

# TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT

## Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 19, 2025

**final**

**Members Present:** David Babbott-Klein, Fred Messer, Brian Shupe, Larissa Ursprung

**Staff Present:** York Haverkamp, Town Administrator

**Others Present:** Barbara Chalom, Russell Chalom, John Crown (MRVTV), AnnMarie Harmon (General Wait House Commission), Dori Ingalls (Mad Marathon), Curt Lindberg (Conservation Commission), Kelly Mazur, Gail O'Keefe (Conservation Commission), Alice Peal, Joshua Schwartz (MRVPD)

**I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Brian Shupe. 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).**

An update on flood recovery was added; approval of minutes was removed from the Consent Agenda.

### **2. Public Forum.**

Russel and Barbara Chalom requested that the Town provide material to repair the water bars on Dana Hill Road, as had been done two years ago. Mr. Shupe indicated that he would contact Josh Rogers regarding this, but advised that it might not be delivered until the recent storm damages were repaired.

## **II. Regular Business**

### **1. Meadow Road Bridge & Covered Bridge Contingency.**

Mr. Shupe outlined the history of the recent Meadow Road bridge inspections and increasing deterioration of the bridge's condition, explaining that the Town is working with FEMA and VTrans to develop a plan for either repair or replacement of the bridge. Ms. Peal outlined that a study to determine if repair is possible, and a subsequent engineering design, are necessary steps, and that a quote from Dubois and King for that work is approximately \$250K. She and Keith Cubbon (CVRPC) have been looking into funding possibilities, but so far have not found a suitable program for which applications are being accepted. They have also been learning what would be necessary if the bridge needs to be closed, Mrs. Peal explained that a temporary bridge could be installed if one is available from VTRANS. The Town would need to pay for the installation and a monthly rent of approximately \$2K per month

Mr. Shupe and Mr. Haverkamp noted that they, as well as FEMA representatives, believe that the \$250K proposed for an engineering evaluation is an excessive amount, and Mr. Haverkamp indicated that he will work with FEMA at an upcoming meeting to get clarification of what is needed and what an anticipated cost would be.

### **2. Conservation Commission – Scrag Mountain Trail RFP.**

Mr. Lindberg presented information regarding the next phase of Scrag Mountain trail development, noting that an RFP for construction was ready to be published, and that he would provide financial information for the Board once proposals have been received.

Ms. O'Keefe reported that she has applied for funding for the purchase of electronic collars to be used to control the goat herd which will be pastured in knotweed areas this summer, explaining that the group providing the funding/collars expects the Town to purchase the collars at the end of the season if they work well and their continued use is desired. She indicated that her intent is to organize a fundraiser if this is the case, and Mr. Lindberg noted that other funding may also be possible for this project. They requested that the Board approve the initial agreement for the use of the collars.

It was agreed that future RFPs to be published by the Conservation Commission should be included in Selectboard Consent Agendas.

**MOTION:** *Ms. Ursprung moved to approve the publication of the proposed RFP for the next construction phase of Scrag Mountain trail work. The motion was seconded by Mr. Babbott-Klein, and passed unanimously.*

**MOTION:** *Mr. Messer moved to authorize the Town Administrator to sign an agreement as outlined for the use of electronic collars for the goat herd being pastured in knotweed areas this summer. The motion was seconded by Mr. Babbott-Klein, and passed unanimously.*

### **3. Wastewater Update.**

Joshua Schwartz highlighted some information from the written report he had provided, noting that this and all previous updates are available on the Town's website. After providing some background information, Mr. Schwartz explained that the project is currently in final design phase, and that efforts are being made to coordinate with plans for Active Transportation Corridor. Current focus areas of the project have been on obtaining easements for pump station locations as well as connections to buildings and beginning the completion of the final design phase, which is anticipated to be completed by the end of January, 2026. He noted that development of an associated ordinance is also upcoming, as well as a determination of what operating costs are expected to be.

Regarding funding, Mr. Schwartz explained that so far all funds expended have been either grant monies or proceeds from forgivable loans, and that more information regarding recent grants applications will be known at the end of June. The team is currently working with USDA Rural Development to design a grant and loan package for the additional funds which will be needed to complete the project.

### **4. General Wait House (GWH).**

Mr. Shupe noted there have recently been multiple issues regarding the GWH to be addressed, and this is in part due to the amount of deferred maintenance being addressed by the newly created GWH Commission, which is helping to move things forward for this community space. Mr. Shupe also noted that he is on the Board of Friends of the Mad River, but did not feel that he was influenced by any financial conflict; nobody objected to his full participation in related discussions.

Connector Space Fees and Rent – It was outlined that the rental fee for this space had been increased as an incentive to have the area cleaned up by the tenants, and that the current fee for the space is more on a per-foot basis than the rent for the interior office space. There was

agreement that the connector area has now been cleaned up and is being used effectively. Discussion then focused on whether the rent should be lowered to equal the rate of the interior space, or be set to a lower amount. It was noted that the space is not heated, but contains an electrical outlet. It was also pointed out that the tools and equipment stored there are in part for community use. There was agreement on the need to balance expenses and a fair rental rate, including the desire for community space in that balance, and the Board asked that the Wait House Commission discuss the matter and propose an appropriate rental rate.

Event Funding Request – Ms. Harmon noted that it had been decided to not schedule any events at this point, so requests have been withdrawn. The Commission will instead be organizing an event for next year's 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

It was discussed that the terminology and purpose of the GWH funds needs to be clarified, and AnnMarie requested that the Town's policy related to alcohol consumption on Town property be reviewed.

Projector – Several objections had been raised regarding the proposal to install a shelf at the Wait House to hold a projector, and Mr. Golfman has indicated that a television/screen on a movable platform will be a suitable solution. Board members expressed their support for this 'flat screen on wheels' approach, and indicated that this solution should be pursued.

## **5. Pocket Park Easement.**

Mr. Haverkamp outlined the request for a resurfacing of the Pocket Park's walkway. Ms. Mazur explained that she has been undertaking some of the maintenance of this area, as she owns the adjacent building. She indicated that she is willing to organize the work needed, but requested that the Town provide funding for equipment and materials needed to address issues such as silt build up and walkway maintenance. Other items she has addressed have been weeding of the bricks along the sidewalk and general clean up. It was indicated that some of the work might be undertaken by Steward MRV volunteers, and also noted that the Road Crew is currently understaffed and would not likely have time to do any of this maintenance. Ms. Mazur emphasized that creation of a maintenance plan would be beneficial going forward.

## **5A. Flood Recovery Update**

The reduced size of the Road Crew due to injury and a vacant position was noted, and appreciation was expressed for the work undertaken by the remaining Crew members in addressing the damage due to the prior weekend's flooding.

The communication flow during the flooding was discussed, as well as the potential of an MOU for mutual aid which is potentially being addressed by the MRVPD staff. Mr. Messer also emphasized the need for Valley-wide emergency management plans, and proposed that Butternut Hill be added to the LHMP due to the repeated flooding of that road.

## **6. Work Plan Overview.**

Due to technical issues, the plan that Mr. Haverkamp had been working on was not accessible.

He provided an overview of the software, and will provide a full document for review in advance of the next Selectboard meeting.

## **7. Selectboard Roundtable.**

Mr. Babbott-Klein provided an update on the MRVPD Steering Committee, noting discussions of flood resilience, community development and community spaces, and the PD's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary plans.

Mr. Shupe noted that he had heard concerns regarding the Round Up having a smaller area used for the weekly event; it was noted that the organizers intend to reduce the amount of area to be roped off for the events.

## **8. Town Administrator Update.**

Mr. Haverkamp outlined the suggestion for including the installation of insulation at the Wait House during the roofing work which is scheduled, and noted the cost associated with two types of insulation – standard fiberglass batting and rigid foam insulated plywood panels. It was agreed that the rigid foam is the better solution, and also agreed that the roof color should be a grey that best resembles aged cedar.

**MOTION:** *Mr. Messer moved to approve the installation of rigid foam panel insulation at the Wait House as part of the upcoming roof replacement, at an estimated cost of \$8000. The motion was seconded by Mr. Babbott-Klein, and passed unanimously.*

Mr. Haverkamp also reported on the following:

- Miles Jenness is drafting plans for the installation of a 'headache' bar to prevent over-height vehicles from entering the covered bridge, as these features now appear to be allowed by VTrans.
- A policy related to damage caused to Town property will be drafted as time allows.
- Street sweeping is planned for the coming week.
- He is ready to move forward with TextMyGov set up if the Board would like to proceed.

## **9. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of April 25, 2025 were amended and approved.

## **III. Consent Agenda.**

Earlier in the meeting, Dori Ingalls had briefly provided some information about the widespread recognition of the Mad Marathon and registration numbers. The potential paving of the Crosspoint roadways had been mentioned, as well.

**APPROVAL:** *A motion to approve the Consent Agenda passed unanimously.*

- Approve Minutes of May 5, 2025
- Approve Bills Payable and Treasurer's Warrants
- Approve Annual Notice to previous dog license registrants who have not yet renewed
- Approve Festival Permit for Mad Marathon for events scheduled for July 11 – 13, 2025
- Approve Tax Map Maintenance Contract with Cartographic Associates, Inc (CAI Technologies) for 4/1/25 – 3/31/26
- Approve Letter of Intent for SFY26 Municipal Road Grants-In-Aid Program
- Approve Liquor License Outdoor Consumption Permit for Twisted Halo

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181 **IV. Other Business**

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

183 **V. Executive Session**

184 **MOTION:** *A motion to enter Executive Session pursuant 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (3) [Personnel],*  
185 *inviting Mr. Haverkamp to join passed unanimously.*

186 The meeting entered Executive Session at 9:00 pm and returned to open session at 9:05 pm.

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188 **MOTION:** *Mr. Messer moved to hire Chad Guyette to the Road Department under the terms*  
189 *discussed. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ursprung, and passed unanimously.*

190 **VI. Adjourn**

191 The meeting adjourned at 9:06 pm.

192 Respectfully submitted,

193 Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary