

Town of Pomfret Selectboard  
Approved Meeting Minutes  
April 19, 2023

Present: John Peters, Benjamin Brickner, Steve Chamberlin, Meg Emmons, Emily Grube

Public: Jim Potter (Road Foreman), Hunter Ulf, Gennie Lawrence, Tom Gubbins, Betsy Rhodes (Library Trustee), John Moore (Planning Commission), Bill Emmons (Planning Commission), Neil Lamson (Lister), Jack Pearsons, Lindsay Hyde, Karen Osnoe (Zoning Administrator and Delinquent Tax Collector), “Mary”

1. John called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.
2. Public Comment – Betsy Rhodes asked for clarification of discussion of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Grant.
3. Hunter Ulf Consultation re: Town Hall – Mr. Ulf attended to offer insight and suggestions on the modernization and renovation of the historic Town Hall building. The Town is considering a roof-mounted solar system, bringing the building’s systems up to code, accessibility improvements and addressing other needs.

Meg researched available grants for energy efficiency projects. She presented three opportunities: (a) a \$4,000 “mini” grant to fund consulting work and community engagement, (b) midsize grants to fund energy use audits, and (c) larger grants up to \$500,000 for building renovation projects that promote energy resilience, a portion of which may be used for accessibility improvements. ARPA funds can be used as well.

Gennie Lawrence volunteered to coordinate public outreach to discuss future needs and uses for the Town Hall. Parking is a limitation. The kitchen is also nonfunctional at present. Mr. Ulf suggested refitting as a catering kitchen (where food is prepared for serving but otherwise made elsewhere). This would free up space for two ADA-compliant bathrooms and a required second egress.

Ben moved and Meg seconded that Meg submit applications for a mini-grant and energy audit grant, which are fully funded and require no matching fund. Unanimous.

Emily moved and Steve seconded the Mr. Ulf be asked to develop a scope and cost estimate for a preliminary evaluation of options for improving the Town Hall. Unanimous.

4. Agenda Review – Ben moved and Meg seconded adding permission for Two Rivers to set up a table outside the special town meeting to solicit information regarding the town plan, and deleting Vermont 100 Endurance Race for which we still have yet to receive any information. Unanimous.
5. Road Foreman’s Report – Jim and crew are busy restoring the roads after a relatively mild mud season. There is a major problem on Webster Hill Road, which the crew will work on this week finish early next week. Jim has two site visits scheduled for the Wild Apple Road culvert replacement project and wants to be sure we have easement agreements ready if needed. Ben will review the form the Town has used previously,

consulting with VLCT and, if necessary, Stitzel Page. Jim and John are scheduled to meet with the repeater/radio people later this week. Jim also suggested a limit be placed on the number of site visits per application as repeat site visits have been occupying a significant amount of his time lately.

6. Items for Discussion or Vote

- a. Eydt Co-Trustees Request to Remove Trees and Vegetation – This is postponed to May 3, at which time a hearing will be held if necessary.
- b. Two Rivers Request – Ben moved and John seconded that Two Rivers be invited to set up a table or display outside the special town meeting on May 20 to solicit resident input on the Town Plan revision. Unanimous. John Moore of the Planning Commission will coordinate with Connor Rigney of Two Rivers.
- c. Paving RFP – Emily prepared an RFP based on last year’s document. Acceptance of a proposal will be contingent on the Town receiving a state paving grant. Proposals will be due by noon on Wednesday, May 17. Ben moved and Steve seconded approval of the RFP publication with minor edits. Unanimous. Emily will post on the Vermont Business Registry and Bid System.
- d. SFY24 Grants-in-Aid Program Letter of Intent – Ben moved and Emily seconded approval of the Grants-in-Aid Program letter of intent for submission. Unanimous. John Peters will sign and submit.
- e. Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) – Emergency Management Director Kevin Rice prepared drafts of the 2023-24 LEMP and submission form. Ben moved and Emily seconded approval of the same with minor edits. Unanimous. Ben will forward the as-approved documents for Kevin to sign and submit.
- f. Delinquent Tax Account Update – Delinquent Tax Collector Karen Osnoe reports no response from her initial letters requesting payment plans from the owners of Parcels 2302-B, 4801-C and -D, 4801 and -B. Karen will try again. If no satisfactory payment plan is reached, these parcels will continue through the tax sale process. Ben moved and Meg seconded that Karen also be authorized to enter into a payment plan with the owner of Parcel 0702 to have that delinquent balance paid in full in 18 months or less. Unanimous.

Karen also reported that she will seek to amend the existing tax lien on Parcel 0705 and place new tax liens on Parcel 0188, 1116 and 4604. She will request Selectboard approval for the same at the May 3 meeting. Karen also noted the special situation at Parcel 0124 where tax payments must be approved by a judge overseeing the property owner’s financial affairs. Parcel 0190-AL remains on the tax sale list.

- g. ARPA Funds Reporting – Neil Lamson will submit the Town’s annual ARPA report on or before the April 30 deadline. The Town has until the end of 2024 to commit to spending the remaining funds.
- h. Teago General Store Liquor Licenses – Ben moved and Meg seconded renewal of Teago’s Second Class liquor (sale of beer and wine for consumption off premises) and Tobacco licenses; and approval of the new First Class liquor (service of beer and wine for consumption on premises) license. Unanimous.
- i. Municipal Energy Resilience Grant – See Item 3 above.
- j. Municipal Planning Grant Extension – No extension is needed. Bill Emmons of the Planning Commission stated that the work funded by this grant is already complete.

- k. Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Grant – The draft Scoping Study Report prepared by VHB, including the preferred alternative, has been submitted to Vtrans for review and comment. Jon Harrington will forward to the Selectboard once the review is complete. Betsy Rhodes asked about paving and improvements to Library Street, parking and safety. There is uncertainty around the extent of the Town’s right-of-way in that location. Betsy will research the original deed and discuss with Jenn Conley at VHB.
  - l. Renewal of TPVS Use Agreement – Ben will correspond with the WCUUSD School Board about extending the Prosper Valley School Use Agreement for an additional five years.
  - m. Warrants – Ben moved and Meg seconded approval for payment of the following warrants:
 

23105	\$ 9,422.33	Payroll
23106	24,179.06	A/P
23107	10,738.41	A/P

 Unanimous.
  - n. Approval of Minutes – Emily moved and Ben seconded approval of the April 5, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. Unanimous.
7. Meeting Wrap Up
- a. Correspondence – The Selectboard received a complaint forwarded from the Zoning Administrator regarding a potentially abandoned property on Allen Hill Road. Meg received communication re: Sleepy Hollow Farm foliage traffic.
  - b. Review of Assignments – Emily will submit paving RFP to the Vermont Business Registry and Bid System; John will submit the Grants-in-Aid letter, follow up with Betsy; Meg will submit mini-grant and energy assessment grant applications; Ben will speak with VLCT or Stitzel Page re: form of easement, send revised LEMP to Kevin, correspond with the School Board re: Use Agreement extension, coordinate with Emily on the paving RFP.
  - c. Agenda for Next Meeting – Eydt Co-Trustees Request to Remove Trees and Vegetation, Bicycle and Pedestrian Program Grant, Vermont 100 Endurance Race, Town Hall renovation.
8. Executive Session
- a. Ben moved and Meg seconded that the Selectboard enter into executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(1)(F) and (a)(3) to discuss confidential attorney-client communications and public officer evaluations and appointments. Unanimous. The Selectboard entered executive session at 9:10 pm.
  - b. The Selectboard exited executive session at 9:54 pm, with no decisions having been made therein.
9. Eydt, et al. v. Town of Pomfret (23-CV-01398 Wrcv) – Ben moved that Stitzel Page be authorized to (a) file a notice of appearance, (b) return a waiver of service of summons, and (c) take other steps necessary to defend the Town in foregoing matter. Unanimous.
10. Public Officer Appointments – None.
11. Adjournment – Emily and Ben simultaneously moved and Meg enthusiastically seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 pm.