

Town of Pomfret Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
November 20, 2024

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

Public: Frank Rogers, Cynthia Hewitt, Cathy Peters, Cathy Emmons

1. Ben called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
2. Executive Session
 - a. Ben moved and Steve seconded that the Selectboard enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(1)(A) to discuss confidential attorney-client communications, the premature general public knowledge of which would clearly place the Selectboard and/or another involved at a substantial disadvantage, and pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(3) to discuss the employment of public employees and the appointment of public officials. Unanimous. The Selectboard entered executive session at 6:01 pm.
 - b. The Selectboard exited executive session at 7:00 pm, with no decisions having been made therein.
3. Agenda Review – Emily moved and Meg seconded that a discussion of anonymous donations received to support the Town Hall be added immediately before Item 6L (Warrants). Unanimous.
4. Public Comment – None.
5. Road Crew Report – Frank is doing well in his first month as road foreman. The trucks are all ready for winter and the snow fence is up. A new road crew member started work last Monday and is doing well so far as well.
6. Items for Discussion or Vote
 - a. Employment of Public Employees – Ben moved and Meg seconded that an offer be made to “Person C”^[1] for employment as a road crew member, on a full-time basis, with other terms and benefits as per the town’s personnel policy. Unanimous. Frank will notify Person C of the employment offer. The Selectboard will consider on a case-by-case basis allowing employees to borrow a modest number of vacation days that have yet to accrue in order to facilitate employees’ vacation plans.
 - b. FY 2026 Budget Discussion – Input was received from the FAST Squad and added to the town account budget. The highway account budget was reviewed on a line-by-line basis. Some items remain TBD pending receipt of year-end information. Discussion to be continued on December 4.
 - c. 2024 Annual Report Deliverables – Emily has drafted the Selectboard Report (to be reviewed on December 4). Frank will update the town highway equipment list. The officer list is nearly complete; Ben will confirm various boards’ chairpersons. The FY 2026 Budget Narrative and 2025 Annual Town Meeting Warning will follow.
 - d. Cintas Uniforms Contract – John communicated with Cintas regarding the current contract. Frank suggested prices be compared with Foley. Frank will ask the crew for their uniforms preference and report back to the Selectboard. Discussion to be continued on December 4.

^[1] **Editor’s Note:** On advice from the Vermont League of Cities & Towns, to protect Person C’s current employment the name of “Person C” is being withheld unless and until the offered employment has been accepted.

- e. Town Health Benefits Provider – Ben will prepare a table comparing BCBS and MVP on various plan elements. Unless that comparison breaks decisively in MVP’s favor, the Selectboard is likely to remain with BCBS in 2025, despite the large premium increase. Discussion to be continued on December 4.
 - f. Personnel Policy Updates and Advice – Emily moved and Meg seconded the Selectboard ratify the engagement of Dinse P.C. for advice related to employee benefits. This was initiated as an Employment Practice Liability (EPL) referral by the Property and Casualty Intermunicipal Fund (PACIF), such that the first several hours of legal time will be paid for my PACIF. Unanimous. Ben will follow up with Maggie Platzer regarding a red flags analysis of the current personnel policy.
 - g. VLCT Drug Testing Policy – Ben circulated a Drug & Alcohol Policy for CMV Operators based on VLCT’s form. Selectboard members will review and consider at the December 4 meeting.
 - h. Town Office Parking Lot Paving – Steve has been playing phone tag with Caleb at Pike; Frank will try reaching Caleb as well for a quote/proposal to complete this work in early 2025.
 - i. Generator Service Contract – The generators were serviced only once this year (on October 30), despite the town prepaying for a twice-a-year service plan. John will inquire about extending the contact term at no additional charge until a second service is performed next spring, at which time a new service provider may be considered.
 - j. Appointment of Public Officials – None.
 - k. Town Hall Survey Results – Meg presented a summary of responses to the Town Hall Revitalization Committee’s survey of residents on how they wished to see the Town be utilized in the future. The Committee received 92 returned surveys and saw good turnout at three in-person community meetings. A wealth of information was received; Hunter Ulf will prepare an updated report including options. Our Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP) grant application was not successful, but additional grant opportunities are anticipated next year.
 - l. Anonymous Donations in Support of the Town Hall – Pomfret has received a total of \$40,000 over the last decade from an anonymous donor wishing to support the Town Hall. Ben consulted with VLCT who confirmed these funds should be deposited into the town’s general operating account. Once in the general operating account, the funds can be appropriated at the Selectboard’s direction or deposited into a non-trust reserve account for a specific purpose. Ben will discuss with Ellen.
 - m. Warrants – John moved and Meg seconded approval for payment of the following warrants:

25042	\$	8,718.03	Payroll
25044		982,834.81	A/P (incl. Sep. and Oct. debit)
25047		5,474.60	A/P

Unanimous.
 - n. Approval of November 6, 2024 Minutes – Emily moved and Steve seconded approval of the November 6, 2024, meeting minutes as presented. Unanimous.
7. Meeting Wrap Up
- a. Correspondence – Mike Doten reported that the Cloudland Road foliage traffic pattern changes were largely successful again this year; the Selectboard received notice of a new highway access on Cherry Hill Road that may require a permit.

- b. Assignments – Meg to speak with Ellen re: accumulated vacation, Medicare supplement, childcare tax credit, Vermont Municipal Employees' Retirement System (VMERS) contribution rate. Ben will prepare a spreadsheet comparing health insurance providers, invite our legislators to a meeting. Cynthia to send first draft of Drug & Alcohol Policy to Ben, and to send a letter regarding the new highway access on Cherry Hill Road. Frank to complete town highway equipment list, contact Caleb at Pike, and query road crew about uniforms preferences.
 - c. Agenda Items for Next meeting – Drug & Alcohol Policy for CMV Operators, 2024 Annual Report Deliverables, Cintas Uniforms Contract, Town Health Benefits Provider, Appointment of Public Officials, FY 2026 Budget Discussion.
8. Executive Session
- a. Ben moved and Meg seconded that the Selectboard enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(3) to discuss the employment of public employees. Unanimous. The Selectboard entered executive session at 10:12 pm.
 - b. The Selectboard exited executive session at 10:57 pm, with no decisions having been made therein.
9. Employment of Public Employees – The Selectboard decided not to pursue a personnel policy change at this time to allow employees to receive cash in lieu of participating in the town's health insurance benefit.
10. Adjournment – Emily moved and Meg seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 pm.