

1 **TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT**

2 **Selectboard Meeting Minutes**

3 **Monday, November 13, 2023**

4
5 **I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Christine Sullivan. The meeting
6 was held in person at the Town Office building and remotely via Zoom.

7 Members Present: Chach Curtis, Jordan Gonda, Fred Messer, Brian Shupe, Christine Sullivan

8 Staff Present: Decker-Dell’Isola, Town Administrator

9 Others Present: Misha Golfman (MRPA), Anthony Italiano (MRTV), Mac Rood (MRPA), Ben
10 Service (Skatium)

11
12 **II. Regular Business.**

13
14 **1. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 VSA 312(d)(3)(A).**

15 No changes were made to the agenda.

16
17 **2. Public Forum.**

18 Nobody requested time to address the Board.

19
20 **3A. Skatium request for tax exempt article on Town Meeting warning.**

21 Ms. Decker-Dell’Isola explained that the Selectboard may either grant an exemption from taxes
22 or request that the entity requesting the tax relief submit a petition (70 signature minimum) to
23 have the question placed as an Article on the Town Meeting agenda. The total tax bill for this
24 year is for \$1162.

25
26 Ben Service provided information for the reasons behind the exemption request, emphasizing
27 that the Skatium is putting effort into several improvements, with the goal of reinstating some
28 of their past programs such as those offering free after-school skating and lessons, as well as to
29 expand into some year-round youth activities. He confirmed that the Skatium received \$3K
30 from the Rec District this year for technical improvements; it was also confirmed that no ARPA
31 funds have been awarded to the Skatium.

32
33 Board members indicated their preference for having a petition submitted, as there are only
34 two other properties which have been granted tax exempt status (MRVAS and Masonic Lodge),
35 and it was agreed that these types of requests would be better considered after community
36 support is demonstrated. Mr. Service agreed to move ahead with creating and circulating a
37 petition.

38
39 **4. Mad River Path (MRPA) Updates.**

- 40 • Consider Section 1111 application for recreation path Route 100 northern crosswalk near
41 Irasville Commons

42 Ms. Decker-Dell’Isola provided some background information regarding the plans for a new
43 Mad River Path crosswalk, to serve as a northern crossing point associated with the new
44 recreation hub, which were first explored and considered by the Board in February 2023. She
45 explained that she and Misha Golfman have met with various VTrans staff members, and have
46 finished putting together application materials; the Town will need to serve as the primary
47 applicant, with MRPA included as an additional applicant. Ms. Decker-Dell’Isola also noted that

48 MRPA will take on the work required after approval of the application, and that if full approval
49 is received, VTrans will provide the appropriate crosswalk markings. Mr. Golfman pointed out
50 that the VOREC grant funding already in place includes the proposed cost of this work, but that
51 approval from VTrans is needed to follow through with the project.

52

53 Mr. Golfman outlined the location of the crossing and associated path segments, explaining
54 that the Path will run along the Irsaville Common side of the cemetery fence, cross the Irsaville
55 Common driveway, and then cross Route 100 to a paved path in front of the Brothers Building
56 office. He outlined that all necessary agreements with private landowners are in place, and
57 that all of those landowners have signed the required State agreement.

58

59 Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola indicated that a decision from VTrans may be received by the end of the
60 year, but that the actual work will not take place until the spring.

61

62 **MOTION:** *Mr. Curtis made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to submit the Section*
63 *1111 application to VTrans for the proposed Mad River Path Recreation Path crosswalk located*
64 *in front of Irsaville Commons. The motion was seconded by Mr. Shupe. All voted in favor.*

65

- 66 • Consider updated request for support of the Mad River Path Route 100 proposed scoping
67 study

68 Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola provided an updated document from Mr. Golfman regarding the project
69 and this request. Mr. Golfman acknowledged the inquiry from Mr. Messer at a previous
70 meeting regarding how development of this multi-use path is important to the community, and
71 outlined some of the work he has completed and information he has gathered to aid in
72 outlining the importance of the project. Mr. Golfman spoke of related language in the Town
73 Plan indicating that this type of transportation path is a priority for the Town, noted the
74 support from VTrans and State representatives, and indicated that he has put together a
75 database of the 320 landowners who have property along the proposed path's corridor. He
76 explained that this will be a legacy project, with the initial segments inviting future
77 improvement. He confirmed that both Moretown and Warren have provided the requested
78 support and approved a \$4K match to use if the grant is awarded.

79

80 Mr. Messer expressed his discomfort with supporting an expensive project when the Town is
81 already facing several infrastructure needs. Mr. Golfman explained that federal funding will be
82 sought for the majority of the expense related to developing the path, and that towns will only
83 be approached to provide matching funds when needed.

84

85 There were no further questions from Board members.

86

87 **MOTION:** *Ms. Gonda made a motion to provide a letter of support to the Mad River Path*
88 *Association as part of their Transportation Alternative Program Grant Application for a Scoping*
89 *Study for a Route 100 multi-use path and provide a financial match of \$4,000 conditioned on the*
90 *participation of the Towns of Warren and Moretown. The motion was seconded by Mr. Curtis.*
91 *The motion passed with Mr. Messer opposed.*

92

93

94 **5. General Wait House (GWH) Discussion.**

95 • Consider action on 2021 General Wait House Report
96 Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola explained that the Committee in preparing their Report had outlined
97 three options for management of the Wait House, and noted that an indication of support for
98 the course of action outlined in Option #2 provides confirmation that there is no intent on the
99 part of the Board to pursue other ownership at this point. Taking this action will also help guide
100 the work of the GWH Commission. It was agreed that the main building should be the first
101 priority as the Commission plans for repairs and maintenance.

102
103 **MOTION:** *Mr. Shupe made a motion to pursue Course of Action #2 as identified in the General*
104 *Wait House Committee December 2021 report. The motion was seconded by Mr. Messer. All*
105 *voted in favor.*

106
107 • Consider appointments to the General Wait House Commission
108 Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola noted that the associated Bylaw language regarding representation
109 includes that Historical Society and building tenants should be represented, but not fill a
110 majority of the seats. Due to interest from several Historical Society members, it was proposed
111 and agreed that this be changed to specify that Historical Society *officers* should not comprise a
112 majority of the GWH Commission. Additionally, tenants have requested that there be a 'tenant
113 seat' on the Commission rather than the appointment of a specific individual, as they would
114 prefer to share the responsibility; this was agreed to by the Board. It was also agreed to have
115 the initial appointments be for one-year terms, of which only a portion of the year remains, and
116 to consider establishing staggered terms/lengths at reappointment in March 2024.

117
118 **MOTION:** *Mr. Messer made a motion to appoint AnnMarie Harmon, Gib Geiger, Lois DeHeer,*
119 *Martin DeHeer, Kathy Mehuron, and a General Wait House tenant representative seat to the*
120 *General Wait House Commission for one-year terms through March 2024 when appointments*
121 *will be reconsidered with all other commission and board appointments The motion was*
122 *seconded by Mr. Shupe. All voted in favor.*

123
124 • General Wait House Commission initial Work Plan discussion
125 Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola indicated that this discussion might be postponed until an upcoming
126 meeting when all the members are present. Board members noted that some projects are
127 already in motion, that painting and tree work are immediate needs, and that the Commission
128 may proceed with seeking estimates for the tree work. It was agreed to have the Commission
129 begin meeting, and come back to the Board with further proposals for projects to be initiated.
130 Open Meeting and Town Procurement considerations were explained to the Commission
131 members who were present.

132
133 **6. Consider donated Fair Grounds parcel tax payment for remainder of FY24.**
134 It was noted that when this parcel was officially donated to the Town, one condition was that
135 the Town would take over tax payments for the current year. Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola explained
136 that she had consulted with Randy Brittingham, and that he agreed this would be an
137 appropriate use of either ARPA or Conservation Reserve funds. Board members agreed that
138 the Reserve funds would be most appropriate.

139

140 **MOTION:** *Mr. Shupe made a motion to pay the remaining \$9,098.46 FY24 taxes for the old*
141 *Fairgrounds parcel (#99190.000) from the Conservation Reserve Fund. The motion was*
142 *seconded by Mr. Curtis. All voted in favor.*

143

144 **7. Consent Agenda.**

145

146 **APPROVAL:** *The consent agenda was approved without objection.*

147

- 148 • Approve the Minutes of 10/23/2023
- 149 • Bills Payable and Treasurer's Warrants
- 150 • Authorize staff to submit Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation Regional
- 151 Project Priority List application
- 152 • Approve Waitsfield Elementary ARPA allocation for lighting updates and direct staff to
- 153 execute a final agreement accordingly

154

155 **8. Selectboard Roundtable.**

156 Mr. Shupe inquired about the road crew assisting with putting the village benches into winter
157 storage; other Board members offered to help with this project. Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola will
158 contact Josh Rodgers and request assistance from the road crew.

159

160 Mr. Messer noted that the Emergency Management Director and Coordinator is working with
161 Vermont Emergency Management to set up a workshop for first responders, focusing on how
162 to coordinate and improve response protocols, which were noted as needing updates during a
163 2019 hazardous materials exposure exercise. The workshop is also meant to foster better
164 cooperation between the groups involved in these types of responses.

165

166 Ms. Gonda asked if the Old Fairgrounds property had been posted. Mr. Shupe indicated that it
167 has not been posted, and also offered to take any Board member interested on a walk through
168 the property.

169

170 **9. Town Administrator's Updates.**

171 Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola raised some questions regarding the upcoming meeting schedule. Most
172 members confirmed their availability for a joint meeting with Fayston on December 12. It was
173 agreed to not hold a Selectboard meeting on November 27, and to meet on December 4 and
174 December 18 as scheduled.

175 **10. Executive Session.**

176 **MOTION:** *A motion to enter Executive Session to continue deliberations passed with Mr. Messer*
177 *abstaining. Mr. Messer had recused himself from the related hearing, and so did not participate*
178 *in the Executive Session.*

179 The meeting entered Executive Session at 7:46 pm and came back into open session at 8:54 pm.

180 **IV. Other Business**

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

182 **IV. Adjourn**

183 The meeting adjourned at 8:54 pm.

184 Respectfully submitted,

185 Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary