

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 26, 2024
Draft

Members Present: Chach Curtis, Fred Messer, Brian Shupe, Christine Parisi, Larissa Ursprung
Others Present: Maryanne Greeley, AnnMarie Harmon (Wait House Commission), MRVTV, Alice Peal (Planning Commission), Aaron Shea, Lani Wharton

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:31 pm by Christine Parisi. The meeting was held in person at the Waitsfield Town Office and remotely via Zoom.

1. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 VSA 312(d)(3)(A).
No changes to the agenda were needed.

2. Public Forum.

Lani Wharton asked that the Town consider posting signs at local swim holes explaining the reasons for caution when entering the river following high water events. Alice Peal indicated that the VT Department of Public Health is developing templates/sample signage along these lines. Board members noted that Town liability and signage language would need to be vetted by the Town's attorney, but that it is likely prudent to install some type of warning information if possible. Maryanne Greeley explained that she was there to support the concept.

II. Regular Business.

1. Town Gravel Pit/Workforce Housing proposal/discussion.

Aaron Shea had provided the Board with some maps and drawings, which he explained were conceptual, proposing development of town homes or duplexes on Town-owned land to the west of Route 100 across from Trembley Road. He indicated that he is already in the process of developing a suitable community wastewater system adjacent to the property, and that if the Town is able to provide the land at little or no cost, he would be able to develop some work force housing at a cost of under 120% of annual median income levels. Mr. Shea explained that he is also open to purchasing the land, but if so, he would need to recoup the expense through selling some of the homes at closer to market value. He noted that he is able to move quickly on having the homes built if the Board is interested in seeing the property developed in this way.

Mr. Shupe suggested that the Board schedule their intended road trip, and include this site on the itinerary.

2. LHMP Follow-up

Alice reported that the LHMP package has been forwarded to Vermont Emergency Management for review. She also spoke of follow up steps with North Fayston Road residents and prior studies completed for the Shepard Brook watershed. In 2017 there was both a flood study and a mitigation study completed, these were completed by Dubois & King and CVRPC. The major conclusion reached was that driveway culverts should be replaced with 'spanning structures,' which are essentially bridges, and that the cost would be between \$50M and \$400M to complete the work necessary to make this change at the affected properties. With

49 residents unable to afford the required matching funds, this solution was not pursued; Ms. Peal
50 indicated that the related language in the LHMP will be revised to reflect this additional
51 knowledge. At this point, assistance is being provided to those residents in the form of
52 ensuring that they are aware of all potential funding opportunities available, and Ms. Peal has
53 been communicating with DEC's Stacey Pomeroy and Jaron Borg regarding their providing a
54 webinar to help educate landowners on the issues related to the Shepard Brook watershed.
55

56 Ms. Peal then spoke of four areas along Route 100 which have been identified for potential
57 reconnection to the floodplain, with berms that might be removed in most cases and a flood
58 chute near Trembley Road which might be restored. She, Brian Voigt, and Keith Cubbon are
59 willing to put together a proposal if the Town is interested in pursuing this work, as there are
60 Clean Water Fund monies which may be available for both completing a study of the sites and
61 subsequently completing the remediation work. Board members agreed that compiling such a
62 proposal would be worthwhile.
63

64 Ms. Peal also brought up the slide between Bragg Hill Road and the Mill Brook, explaining that
65 the first step towards mitigation of this issue is having river scientists complete an updated
66 review of the area. The Board decided to add this site to their upcoming road trip.
67

68 **3. Wait House Lease and User Agreement Review.**

69 AnnMarie Harmon presented a draft of an update lease agreement for those renting space at
70 the building, including the Commission's proposal for a rent increase. She explained that the
71 suggested rental rates are based upon covering direct expenses, which including some newer
72 items such as pest control and updated cleaning charges, were calculated to be approximately
73 \$19K annually. Currently the Town receives \$12K annually in rental income from the property.
74 Ms. Harmon raised the possibility of establishing step increases, so that there is not a sudden
75 jump in rates for current tenants.
76

77 The following aspects of the changes were brought forward:

- 78 • It would be best to have one public internet account for the entire building
- 79 • It should be clarified who will serve as the contact person for the tenants
 - 80 ○ Currently there has been rotating attendance at Commission meetings
- 81 • It was proposed that the Historical Society retain the use of their three current spaces,
82 with initialization of rent for the office space but the other two areas remaining rent-
83 free
 - 84 ○ There was a discussion regarding the contributions the Society has made to the
85 building over the years, and whether it is appropriate to begin charging them
86 rent
- 87 • The initial deposit can be waived for current tenants
- 88 • Clarification is needed regarding keys to the building
- 89 • It should be specified what the security deposit covers
- 90 • The increase should begin in full, with no graduated plan to be established

91
92 Board members agreed to each review both the lease and the use agreement, noting in
93 particular that permission for dogs on site, insurance information, and necessary permitting
94 should all be outlined as necessary. Feedback will be provided, and Mr. Messer will send
95 updated copies of both documents out to Board members. It was agreed that notification

96 should be provided to tenants that the changes to be agreed upon will go into effect on January
97 1, 2025 and copies of the final documents provided when they are available.

98

99 **4. Letter of Support for Downstreet Housing project.**

100 One clarifying edit was agreed upon.

101

102 **MOTION:** *Mr. Shupe made a motion to approve the Letter of Support, including the correction*
103 *made at the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Messer, and passed unanimously.*

104

105 **5. Authorize select board chair to sign ESA agreement for Wastewater engineering services.**

106 Mr. Curtis outlined that this amendment to the Agreement is for Dubois & King’s completion of
107 the design work for the wastewater system, noting that there is a clause in the agreement that
108 provides for halting/pausing the work if anticipated funding is not awarded.

109

110 **MOTION:** *Mr. Curtis made a motion to authorize the Board Chair to sign the amended ESA*
111 *Agreement. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ursprung, and passed unanimously.*

112

113 Mr. Curtis also reported that neither Senator’s office had awarded the requested Congressional
114 discretionary funding, likely because most awards are for smaller amounts than what was
115 requested. He noted, however, that the Town had moved up in ranking on the State’s IUP list,
116 and has been awarded \$5M through that program, due to the State’s having discretion for
117 projects that are ‘construction ready.’

118

119 **6. Follow up on Policies and Ordinance updates.**

120 Ms. Parisi noted that she had updated the Personnel Policy according to the input provided by
121 Board members, and that she had also edited the Dog and Animal Control Ordinances, using a
122 VLCT template as a guide. Some of the details of the Dog and Animal Control language will also
123 be impacted through consultation with an Animal Control Officer (ACO), once that position is
124 filled. The related job description will also possibly need updating based upon statutory
125 changes, and the intent is to work on that document with an ACO as well. Mr. Messer
126 confirmed that the Town Health Officer would no longer be involved in animal control issues
127 unless a bite or other injury needs to be addressed. He also explained some of the challenges
128 involved in the issuing of tickets by a town official, although it was acknowledged that tickets
129 are a strategy to reinforce the seriousness with which the Town approaches these matters.

130

131 Regarding details of the ordinance language, it was agreed that a 20-minute time frame should
132 be set for barking complaints and that three violations would trigger the beginning of a process
133 to have a dog removed from a residence.

134

135 Ms. Parisi will complete final drafts based upon this input, and the documents will be ready for
136 approval at the next Board meeting.

137

138 **7. Consent Agenda.**

139 **APPROVAL:** *The Consent Agenda was approved with no objections or concerns raised.*

140

- 141 • Approval of Minutes of 8/12/24
- 142 • Bills Payable and Treasurer’s Warrants
- 143 • Liquor License Warrants

- 144 • Approve Klimek Tree Planting expenses
145

146 **8. Selectboard Roundtable.**

147 Mr. Messer reported that he had met with a FEMA representative at the Meadow Road bridge,
148 and that he continues to have concerns about the bridge’s ability to handle corn harvesting
149 trucks and equipment, fire trucks, etc. He indicated that he will continue to reach out to CVRPC
150 and appropriate State agencies, including asking VTrans to perform an inspection as soon as
151 possible. Possible sources of grant funding for repairing/replacing the bridge were mentioned.
152

153 Ms. Parisi provided an update on the installation of the RRFB (flashing crosswalk beacon) at the
154 crosswalk near the Elementary School; strategies for moving the radar feedback sign (which
155 must be relocated before the RRFB can be installed) were discussed. Ms. Parisi will follow up
156 on this matter.
157

158 Ms. Parisi noted that she had been in touch with VTrans regarding road sweeping and cleanout
159 of stormwater drains, but had not received any definitive information regarding if or when this
160 work would be completed.
161

162 In response to a question from Ms. Ursprung, Ms. Parisi explained that, in the absence of a
163 Town Administrator, the Board’s Resolution for applying remaining ARPA funds had not been
164 uncovered during the year-end closing of books. Sandy Gallup will consult with the auditors
165 regarding this oversight, and the matter will be addressed as necessary. She also noted that
166 invoices are needed from the groups who were granted ARPA funds, to ensure they have been
167 spent appropriately and to recoup any amounts that were not used.
168

169 **9. Executive Session.**

170
171 **MOTION:** *A motion to enter Executive Session pursuant 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (3) [Personnel] passed*
172 *unanimously.*

173 The meeting entered Executive Session at 8:30 pm and returned to open session at 9:00 pm.
174

175 **V. Other Business**

176 **1. Correspondence/reports received** were reviewed.

177 **VI. Adjourn**

178 The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

179 Respectfully submitted,

180 Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary