

1 **TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT**
2 **Selectboard Meeting Minutes Monday,**
3 **July 22, 2024**
4 **Final**
5

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

7 **Staff Present:** Tripp Johnson, Fire Chief

8 **Others Present:** Joe Alsworth (Capital Fire), Jeff Campbell (Warren FD Chief), Keith Cubbon
9 (CVRPC), Evan Dacosta (WFFD), Paul Hartshorn (WFFD), (MRTV), Stephan Pratt (Moretown FD
10 Chief), Craig Snell (WFFD), Brian Wray

11
12 **I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Christine Parisi. The meeting
13 was held in person at the Waitsfield Town Office and remotely via Zoom.
14

15 **1. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 VSA 312(d)(3)(A).**
16 The Selectboard Roundtable had been inadvertently left off the agenda.
17

18 **2. Public Forum.**

19 Nobody present requested time to address the Board.
20

21 **II. Regular Business.**

22
23 **1. Liquor Permit Applications: None**

24 No liquor license review was needed.
25

26 **2. Festival Permit Application – Mad River Valley Summer Carnival.**

27 Brian Wray explained that he has been working with the four local elementary schools to put on
28 this event at Mad River Green, as a fundraiser. He outlined that:

- 29
- 30 • No hot food or alcohol will be served.
 - 31 • Hours are 11 am to 2 pm, with set up and break down time, the requested time is 9 am
32 through 3 pm.
 - 33 • It is difficult to accurately predict participation, but likely there will be approximately
34 100 attendees.

35 It was requested the Mr. Wray inform the Fire Department and MRVAS of the event. Tripp
36 Johnson offered to have a fire truck on site as part of the event.
37

38 **MOTION:** *Mr. Messer made a motion to approve the Festival Permit Application for the Mad*
39 *River Valley Summer Carnival on August 25, 2024 with a rain date of September 1, 2024. The*
40 *motion was seconded by Mr. Shupe, and passed unanimously.*
41

42 **3. Fire Department/Capital West**

43 Joe Alsworth provided an outline of the steps taken to replace the aging radio system for area
44 Fire Department communications, including being tasked by Governor Scott to design a capital
45 replacement plan for future needs. He explained that Capital Fire Mutual Aid (CF) worked with
46 several parties to design an equitable plan, and it was established that CVRPC is the fiduciary
47 for the capital account that was established. Funds are maintained in a separate account,
48 currently in CDs. Mr. Alsworth noted that an audit of the account is currently underway,

49 prompted in part by Waitsfield's concerns about the transparency of the investments. He
50 indicated that the CF group hoped to avoid asking for a bond to cover the cost of the mutual aid
51 system replacement, and that the annual contribution from member towns was originally
52 intended to fund a new system of towers and equipment as well as the anticipated need for
53 replacement equipment in future years. The current balance in the fund, including interest
54 earned, is \$91,567.06.

55
56 The cost of the project has risen to over \$3.8 million since the inception of the capital funding
57 program, and Mr. Alsworth explained that Congressional Discretionary Funding has now been
58 applied for to cover the cost of the towers and equipment needed to upgrade the
59 communications system, which currently dates to 1988 and for which there is no compatible
60 replacement equipment available. A new system would offer more reliable service than is
61 currently experienced both within local Departments and between all area Departments when
62 requesting mutual aid. Because the cost has risen so dramatically, the Capital West fund is now
63 intended to finance replacement equipment in ten years or so, and either grant funding or a
64 bond request will be used to put the initial replacement infrastructure online.

65
66 Mr. Alsworth indicated that all member communities had agreed to take part in this capital
67 replacement plan, and that MOUs had not been put in place with the towns, because each
68 town which is a member in good standing is a partial owner of the system.

69
70 Ms. Parisi explained that the Board understands what is needed, and trusts the judgement of
71 the Fire Department staff and volunteers regarding this, but that some assurance is needed
72 regarding the investment of funds and that the money will be spent on what has been outlined.
73 She noted that the Board had also questioned what would happen to the funds should
74 sufficient grant money be provided to cover the cost of the system. Some of the Fire
75 Department members present spoke of the need to replace/upgrade equipment in the years
76 following the set up of the new system, noting that technology changes fairly often. It was
77 explained that having the capital fund money set aside for these future replacements/upgrades
78 is beneficial when applying for any grants to cover the initial cost of the new system.

79
80 During the course of the conversation, Ms. Parisi noticed that there is an MOU posted on the
81 Capital West web site, dated January 2023. She explained that this is the type of document
82 that the Board has been seeking, in addition to the Resolution of Support which had been
83 approved and signed by the Board when Capital West first requested contributions for the
84 capital funding. It was noted that the Town has set aside funds on schedule, to be transferred
85 to Capital West once an MOU is in place.

86
87 Mr. Alsworth reported that an RFQ had been published, and that Motorola was the only
88 company that responded; they have been completing some pro bono work in preparation for
89 the potential installation of the new infrastructure.

90
91 The Board offered to review the MOU that was available, and to bring the matter to a
92 conclusion by their August 12 meeting at the latest. Mr. Johnson confirmed that, going
93 forward, he will provide minutes and financial reports from Capital West for review by the
94 Selectboard.

95
96

97 **4. Storm/Flooding Update.**

98 It was discussed that the majority of the damage experienced in Waitsfield due to the July 10-
99 11 flooding was on Center Fayston Road and Old Center Fayston Road, and it was explained
100 that Josh Rodgers would like funds for culvert replacements on those roads (\$30-35K for Center
101 Fayston and \$25K for Old Center Fayston). Sandy Gallup has confirmed that the funds are
102 available to cover these expenses, and that budget adjustments may be made later in the fiscal
103 year if necessary. Mr. Rodgers has been tracking all time and expenses for submission to FEMA
104 if a disaster declaration comes through for the event.

105
106 It was indicated by Board members that Dana Hill Road and Rolston Road also had damage, and
107 that two property owners on the North Fayston Road are interested in pursuing the FEMA
108 buyout process.

109
110 Mr. Messer reported that he had a request from VEM to set up a debris management site,
111 although there has been no request for this from residents for this most recent event. In the
112 past, this was set up at the Town Garage, but that has become more difficult with solar panels
113 and other reconfiguration at that site. Josh Rodgers will be consulted to determine if the gravel
114 pit would be suitable.

115
116 Mr. Messer also noted that VEM was not able to provide him with a 211 list of those who
117 reported damage.

118
119 Mr. Curtis made note of the pipe from the Water System pump station needing some fill and
120 grading; Christine will let Mr. Rodgers know that the road needs attention to protect the pipe.

121
122 Mr. Shupe indicated that at the most recent MRVPD Steering Committee meeting Joshua
123 Schwartz had raised the topic of a Valley-wide emergency response system being put in place,
124 for coordination of assistance, equipment needs, safety training, and volunteer management.

125
126 **5. Traffic Ordinance Review – updates and next steps.**

127 Ms. Parisi reported that she had received feedback from the Sheriff’s Department, outlining the
128 areas where there are speed limit discrepancies between particular roads and the 35 MPH limit
129 called for on unpaved roads in general. She also noted that the speed limits at either end of the
130 Village along Route 100 have recently been modified.

131
132 The Sheriff also mentioned establishing school zones, but has not yet provided information
133 regarding the necessary signage. Bridge Street parking configuration also needs to be looked at
134 to determine that the correct distance from stop signs is in place; Mr. Shupe offered to look
135 into this.

136
137 The Traffic Ordinance will be published in the Valley Reporter, as required following the
138 adoption of any amendments. Further changes to the Ordinance will be incorporated as
139 determined to be necessary.

140
141 There was some discussion of combining the Dog and Animal Control Ordinances, ticket writing
142 and the associated difficulties involved.

143

144 **MOTION:** *Ms. Ursprung made a motion to adopt the Traffic Ordinance as amended during the*
145 *meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Curtis, and passed unanimously.*

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147 **6. Personnel Policy – review updates and consider adopting.**

148 Ms. Parisi outlined the changes she had made, in many cases based upon research she
149 undertook of similar contracts and in some instances due to changes in federal law or
150 suggestions from VLCT. These changes were discussed, along with some other suggestions
151 from Board members. Ms. Parisi will incorporate the suggestions agreed upon and provide an
152 updated version for Board approval at their next meeting.

153

154 **7. Hiring Update: Next Steps.**

155 Mr. Shupe noted that the deadline for receiving application is the end of the week, Friday July
156 26, and that 15 applications had been received. He explained that Rick McGuire will prescreen
157 the applicants and potentially handle initial brief interviews. Mr. McGuire had reminded Mr.
158 Shupe that he would like to present candidates with upcoming Board goals, and Mr. Shupe
159 confirmed that he would update the Board’s Work Plan and circulate it to the rest of the Board.
160 It was agreed that initial interviews would be set up with a subcommittee.

161

162 **8. Consent Agenda.**

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

164

- 165 • Approval of Minutes of 6/24/24 and 7/8/24
- 166 • Bills Payable and Treasurer’s Warrants

167

168 **9. Selectboard Roundtable.**

169 Ms. Parisi brought the Board’s attention to the Waitsfield Children’s Center having closed,
170 which means that the \$25K ARPA allocation awarded is now available for other purposes.

171

172 **10. Executive Session.**

173

174 **MOTION:** *A motion to find that pursuant to 1 V.S.A § 313 (a) (1) premature general knowledge*
175 *of confidential attorney- client communications made for the purpose of providing professional*
176 *legal services to the public body would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a*
177 *substantial disadvantage passed unanimously.*

178 **MOTION:** *A motion to enter Executive Session pursuant 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (3) [Personnel] and 1*
179 *V.S.A. § 313 (a) (1F) [Confidential attorney-client communications] passed unanimously.*

180 The meeting entered Executive Session at 8:22 pm and returned to open session at 8:55 pm.

181

182 **MOTION:** *Mr. Shupe made a motion to approve and sign the MOU with Capital Fire Mutual Aid.*
183 *The motion was seconded by Mr. Curtis, and passed unanimously.*

184

185 **MOTION:** *Mr. Curtis made a motion to approve an employment agreement with Sandy Gallup.*
186 *The motion was seconded by Ms. Ursprung, and passed unanimously.*

187

188 **V. Other Business**

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

190 **VI. Adjourn**

191 The meeting adjourned at 8:57 pm.

192 Respectfully submitted,

193 Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary