Bianca Lafayette, Esther Blow

**Add to Agenda:** Jeff Adds UVM Home & Hospice under FY26 Budgets. Josie adds Champlain Island Food Shelf under FY26 Budgets.

**Review and Approve Minutes:**

**November 18, 2024:** *Ron Bushway moves to approve the November 18, 2024 minutes. Jeff Parizo seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard Chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.*

**Guests:**

**Jess Neubelt, Evernorth- Round Barn:** Jess Neubelt (Jess) from Evernorth introduces the redevelopment plan for the Round Barn Apartments, giving an overview of the current state of the Round Barn Apartments. Jess explains the challenges of the current property and the goals for the redevelopment. Jess says they received funds through the Inflation Reduction Act for \$1.4 million in green and retrofit resilient program funds. Jess outlines the proposed redevelopment, including demolishing the Round Barn building and renovating the annex, noting that they hope to start in the winter of 2025. Jess addresses concerns about relocation costs and the process for relocating residents during construction.

**Carol Egan, Turn to Joy:** Carol Egan (Egan) discusses the financial struggles of Turn to Joy, located in the Annex building. Carol explains the impact of losing six students (a loss of about \$22,000/yr) and the loss of Act 76 funding (a loss of about \$40,000/yr). Carol mentions the high costs of heating (a cost of about \$4,000/yr) and other utilities for the building. The Selectboard suggests Carol write a proposal for paying the \$500 per month rent and the \$3,000 back rent and present it at the next Selectboard meeting. Carol says she will do that, email it to Jeff, and attend the next meeting to discuss it.

**Review and Sign Warrants:** Ellen identifies an error in the library appropriation amount, noting it says \$19,480 but should be \$13,154. Melissa Boutin (Melissa) notes that it should be \$24,480 and explains the adjustment from Library Fund balance.

*Ellen Howrigan makes a motion to review and sign the warrants. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard Chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.*

Ron discusses the generator contract and the need to pay from the highway fund for it, that the grant award will reimburse the highway fund. Ron notes that he needs permission to do so.

*Jen Morway makes a motion to send out the deposit to Brookfield for the generator. Jeff Parizo seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard Chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.*

**Financials:** Jen and Melissa discuss the CD for the Town Library Project Fund. Emily Clark (Emily) mentions the need to ensure all grant funds are covered before the performance period ends. Jen and Melissa discuss the general fund spreadsheet and the need to clarify certain line items. Jen asks about delinquent taxes; Melissa clarifies the split of the taxes between fiscal years. Jeff and Melissa discuss the solar project and the fund balance for the project. Jen and Melissa discuss the Town Library Project Fund (formerly known as ARPA money) penalty and the need to establish a formula for that.

**Highway Department Update:** Ron provides an update on the plows, salt shed, and 'no parking' signs. Ron mentions the extended warranty for the truck is all set as well as the new heater for the transfer station. Ron says he posted about the fee changes at the Transfer Station to Front Porch Forum as well as for the open position at the Transfer Station. Ron discusses the need to verify if light fixtures at the fire station are covered by grant money. Jen and Ronnie discuss the possibility of using MERP Grant for that LED lighting. Ron provides an update on the transfer station and the busy Saturday due to being closed on Thanksgiving.

**Buildings Facilities Manager Update:**

**IT Update:** Jen discusses the website grant, noting that they would not be eligible for that one, that she will continue looking for a grant for the website. Angie mentions the need to be specific about the requirements for a municipal website.

### **New Business**

**New DRB Member:** Marie Prescott (Marie) explains that they had a member resign and that they have found a replacement, naming Jacob St. Pierre.

*Jeff Parizo makes a motion to appoint Jacob D. St. Pierre of 43 Moccasin Ave, Grand Isle to the Development Review Board. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard Chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.*

**Justice of the Peace:** Jeff discusses the process for filling the Justice of the Peace positions that were added from the question on the last election's ballot, noting it will be filled in the next general election in 2026 per the Secretary of State.

**FY26 Budgets:**

**Northwest Regional Planning Commission FY26 Request:** The Selectboard discusses this request, noting that it is not an appropriation request that will not appear separately on the ballot, but instead be a part of the planning commission's budget.

**Islands Center for Arts & Recreation Request:** The Selectboard asks Angie to get the signed petitions for this appropriation request.

**Friends of Northern Lake Champlain Request:** The Selectboard asks Angie to get the signed petitions for this appropriation request.

**Grand Isle County Sheriff Request:** *Jeff Parizo makes a motion to approve the FY26 Law Enforcement expense of \$193,065.60 for the year. Ellen Howrigan seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard Chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.*

**UVM Home & Hospice:** Jeff mentions that he would like to find out if UVM Home & Hospice will be sending an appropriations request, Ron and several community members note that they were mailed signature requests for that petition. Jeff asks Melissa when those signatures are due, Melissa says January 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Champlain Islands Food Shelf:** Josie asks if it would be possible for the Champlain Islands Food Shelf to request \$1,500 in appropriations without having the petition signatures, Jeff says no. Josie asks what the process is, Jen explains that Melissa has the required petition paperwork.

**Comcast Phone Line Update:** Melissa gives an update on the Comcast bill that was questioned at a prior meeting. Melissa explains that it was not for a phone line, but for the internet. Melissa says that she was able to reset the password, gain access to the account, and update it with the correct email address. Melissa explains that due to losing access to that account for a few months, they now have to pay off the bills that accumulated. Melissa explains that the monthly amount is higher (\$249.99) due to being past due and will go back to the original monthly amount (\$144.99) once they pay the overdue balance of \$1,286.84.

***Jeff Pario makes a motion to approve \$1,286.84 to pay the Comcast bill that is due. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard Chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

### **Old Business**

**Town Clerk FY26 Budget:** Melissa presents the FY 26 budget for the town clerk, including proposals for record preservation and utilizing general fund balance for health insurance since that is where unspent health insurance funds have been put in the past years. Jen discusses the implications of increasing hours for Terri White (Terri) to 32.5 hours and the associated benefits, including retirement, health care, and dental. Melissa explains why retaining Terri is important, noting that she is knowledgeable, easy to train, and willing to work. Melissa notes that she has been told to find help for years, that she has now found that help. The selectboard discusses the number of full-time employees the town would have. Jeff notes that pre-COVID, Grand Isle had both Melissa and Linda Effel as full-time employees. Melissa notes how many full-time employees the surrounding towns have, noting that Grand Isle has a larger population than South Hero and North Hero. Emily Clark suggests that the assistant town clerk's job should include digitization efforts to reduce future workload, and Melissa agrees. Jeff and Melissa discuss the breakdown of budget between the Town Clerk, Town Treasurer, Assistant town Clerk, Assistant Town Treasurer. The Selectboard discusses the breakdown: Clerk- \$51,500; Treasurer- \$28,068; Assistant Clerk- \$23,068; Assistant Treasurer- \$12,422.

***Jeff Parizo makes a motion to approve the Town Clerk/Treasurer Budget for \$170,241. Josie Leavitt seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard Chair calls the vote which passes. Yay- Jeff Parizo, Josie Leavitt, Ron Bushway, Ellen Howrigan. Nay- Jen Morway.***

**FY26 General Budget:** Tabled to the next meeting.

**Audit Discussion:** *Jeff Parizo makes a motion to approve the FY24 draft audit. Ellen Howrigan seconds, No further discussion. Selectboard Chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.*

**Town Health Insurance Update:** Jeff presents the health insurance plan options from Blue Cross Blue Shield and MVP that are available to the Town of Grand Isle, noting that the MVP Gold plan seems to be the most cost-effective. The selectboard discusses the options.

***Jeff Parizo makes a motion to approve the health care plan moving to MVP Vermont Gold 1, with the premium payment of \$1,145.36 a month. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard Chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

**Remote Check Discussion:** Melissa provides an update on the remote check deposit implementation, noting that the equipment has not yet been received but is expected within two weeks.

**Grand isle Opioid Settlement Fund:** Jeff and Melissa discuss the process for signing the letter and check for the Grand Isle Opioid Settlement Fund. The Selectboard signs the letter, Melissa will send the letter.

**Administrative Check-In:**

**Jeff:** Complete generator grant paperwork

**Ellen:** Send Melissa her MVP contact

**Ron:** Sign generator paperwork

**Adjournment:** *Ron Bushway moves to adjourn the meeting at 8:08pm. Jen Morway seconds. No further discussion. Selectboard Chair, Jeff Parizo, calls the vote which passes unanimously.*