

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT
Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 16, 2024
Approved

Members Present: Chach Curtis, Fred Messer, Christine Parisi, Brian Shupe, Larissa Ursprung

Staff Present: None

Others Present: Laura Arnesen (MRV Recreation District), Nathan Davis, Bruno Grimaldi (Conservation Commission), Curt Lindberg (Conservation Commission), MRTV

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 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).

A discussion of the agreement with the Hoffmans regarding their dogs and consideration of paving bids received were added to the agenda; approval of a letter regarding the Health Center was added to the Consent Agenda; approval of Minutes was removed from the Consent Agenda.

2. Public Forum.

Nobody present requested time to address the Board.

II. Regular Business.

1. Liquor License Renewal – Scrag and Roe.

This item was postponed; Mr. Davis arrived later in the meeting, and this renewal was reviewed.

2. Appoint Caitlin Ennis (Fayston) to fill unexpired (2026) Library Trustee term until Town Meeting Day 2025.

Ms. Parisi explained that this appointment is needed due to a resignation.

MOTION: *Mr. Curtis made a motion to appoint Caitlin Ennis as Library Trustee until Town Meeting Day 2025. The motion was seconded by Mr. Messer, and passed unanimously.*

3. Conservation Commission budget request for FY 2026.

Mr. Grimaldi outlined the Commission’s budget request for FY26, noting that the amounts requested for each category are the same as for the past two years. He informed the Board that upcoming projects include continued trail building at Scrag Mountain, Farley Park development, and Fairgrounds/Wu Ledges assessments and drafting of a Management Plan.

4. Designate a Liaison to State Ethics Commission.

Information about this matter was included in the Board packet, Ms. Parisi explained that this is commonly a position assigned to Town Administrators (TA), and that it was not comfortable to appoint another employee at this point, as they are already putting in extra effort to cover many TA responsibilities. She indicated her willingness to fill the position for the short term.

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MOTION: *Mr. Shupe made a motion to appoint Ms. Parisi as the Town’s Liaison to the State Ethics Commission. The motion was seconded by Mr. Messer, and passed unanimously.*

4A Hoffman Dog Removal

Mr. Messer indicated that the deadline for the Hoffman’s to have their dogs moved out of Waitsfield is about to pass, and expressed that communication to the family should be initiated regarding the matter.

MOTION: *Mr. Messer made a motion to instruct the Town’s attorney to draft a letter for Selectboard signature, which when signed will be delivered to the Hoffmans by the Town Constable; the text of the letter to state that they are to surrender their two dogs to the Valley Animal Hospital (VHA) on the first business day of 2025. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ursprung.*

Discussion raised points including that there be provided in the letter the option to remove the dogs from Town rather than surrendering them to the VHA, that it had not been confirmed with the VHA their willingness to accept/euthanize the dogs, and whether this communication should take place between the Town’s and the Hoffman’s attorney, as there is already a settlement agreement in place which has involved the attorneys.

AMENDMENT: *Mr. Messer amended his motion to allow for the option of removal of the dogs from Town, and to have the Board draft a letter for delivery rather than engaging the Town attorney. The amendment was seconded by Mr. Curtis, and was approved unanimously.*

VOTE: *The amended motion passed unanimously.*

Mr. Messer offered to draft the letter, and Mr. Shupe offered to review it before delivery.

5. Budget and Paving.

Two bids had been received for the paving of the East Warren Road, from Whitcomb Construction and Pike Industries; Charlie Goodman and Josh Rogers had indicated no preference between the two. The lower bid received was from Pike. Grant and Reserve funds are available to cover the amount bid. It was agreed to request that the Slow Road also be paved as part of the project, if the paving plan allows for this to be fit in. Mr. Curtis noted that some expenses may possibly not be included in the Pike bid.

MOTION: *Mr. Curtis made a motion to accept the bid from Pike Industries for paving Bridge Street/East Warren Road, pending confirmation of the scope of work and exclusions by the Road Commissioner and Foreman. The motion was seconded by Mr. Shupe, and passed unanimously.*

Mr. Shupe reported that he had met with Mr. Goodman and Mr. Rogers regarding the road budget. He noted that salary and benefit amounts have not yet been updated, that much of the proposed budget is level funded, and that most of the increases included are due to the impacts of current inflation.

92 Some specifics were noted, including that the provider for uniform cleaning was recently
93 switched, and that contracted services covers smaller grading and sanding projects.

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95 Gravel crushing and associated reserves were discussed. It was noted that there have been no
96 chloride expenses yet this year; Mr. Shupe will inquire about this.

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98 It was agreed that a sidewalk maintenance plan needs to be developed.

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100 Reserve Fund balances were reviewed, and planned 2026 purchases outlined. It was suggested
101 that adding a new truck to the fleet rather than trading one in should be considered, as there is
102 now an additional crew member.

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104 **5A. Liquor License Renewal – Scrag and Roe (continued)**

105 Mr. Davis explained that there is an outdoor consumption license in place for the patio, and
106 that Scrag and Roe is not involved in organizing or serving at Roundup events at this point.

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108 **MOTION:** *Mr. Shupe made a motion to approve Scrag and Roe’s liquor license renewal. The*
109 *motion was seconded by Mr. Messer, and passed unanimously.*

110 **6. Selectboard Roundtable.**

111 Ms. Ursprung and Mr. Shupe continue to meet with FEMA representatives; the possibility of
112 coverage for the Meadow Road Bridge is still being explored.

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114 Insurance for covered bridge appears to be in order, but Mr. Shupe continues to chase down
115 details as PACIF works through obtaining payment through the driver’s coverage.

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117 Ms. Parisi raised the matter of canoe storage at the Wait House. It was acknowledged that
118 MRPA is paying for shed space, but that no storage is meant to take place there. Mr. Messer
119 will communicate this information to Mr. Golfman.

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121 It was planned to schedule a meeting for every Monday in January, with the potential to cancel
122 the January 20 meeting if deemed not necessary. January 23 – February 2 is the time window
123 for posting of Town Meeting Warning materials.

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125 It is anticipated that preliminary interviews for TA candidates will be held later in the week.

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127 A new Road Crew position ad will be posted.

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129 **7. Consent Agenda.**

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

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 - Bills Payable and Treasurer’s Warrants
 - Approve Farley Park Contract(s)
 - Approval for signing of Tri-Town letter regarding Mad River Valley Health Center

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136 **8. Executive Session.**

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

139 The meeting entered Executive Session at 7:47 pm and returned to open session at 8:15 pm.

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141 **III. Other Business**

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

143 **IV. Adjourn**

144 The meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

145 Respectfully submitted,

146 Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary