

Town of Pomfret Selectboard  
Meeting Minutes  
June 21, 2023

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

Public: Jamie Ziobro, Jim Potter (Road Foreman), Cathy Emmons, Margarete Pierce, Andrew Pierce, Jim Robinson, Marie Robinson, Cy Benoit (Tree Warden), Dylan Keith, John Morley, Glenn Morley, Sheriff Ryan Palmer, Betsy Rhodes (Library), Karen Osnoe (ZBA & Delinquent Tax Collector), Sam Musson, Doug Abbott, Kerry Postler-Hermann, Mike Doten, Amy Robb, John Moore (Planning Commission), Ogden Hunnewell, Gerry Fields

1. John called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.
2. Agenda Review – Move Fall Foliage Traffic Management to after Road Foreman Report; add Request to Cater Permit after Abracadabra Festival Permit Applications; delete Highway Access (Dinsmoor Road); delete Town Hall Mini Grant Application. Unanimous.
3. Public Comment – None.
4. Road Foreman’s Report – Jim received aggregate materials quotes from Blaktop, Inc. and Pike Industries bids from Black Top and Pike. Ben moved and Steve seconded that the Pike quote be accepted. Unanimous. Jim noted that roadside mowing was ongoing and asked that any residents with sensitive roadside areas to contact the Road Crew in advance so they can be alert to them. The Webster Hill Road work is ongoing and expected to continue for another two weeks. Emily will post another road closure notice on the listserv. Caleb (Pike Industries) and Jim met regarding the Stage Road repaving and Library Street apron project. The new truck paint has been completed; they will need a couple of days to finish outfitting.
5. Items for Discussion or Vote
  - a. Fall Foliage Traffic Management – Ben reported that the Woodstock Select Board met the night before and expressed sympathy with Pomfret’s plight and a willingness to support the decision Pomfret ultimately makes regarding traffic management on Cloudland Road, including coordination of a possible closure of the road in both towns. Pomfret residents in the affected area indicated strong support for closing all of Cloudland Road (including the segment to Galaxy Hill Road) and Barber Hill Road, which received spillover tourism traffic last year. Cloudland Farm intends to direct their patrons to drive around via Galaxy Hill Road to reduce localized traffic issues. Sheriff Ryan Palmer was present and discussed options for temporary traffic flow changes and enforcement. Area residents also reported on their efforts to remove advertisement of private properties as tourist destinations from social media, travel websites and locally produced tourism materials. The residents also are working on a road closure plan for the Selectboard to consider at a future meeting.
  - b. Highway Access Permits
    - i. J. Nutter, private driveway (1582 High Pastures Road) – Ben moved and Meg seconded approval of the driveway access application with the following condition(s): remove trees to attain at least a 155-foot sight distance in both

directions from a vantage point on the driveway 10 feet back from the traveled way. Unanimous.

- ii. J. Nutter, agricultural access (2067 High Pastures Road) – Ben moved and Emily seconded approval of the agricultural access application with the following condition(s): (1) install an 18-inch culvert at the intersection with High Pastures Road, (2) abandon the existing access to the parcel, and (3) periodically mow roadside vegetation in order maintain a 155-foot sight distance in both directions from a vantage point on the driveway 10 feet back from the traveled way. Unanimous.
- c. Request for Fence in ROW (2000 High Pastures) – The proposed split rail fence replaces an older split rail fence in the same location within the town’s right-of-way, a portion of which was previously removed. Ben moved and Meg seconded approval of the proposed fence, in the same location as the older fence. Unanimous. John will prepare and send a standard disclaimer letter to the owners explaining that the town is not responsible for damage caused within the right-of-way as a result of road maintenance or snow removal.
- d. Highway Ordinance Amendment – Ben moved and Emily seconded approval of amendments, edited as discussed. Unanimous. Ben will prepare the required legal notice for publication in the June 29 *Vermont Standard*.
- e. FY 2024 Cost of Living Adjustment – Following the same methodology adopted by the Selectboard last year,<sup>[\*]</sup> the cost of living increase for the coming fiscal year is 6.1%. Ben moved and John seconded that hourly employees receive a 6.1% cost of living adjustment, effective July 1. Unanimous.
- f. Financial Controls Questionnaire – Ben moved and John seconded that the financial controls questionnaire be approved as submitted by the Treasurer, and that John be authorized to sign the same on the Selectboard’s behalf. Unanimous.
- g. Abracadabra Festival Permit Applications – Ben moved and Meg seconded approval of the three Festival Permit applications submitted by Abracadabra Coffee. Unanimous.
- h. New England Smoked Seafood Request to Cater Permit Application – Ben moved and Meg seconded approval of the Request to Cater Permit application submitted by New England Smoked Seafood. Unanimous.
- i. Warrants – Ben moved and John seconded approval for payment of the following warrants:

23127	\$ 8,281.27	Payroll
23128	7,620.52	Payroll
23129	7,622.00	Payroll
23130	39,934.76	A/P (incl. June debit card statement)

Unanimous.

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\* **Editor’s Note:** From the Selectboard’s June 15, 2022 meeting minutes:

The board decided to use an analogous methodology to figure our COLAs as the state uses for VMERS (see 24 V.S.A. 5067). That is, the 12-month percent change in the Northeast Region CPI-U as of the December prior to the COLA effective date. The Northeast Region CPI-U is reported here: [https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/news-release/consumerpriceindex\\_northeast.htm](https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/news-release/consumerpriceindex_northeast.htm).

- j. Approval of Minutes – Ben moved and Meg seconded approval of the June 7, 2023 Selectboard Meeting Minutes as presented. Unanimous.
- 6. Meeting Wrap Up
  - a. Correspondence – None.
  - b. Assignments – Meg to gather more information/statistics for the Town Hall mini-grant submission. Emily to send listserv emails re: Webster Hill Road closure and roadside mowing. Emily and John to look for the ROW disclaimer letter. Ben to revise sheriff's contract as discussed in open meeting, submit the approved liquor permits in Becky's absence, email the approved access permit applicants.
  - c. Agenda for Next Meeting – Vermont Declaration of Inclusion, revised financial policies.
- 7. Executive Session
  - a. Ben moved and John seconded that the Selectboard enter into executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(1)(A) and (F) to discuss contracts and confidential attorney-client communications. Unanimous. The Selectboard entered executive session at 9:24 pm.
  - b. The Selectboard exited executive session at 10:20 pm, with no decisions having been made therein.
- 8. Items for Discussion or Vote
  - a. Law Enforcement Services Contract (Windsor County Sheriff) – Ben and Emily seconded that the Law Enforcement Services Contract be approved with changes discussed with Sheriff Palmer during the public session. Unanimous. Ben will revise the contract as discussed and send to Sheriff Palmer for countersignature.
  - b. Zoning Violations – Ben will relay the substance of the Selectboard's discussion in executive session to Stitzel Page.
- 9. Adjournment – Ben moved and Meg seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 10:21.