

TOWN OF WAITSFIELD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
Monday, January 6, 2025
6:30 P.M.

Please see note below for access

- I. Call to Order: 6:30 PM**
 - 1. Agenda additions, removals, or adjustments per 1 V.S.A. § 312 (d) (3) (A).
 - 2. Public Forum
- II. Regular Business.**
 - 1. Appoint Vee Lynch to Wait House Commission
 - 2. Mad River Path/Wait House Lease discussion
 - 3. FEMA/Flood Recovery Update
 - 4. Covered Bridge Update
 - 5. Budget
 - 6. Select Board Roundtable
 - 7. Consent Agenda:
 - a. Approve Warrants and Bills Payable
 - b. Approve Minutes 12/2/24 and 12/16/24
 - 8. Executive Session
 - a. Pursuant to 1 V.S.A § 313 (a) (1) find that premature general knowledge of confidential attorney- client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the public body would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage
 - b. Enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (3) [Personnel]
- V. Other Business.**
 - 1. Correspondence/reports received
- VI. Adjourn.**

***PLEASE NOTE: Public Access to this meeting will be hybrid, remote via Zoom or in person at the Waitsfield Town Office. For remote access, please use the following link:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82056117089>

Meeting ID: 820 5611 7089

By phone: 1 (929) 205-6099

Anyone wishing to speak can do so during the designated times, as indicated by the chair.

ALL TIMES ARE APPROXIMATE

1 **TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT**

2 **Selectboard Meeting Minutes**

3 **Monday, December 2, 2024**

4 **Draft**

5
6 **Members Present:** Chach Curtis, Fred Messer, Christine Parisi, Brian Shupe, Larissa Ursprung

7 **Staff Present:** None

8 **Others Present:** Laura Arnesen (MR Recreation District), Ron Graves (Fayston SB), Tripp
9 Johnson (WFFD Fire Chief), Mike Jordan (Fayston SB), Chuck Martel (Fayston SB), Craig Snell
10 (WFFD), Sarah Stavraky (Fayston Treasurer), Madison Vasseur (Fayston TC/SB Assistant)

11
12 **I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Brian Shupe. The meeting was
13 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 No adjustments were needed.

17
18 **2. Public Forum.**

19 Nobody present requested time to address the Board.

20
21 **II. Regular Business.**

22
23 **1. WFFD FY 2026 Budget.**

24 Tripp Johnson reported that five of the Department's volunteers had completed Firefighter One
25 training in the past year. The Department responded to 109 events in the past year, a little
26 lower than average, five of the responses were to structure fires. Currently there are 25
27 volunteers active with the Department, and two more in the process of joining up.

28 Mr. Johnson indicated that the extractor tank and pipes are in place, and that once the
29 electrical work is complete, the extractor will be operable.

30 Ms. Parisi noted that she and Mr. Graves had met with Mr. Johnson and Mr. Snell to review this
31 year's budget actuals, and explained that the current year's labor expenses are over budget.
32 The group then reviewed the proposed budget, making notes of significant increases and
33 decreases.

34 There was some discussion regarding adding insurance coverage for firefighters in order to
35 cover any personal policy deductibles if there is damage resulting due to responding to an
36 event in a personal vehicle; it was agreed that the administrative time needed may make this
37 coverage more expensive than it is worthwhile, and that there may be better approaches to
38 covering these deductibles if the situation arises.

39 Tire replacements will be continuing as required, so that line item needs to remain at \$25K. Air
40 packs, AED replacements, and replacement of older style hoses over the next two years are
41 included in the budget.

42 The labor line includes both a proposed rate increase as well as allowance for more hours,
43 which reflects what is anticipated. Mr. Johnson explained that there is more need for
44 assistance calls, and time spent on homeowner education. He also outlined that volunteers are
45 often leaving well-paying hourly jobs in order to respond to an event, and so proposed raising
46 the compensation rate to \$20/hour from the current \$17/hour. There was further discussion of
47 the need to retain firefighters, and Board members proposed that the rate be set at \$18.50 for
48 the current year with a commitment to continue with further incremental increases in
49 upcoming budgets. Mr. Johnson and Mr. Snell expressed that this would be a satisfactory
50 solution. The anticipated number of hours was included as 2700.

51 The proposed budget as edited totaled \$216,360. It was noted that last year's budget did not
52 include the Capital West contribution, and so the increase is from a budget of \$200K rather
53 than the \$190 indicated; an explanatory note will be included in the Town Report.

54 The Capital Improvement Plan was discussed, particularly the \$550K needed for an upcoming
55 truck replacement. Mr. Johnson explained that more seating capacity is needed, and that a six-
56 person cab truck would be more in the \$800K range. He proposed that purchasing a quad pack
57 pickup for \$75K would both solve the seating issue and provide additional benefits for the
58 Department. It was confirmed that trucks still need a two-year lead time for ordering and
59 delivery, and that plans should be made accordingly.

60 Mr. Johnson then addressed facility needs at the Fire Station, explaining that currently the
61 dining area is adjacent to the equipment cleaning area, a situation which creates health
62 concerns for the volunteers. He also indicated that finding another location for storage of the
63 sidewalk plow would be helpful. Septic capacity considerations were raised, and it was
64 acknowledged that this is a complicated issue; Mr. Johnson reiterated that gear
65 decontamination is critical and that younger volunteers are much more aware of the
66 consequences of exposure to chemicals involved in firefighting.

67 **MOTION:** *Mr. Martel made a motion to adopt the Fire Department budget in the amount of*
68 *\$216,360. The motion was seconded by Mr. Shupe, and passed unanimously.*

69 **2. Fayston Winter Road agreement.**

70 Road Department budget numbers were reviewed, and it was discussed and agreed that it
71 would be both more straightforward as well as equitable to simplify this agreement by
72 incorporating a percentage increase each year, at either 3% or the rate of inflation, with a more
73 detailed review of numbers approximately every five years. Last year's agreement was for
74 Waitsfield to compensate Fayston in the amount of \$11,800.

75

76 **MOTION:** *A motion to agree upon a \$12,500 payment from Waitsfield to Fayston for the 2025*
77 *calendar year passed unanimously.*

78

79 **3. ARPA funds update.**

80 This topic was postponed.

81

82 **4. Mad River Rec District update.**

83 Ms. Arnesen provided a budget report, and indicated that the Rec District is proposing a level
84 funded budget for the upcoming year. She noted that it is anticipated that Moretown will join
85 the District as a partial member, and that the MOU will be adjusted accordingly if Moretown
86 approves joining at March's Town Meeting.

87
88 Ms. Arnesen reviewed some budget details, noted that an extension had been granted on the
89 finalization of the CRV work and completion of deliverables, and provided an update on some
90 of the District's projects and programs.

91
92 **5. Covered Bridge.**

93 It was reported that work on the bridge will commence on December 16, and that Miles
94 Jenness (VT Heavy Timber) will be providing an updated itemized outline of costs, which are
95 now anticipated to be approximately \$16K. Mr. Shupe will need this itemization in order to
96 proceed with insurance coverage logistics. The additional work outlined by Mr. Jenness to
97 address longstanding defects on the bridge is anticipated to cost approximately \$13K; it was
98 confirmed that there is at least \$10K in appropriate reserve funds to cover most of this
99 expense, and that having all the work completed at once is the most cost-effective strategy.

100
101 **MOTION:** *Mr. Curtis made a motion to approve the additional work outlined by VT Heavy*
102 *Timber, at a cost not to exceed \$14K. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ursprung, and passed*
103 *unanimously.*

104
105 It was agreed that further discussion of construction of a portal entrance to prevent similar
106 damage from occurring in the future will take place at an upcoming Board meeting, and Mr.
107 Messer reiterated his proposal that a related ordinance be drafted and adopted so that fines
108 may be imposed if similar damage is experienced moving forward.

109
110 **6. Selectboard Roundtable.**

111 Mr. Shupe explained that Sam Robinson (MRVPD) had drafted a letter for the MRV towns'
112 Selectboards to sign regarding the closure of the Health Center; this will be sent to all pertinent
113 parties once the signatures are in place.

114
115 Meetings with FEMA regarding the damage from the July 2024 flooding are continuing; it has
116 been requested that work on the Meadow Road bridge be covered, as it suffered significant
117 degradation due to the heavy truck traffic experienced during flood repair work.

118
119 The MRVPD will be discussing the upcoming year's Work Plan and Budget at their December
120 meeting.

121
122 **7. Consent Agenda.**

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

- 124
125
 - Bills Payable and Treasurer's Warrants

126
127 **8. Executive Session.**

128 **MOTION:** *A motion to find that premature general knowledge of confidential attorney- client*
129 *communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the public body*
130 *would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage passed*
131 *unanimously.*

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

134 The meeting entered Executive Session at 8:05 pm and returned to open session at xxx pm.

135

136 **III. Other Business**

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

138 **IV. Adjourn**

139 The meeting adjourned at xxx pm.

140 Respectfully submitted,

141 Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary

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

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 has passed, 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.

94
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.

97
98 It was agreed that a sidewalk maintenance plan needs to be developed.

99
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.

103
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.

107
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.

113
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.

116
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.

120
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.

124
125 It is anticipated that preliminary interviews for TA candidates will be held later in the week.

126
127 A new Road Crew position ad will be posted.

128
129 **7. Consent Agenda.**

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

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132
 - 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 xxx pm.

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141 **III. Other Business**

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

143 **IV. Adjourn**

144 The meeting adjourned at xxx pm.

145 Respectfully submitted,

146 Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary