

Town of Pomfret Selectboard  
Meeting Minutes  
December 20, 2023

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

Public: Bill Emmons, Neil Lamson (Lister), Betsy Rhodes (Library Trustee), William Harvey (Alta Equipment Group), Cynthia Hewitt (Selectboard assistant)

1. Ben called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.
2. Agenda Review – Meg moved and Steve seconded that (i) Capital Program and Budget Policy and Procedure, (ii) Road Crew Communications Devices and (iii) Town Garage Boiler Replacement be deleted and that (iv) Wild Apple Road Culverts Replacement Application Permits be added to the agenda. Unanimous.
3. Public Comment – None.
4. FY 2025 Budget Informational Meeting
  - a. Neil Lamson commented on the proposed reduction in highway paving reserve funding; he also expressed appreciation that the draft budget has been made available on the town website after each Selectboard meeting.
  - b. Betsy Rhodes, for the Abbott Memorial Library, thanked the Selectboard for including the Library’s requested appropriation in the draft budget.
5. Road Foreman’s Report – None (Jim absent).
6. Items for Discussion or Vote
  - a. Generator Service Contract – Emily moved and Steve seconded approval of the Yankee Generator contracts for one year, including two annual maintenance visits to the Town Office, Teago Station, Pomfret Station and Town Garage generators for a total cost of \$1,425. Unanimous.
  - b. Opening of Wheel Loader Bids – Bids were received from (i) United Construction & Forestry and (ii) Alta Equipment Group. Both were opened and an award is anticipated at the January 3, 2024 meeting.
  - c. FY 2025 Budget Discussion
    - i. Ben reviewed several figures that were updated or adjusted since the last meeting based on information received in the meantime. A few line items remain to be confirmed, based on information anticipated to be received in early January.
    - ii. Discussion of the paving reserve followed Neil’s earlier comment. Proposed funding was increased from \$150,000 to \$175,000. The cost of paving has generally increased significantly, thus a larger appropriation is warranted. ARPA funds remain available for this purpose as well.
    - iii. Funding of the bridge reserve was maintained at \$25,000. Steve noted that the bridge at Teago General Store eventually will need to be replaced, likely at substantial cost.
    - iv. Funding of the highway vehicle reserve was increased from \$164,000 to \$170,000 to reflect generally increasing cost of highway vehicle replacement.
  - d. FY 2023 Town Report Deliverables
    - i. Selectboard Report – Emily prepared an initial draft, which Ben edited and circulated to the Selectboard for review and comment.

- ii. Highway Equipment List – Jim provided updated valuations. Steve noted that the new F-550 should be added to the list. Ben will do so and circulate to Jim for confirmation of the asset value.
  - iii. Officer List – This is complete, subject to any appointments that may be made between now and early January.
  - iv. FY 2025 Budget Narrative – To be finalized once the FY 2025 budget is adopted next month.
  - v. 2024 Annual Meeting Warning – This has been drafted and will be finalized after the petition deadline next month. The Selectboard decided (following the Town Clerk’s suggestion) to begin polling at 8:00 am on Town Meeting Day, a half hour earlier than usual in anticipation of increased turnout for the concurrent presidential primary election. The Selectboard also opted not to combine appropriations into a single article even though doing so would reduce the cost of printing ballots and programming the new electronic ballot tabulator. It was felt that the additional cost was warranted to allow voters the opportunity to vote each appropriation up or down separately .
  - e. Wild Apple Road Culverts Replacement Application Permits – Tyler from East Engineering prepared two permit applications for the Wild Apple Road Culverts Replacement work: (i) Department of the Army (Army Corps of Engineers) and (ii) stream alteration from the state Department of Environmental Conservation. Steve moved and Meg seconded approval of the same. Unanimous.
  - f. Warrants – Steve moved and Meg seconded approval for payment of the following warrants:
 

24050	\$13,393.59	Payroll
24052	34,891.66	A/P
24054	44,205.72	A/P (incl. Nov. and Dec. debit card expenses)
24056	5,853.46	Payroll

 Unanimous.
  - g. Approval of December 6, 2023 Minutes – Steve moved and Emily seconded approval of the December 6, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. Unanimous.
7. Meeting Wrap Up
- a. Correspondence – Ben spoke with the accountant who signed the cover letter accompanying an anonymous donation to confirm the donor’s intent that the funds be used to defray costs associated with the Town Hall building. The accountant so confirmed.
  - b. Review of Assignments – Ben to scan and circulate the submitted wheel loader bids; update the highway equipment list; circulate the signed generator contracts and Wild Apple Road culverts replacement permits. Meg will continue working with Neil on the ARPA funds accounting; Emily to follow up regarding officer appointments; John to follow up regarding the possible executive session on January 3.
  - c. Agenda for Next Meeting – Possible Execution Session re: Employee Agreements, Officer Appointments, Road Crew Communications Devices, Town Garage Boiler Replacement, Wild Apple Culverts Replacement RFP, FY 2023 Annual Report Deliverables, Capital Program and Budget Policy and Procedure, Wheel Loader Bid Award, Hunnewell Access Permit.

8. Executive Session
  - a. Ben moved and Emily seconded that the Selectboard enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(3) to discuss the appointment of public officers. Unanimous. The Selectboard entered executive session at 8:11 pm.
  - b. The Selectboard exited executive session at 9:14 pm, with no decisions having been made therein.
9. Appointment of Public Officers – None.
10. Adjournment – Steve moved and Emily seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 pm.