

Town of Pomfret Selectboard  
Meeting Minutes  
September 18, 2024

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

Public: John Moore, Jim Potter, Marcy Potter, Neil Lamson, Christina Chamberlin, Patrick Potter, Zack Potter, Bill Emmons, Alan Graham

1. Ben called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm.
2. Executive Session
  - a. Ben moved and Emily seconded that the Selectboard enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(1)(A) to discuss contracts, the premature general public knowledge would clearly place the Selectboard and/or another involved at a substantial disadvantage. Unanimous. The Selectboard entered executive session at 6:16 pm.
  - b. The Selectboard exited executive session at 7:00 pm, with no decisions having been made therein.
3. Agenda Review – John moved and Steve seconded addition of Wild Apple Road Culvert Close-Out before Item 6C (Road Salt Purchasing) and MERP report before Item 6J (Warrants). Unanimous.
4. Public Comment – None.
5. Road Foreman’s Report – Jim Potter resigned from the position of Road Foreman with immediate effect and offered that his last day of work would be in two weeks. Mr. Potter submitted a letter of resignation to the Selectboard, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.
6. Items for Discussion or Vote
  - a. Selectboard Communications – No discussion or decisions made.
  - b. Employment of Public Employees – No discussion or decisions made.
  - c. Wild Apple Road Culvert Project Completion – Steve described differences between the as-built culvert and approved plans (e.g., reduced inlet clearance and waste block wing walls versus stone). It is unclear how or whether the deviations were approved. The completed project is adequate, albeit not what was expected. Emily suggested this project be a learning experience and that future projects should more clearly outline communications processes to include daily reporting. The close-out materials will be reviewed for approval at the October 2, 2024 meeting.
  - d. Road Salt Purchasing – One bid has been received from Cargill. John will contact the state to determine whether municipalities may join its contract for salt this year and, if so, at what price. Ben moved and Steve seconded contracting with Cargill for 500 ton of salt at \$86.75/ton; and 900 ton of ClearLane at \$98.25/ton; provided the state’s price is not lower. Unanimous. Ben will confirm the state’s information with John before signing and returning the Cargill quote.
  - e. Better Roads Grant Letter of Intent – Steve moved and John seconded approval of the Better Roads Grant Letter of Intent. Unanimous.
  - f. Town Office Parking Lot Paving – Steve will follow up with Jim for a quote on paving the town office parking lot.
  - g. FY 2026 Budget Scheduling – Ben suggested beginning the budget process slightly earlier this year to reduce the need for special meetings and to provide more

predictable opportunities for public participation. To that end, Ben suggested asking town officers (non-highway) to prepare budget requests for discussion at the October 16 meeting, and the highway department and fire department to prepare budget requests for discussion at the November 6 meeting. The Selectboard was generally agreeable and Ben will follow-up with those officers and departments to confirm.

- h. Town Building Routine Maintenance – Emily will speak with John Moore about maintenance needs and priorities. Emily noted that painting of the back of the Town Hall is likely beyond the ability of volunteers to complete safely. Steve will contact contractors for bids on this work.

Alan Graham reported the Pomfret Historical Society has funds earmarked for the town hall and carriage shed maintenance. He suggested the town might solicit additional donations for these purposes with the Historical Society’s resources being used as matching incentive funds.

Alan also offered to donate plaster picture rails for the town offices and the town hall, which he would prime and paint, to allow display of more historic artifacts on town property. The Selectboard gratefully accepted Alan’s offer and agreed to arrange for installation of the picture rails when ready.

- i. ARPA Fund Expenses – Meg reports that after final FY 2024 accounting adjustments were made, and assuming the town office parking lot will not be paved this year, the uncommitted balance in the ARPA fund is \$31,309.15. In order avoid recapture, all ARPA funds must be committed by December 31. Ben moved and Steve seconded that all remaining ARPA funds be committed to pay for the Stage Road paving project. Unanimous. Meg will update Ellen so that the account balance can be updated accordingly.
- j. Front Porch Forum – After discussion, the Selectboard agreed the Vital Communities listserv remains a more effective way to communicate town business to the town.
- k. Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) – Meg received a notice that applications for the next phase of MERP, a larger implementation grant, are due September 27. The amount available is up to \$500,000. Twenty percent of the grant may be used for ADA compliance. Since future use of the building is yet to be determined, the Selectboard felt that submitting an application at this time would be premature. Meg will continue working with Hunter Ulf to close out the original “mini” grant this fall, and with the Town Hall Revitalization Committee to develop plans for future use of the building.
- l. Warrants – Meg moved and Emily seconded approval for payment of the following warrants:

25022	\$ 469.12	Tax Refunds
25024	7,935.77	Payroll
25025	957,588.84	A/P

Unanimous.
- m. Approval of September 4, 2024 Minutes – Steve moved and John seconded approval of the September 4, 2024 meeting minutes as presented. Unanimous.

7. Executive Session

- a. Ben moved and Emily seconded that the Selectboard enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(1)(F) and (a)(3) to discuss confidential attorney-client

communications and the employment of public employees. Unanimous. The Selectboard entered executive session at 8:42 pm.

b. The Selectboard exited executive session at 10:49 pm, with no decisions having been made therein.

8. Meeting Wrap Up

a. Correspondence – Meg received a MERP application notice; Emily received and forwarded a notice of opioid settlement funds reporting.

b. Review of Assignments – John will contact the state regarding salt purchasing; Emily will consult with John Moore regarding town building maintenance; Steve will solicit Town Hall painting bids and will speak with Jim about quotations for paving the town office parking lot; Ben will solicit FY 2026 budget input from town officers and departments and will send listserv messages about Wild Apple Road re-opening and Cloudland Road closing for foliage.

c. Agenda for Next Meeting – Wild Apple Road culvert close-out documentation, employment of public employees, highway access permit (Starbuck Road).

9. Adjournment – Steve moved and John seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 pm.

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September 18, 2024

To Whom It May Concern:

After serving this town for many years I am resigning from the Pomfret Road Foreman position with a two week notice effective immediately.

I want the board and community to know this was a decision that was not taken lightly. In this case I feel I need to be the better man and take the high road so that you can find the preferred individual that the whole board can work with.

I want to say thank you to Steve for standing up to his word and looking out for the employee.

Thank you,



James Potter

9-18-2024