

Town of Pomfret Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
August 2, 2023

Present: Benjamin Brickner, Meg Emmons, Emily Grube

Public: Nancy Matthews (Auditor), Ted Matthews, Claudia Tupanjanin, Scott Barger, Jake Astbury, Cy Benoit (Tree Warden), Cathy Emmons, Lisa Parsons, Mike Doten, John Moore (Planning Commission), Doug Tuthill (Constable), Neil Lamson (Lister), Andy Mann, Gerry Fields, Mark Montella, Bill Emmons (Planning Commission), Chad Hewitt, Mark Montella, Greg Hartford

1. Ben called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.
2. Agenda Review – Chad Hewitt, the town’s certified public accountant, will join the meeting at or around 7:45 pm to discuss FY 2023 financial results and setting the FY 2024 tax rate; Scott Barger asked to add approved of Fire Department turn-out gear, which he indicated was time-sensitive to enable to members to attend trainings this fall. Meg moved and Ben seconded the foregoing. Unanimous.
3. Public Comment – None.
4. Road Foreman’s Report – None.
5. Items for Discussion or Vote
 - a. Foliage Traffic Management – There has been no answer from Woodstock regarding financial or in-kind assistance with traffic control on the Woodstock portion of Cloudland Road. Cathy has spoke with a Woodstock Select Board member who indicated they were waiting for Pomfret to make a decision on road closure before committing any Woodstock resources. A Woodstock Select Board committee will meet on Tuesday, then the full Woodstock Select Board will meet the following Tuesday, at which point we hope to have an answer. Some Cloudland Road residents have expressed concerns around needing to exit their vehicles to open a movable gate. Meg moved and Ben seconded that the entire lengths of Cloudland Road and Barber Hill Road be closed (other than to residents, guests, agricultural use and emergency vehicles), from September 22 through October 22. Brickner and Emmons in favor; Grube against. Motion did not carry.^[*] The matter will be discussed again at the August 16 meeting with the full Selectboard present.
 - b. Stage Road Traffic Study – Two Rivers performed a traffic speed study needed to establish a speed limit on Stage Road outside of South Pomfret village. The 85th percentile (the starting point for setting speed limits) was 56 mph toward Barnard and 49 mph toward South Pomfret. The Selectboard will consider other factors that may allow a lower limit to be established. An amendment to the Traffic and Parking Ordinance will be required. Once a speed limit is established, the Selectboard will ask the Sheriff’s Department to direct enforcement patrols in that area.
 - c. Large Event Permit (589 Stage Road) – This is for a wedding on September 9 and 10. Meg moved and Ben seconded that the application be approved with the condition

* **Editor’s Note:** Pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 172, the concurrence of at least three members is required, regardless of the number of members present.

that no cars be parked on the paved surface or gravel shoulder of Stage Road. Unanimous. The applicant was urged to have their catering company submit a Request-to-Cater Permit application (if required) in time for review at the August 16 meeting.

- d. FY 2024 Town Tax Rate – Chad Hewitt, the town’s certified public accountant, explained the town’s FY 2023 financial results and answered questions about how the Selectboard should consider the town’s account balances, the small deficit in the highway account, and other matters when setting the FY 2024 tax rate. Ben moved and Emily seconded that the FY 2024 town tax rate be \$0.3479 per \$100 assessed value (up from \$0.3406 to cover the aforementioned deficit) and that the FY 2024 local agreement rate be \$0.0007 per \$100 assessed value. Unanimous. The Selectboard also reviewed and approved with minor modifications a letter to accompany tax bills explaining how the tax rate was set and how it has changed from last year.
- e. Fire Department Turn-Out Gear – Scott Barger reported that the Fire Department obtained a second quote for turn-out gear that came in lower than the first. Meg moved and Ben seconded approval to purchase from the second vendor three sets of such gear, to be paid for first from the related FY 2024 budget line item, with any balance to be paid from the Fire Dept Non-Vehicle Reserve. Unanimous.
- f. Purchasing Policy Authorization Thresholds – Nancy researched several nearby towns’ policies to determine the typical thresholds for Selectboard authorization, competitive quotes and sealed RFPs for large purchases. As two of the most experienced Selectboard members were absent, it was felt this decision should wait until August 16. In the meantime Nancy will prepare the revised Purchasing Policy with the threshold numbers blank.
- g. Dog Ordinance Matters/Delinquent Dog Licenses – Doug Tuthill reported on an ongoing dog nuisance matter. John Peters will follow up with the Sheriff’s Department regarding the same. Cynthia called dog owners who have previously licensed their dogs but failed to do so this year. Some have since obtained licenses. John Peters will follow up with the Sheriff’s Department to contact those who still have not. Becky Fielder prepared a separate list of dog owners who have never licensed their dogs. Cynthia will call these residents as well, with the Sheriff making follow-up visits as the next step. Emily moved and Ben seconded the foregoing. Unanimous.
- h. Broad Brook Zoning Issue – The appeal period for Zoning Board of Adjustment’s decision has expired and the violation persists. Ben will follow up with Stitzel Page on next steps.
- i. Warrants – Ben moved and John seconded approval for payment of the following warrants:

24005	\$11,470.24	Payroll
24007	49,666.26	A/P (includes materials for storm damage)

Unanimous.
- j. Approval of Minutes – Emily moved and Ben seconded approval of the July 17, 2023 special meeting minutes with a typo correction, and the July 19, 2023 regular meeting minutes as presented. Unanimous.

6. Meeting Wrap Up
 - a. Correspondence – Hillary White anticipates submitting a highway access permit application for the shared private driveway known as Dinsmoor Road. The Selectboard previously received a highway access permit application from Andy Mann for work on the same driveway. A site visit to review the Mann application was scheduled for August 16, 2023 at 5:45 pm. If the White application is timely received, a site visit to review the same will be scheduled for August 16, 2023 at 6:15 pm.
 - b. Review of Assignments – Emily to discuss foliage traffic management with Jim; John to discuss Dog Ordinance matters with the Sheriff; Ben to contact Stitzel Page regarding the zoning violation.
 - c. Agenda for next meeting – Foliage traffic management, revised Purchasing Policy, Dinsmoor Road highway access applications, Labounty probate filing, Windy Lane e911 numbering matter, Stage Road speed limit/revised Traffic and Parking Ordinance.
7. Adjournment – Ben moved and Emily seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 10:08 pm.