

Town of Pomfret Selectboard  
Approved Meeting Minutes  
January 4, 2023

Present: Emily Grube, John Peters (from 8:15 pm), Benjamin Brickner, Steve Chamberlin, Jon Harrington

Public: Jim Potter (Road Foreman), Nancy Matthews (Auditor), Cathy Peters, Greg Olmstead, Scott Barger, Scott Pearce, Carl Bulgini, Spencer Schwenk, Neil Lamson, Cy Benoit, Jake Astbury, Kristen Esty

1. Emily called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.
2. Executive Session
  - a. Ben moved and Steve seconded that the Selectboard enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(3) to discuss employee matters. Unanimous (John Peters absent). The Selectboard entered executive session at 6:04 pm.
  - b. The Selectboard exited executive session at 6:58 pm, no decisions having been made therein.
3. Emily called the meeting back to order at 7:00 pm.
4. Public Comment – None.
5. Agenda Review – Ben moved and Steve seconded addition of end of probationary period for our newest road crew member, and addition of zoning violation notice letters. Unanimous (John Peters absent).
6. Road Foreman’s Report & Highway Items
  - a. Jim prepared an updated town highway equipment inventory, which Ben will forward to the Auditors for inclusion in the town report.
  - b. Ben presented the revised highway access permit application, which conforms to the amended highway ordinance that takes effect on January 15. Steve moved and Jon seconded that the revised permit application form be approved. Unanimous (John Peters absent).
  - c. Emily prepared an RFP for engineering services for two culvert replacements. Ben moved and Steve seconded approval of the RFP to be posted this week. The deadline for proposals is noon on February 1, 2023. Unanimous (Jon Harrington recused; John Peters absent).
  - d. The board continued discussion of the FY 2024 highway budget and expects to finalize and approve the same at its next meeting on January 18.
  - e. Spencer Schwenk approached Jim about installing a new street sign on a granite post at the intersection of Pomfret Road and Bartlett Brook Road Sign. Jim spoke with the Vtrans District 4 supervisor, Chris Bump, who explained that all signs within the “clear zone” of a traveled land must be on break-away posts. Jim will contact Mr. Schwenk to schedule a site visit.
  - f. Brad Ruderman contacted Jim regarding the Eydt Estate highway access permit application previously denied by the board.

- g. Ben moved and Steve seconded that Brian Sawyer’s employment probationary period be ended and that Mr. Sawyer’s rate of pay be increased to \$28 per hour. Unanimous (John Peters absent).
7. Items for Discussion or Vote
- a. FY 2024 Fire Department Budget – Scott Barger reported that the Fire Department reviewed and further revised its capital plan, resulting in a reduced amount needed to adequately fund its equipment reserve fund. Together with the revised operating budget presented at the prior meeting, the Fire Department’s budget request is up only 6.9% year-over-year (down from a 17.9% increase in the original budget presentation). The board expressed appreciation for the Fire Department’s effort in reviewing their budget. The Fire Department also suggested that ARPA funding might be used to cover some upcoming capital expenses such as electrical generators and new on demand hot water heaters.
  - b. ARPA Funds – Steve suggested prioritizing a generator for the town garage. During the recent winter storm, power lines came down near the garage, but the garage did not lose power. Without power, trucks cannot be fueled. Emily stated there are two price quotes in, and that the board applied for partial grant funding for two generators. We should know the disposition of our grant application in a few weeks. Neil suggested the board proceed with purchasing the generators, which can be paid for with ARPA funds if the grant is not awarded.
  - c. FY 2024 Town Budget – The board continued discussion of the FY 2024 Budget. The board expects to finalize and approve the same at its next meeting on January 18.
  - d. Town Report Deliverables – Ben presented for discussion several of the Selectboard deliverables for the town report including the Selectboard Report, Officer List, Budget Narrative, and Annual Meeting Warning. The board approved the Selectboard Report and Officer List, which Ben will forward to the Auditors for inclusion in the town report. There are no changes to the town asset list; Ben will report the same to the Auditors. The Budget Narrative will be finalized after the FY 2024 budget is approved, and the Annual Meeting Warning will be finalized after the public question petition deadline has passed.
  - e. Bartlett Brook Road Street Sign – Spencer Schwenk asked for the board’s concerns concerning his proposal to install a new street sign on a granite post at the intersection of Pomfret Road and Bartlett Brook Road Sign. Emily explained that Jim spoke with the Vtrans District 4 supervisor, Chris Bump, who explained that all signs within the “clear zone” of a traveled land must be on break-away posts. Ben indicated that Jim would contact Mr. Schwenk to schedule a site visit.
  - f. Warrants – Emily moved and John seconded approval of the following warrants:
 

23066	\$18,555.92	Payroll
23068	35,066.93	A/P

 Unanimous.
  - g. South Pomfret Scoping Study – Jen Conley will present VHB’s scoping study recommendations to the board at its regular meeting on February 1, 2023.

- h. Zoning Matters – The board discussed the need to follow up with Artistree on a variety of zoning and permitting matters to ensure all businesses in town were treated similarly. Ben will contact Karen in that regard.
  - i. Approval of Minutes – Ben moved and John seconded approval of the December 21, 2022, meeting minutes as presented. Unanimous.
8. Meeting Wrap Up
- a. Correspondence – None for discussion.
  - b. Review of Assignments – Emily asked Ben to contact VLCT regarding re: use of surplus, Karen re: Artistree permitting. Emily would like the Board to consider whether they would like to suggest to the voters the notion of changing town meeting to a hybrid or Australian ballot. Emily also will follow up with Vtrans regarding the need for break-away posts in the clear zone adjacent to traveled lanes.
  - c. Agenda for 01/18/2023 Meeting – FY 2024 Budget, Technology in Meetings, SharePoint Filing Tutorial.
9. Adjournment – Steve moved and the Jo(h)ns seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 11:22 pm.