

Town of Pittsford SELECT BOARD MEETING – November 15, 2023 – DRAFT

MEMBERS PRESENT: W. Joseph Gagnon, Alicia Malay, Mark Winslow, and Thomas Hooker.

ABSENT: Dave Mills OTHERS PRESENT: Tom Shannon, Bill Hemple, Kate McKay, Nate McKay, Lisa Wright, Rich Bowman, Craig Jewett, Steven Jupiter, Jeff Jenser, Joe Raptour, Craig Jewett, Ann Reed, David Atherton - Town Manager, Kelly Giard – Recording Secretary.

The Select Board was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chair Malay.

Chair Malay stated that there was a need to amend the agenda to add Executive Session for Personnel concerns to discuss the Town Report; J. Gagnon stated that he has a legal concern for Executive Session. Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by J. Gagnon to accept the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.

MINUTES:

The November 1, 2023 regular meeting minutes were signed with no corrections.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT:

Town Manager Atherton reported the following:

- The Veteran's Day ceremony was a success with great weather. Thank you to Pastor Joel Tate for the Invocation and Benediction, the Pittsford Boy Scouts for leading the Pledge of Allegiance, Veteran Eric Stage for delivering the speech and the Lothrop School Chorus for leading the singing. A thank you also to Liz Avarado and Ann Reed for organizing the event.
- Attended a meeting with the Agency of Commerce and Community Development in support of the Pittsford Village Farm Grant application.
- Met with the Wyman's to sign the transfer station contract. The change in operation is scheduled for December 1, 2023. The Wymans have been working with the State to take over all certifications and permits as the transfer station operators.
- The Highway Department has been rebuilding a gravel portion of Oxbow Road that has had frost heave issues caused from runoff. There will also be some shoulder work to shed any water away from this rebuilt section.
- Ann Reed worked with Fire Department and First Response on their budgets.
- The Town Attorney has sent the first tax delinquency letters out. There were 11 properties that were still outstanding. The next steps in this process is to begin the official tax sale process.
- Ann Reed attended the Vermont Governor's Finance Officers Association fall seminar in Rutland and will be presenting the required changes that will need to be made in Finance and HR beginning on January 1, 2024.
- There are some speed limit changes needed within the village district now that the State has changed the 25MPH zone. This presentation is tentatively slated to be at the December 6, 2023 meeting of the Select Board.

- There was not a quorum at the Otter Valley Communications Committee, however, Pittsford and Poultney were not included in this round of the project, however, there is hope that they will be included with the next round.
- Met with Lyle Jepson to have Liz Avarado serve as the Pittsford representative on the CEDRR board.
- Working with Jenny Parker for the capability of sending mass texts to residents that voluntarily subscribe. The cost is \$75 per month, however the first 2 months are free. The cost per month covers a total of 1000 text recipients. J. Gagnon inquired if there were events in the past that would warrant this type of exercise. Town Manager Atherton stated that there have been situations that it would be beneficial.

SELECTBOARD MEMBER REMARKS:

Selectman Winslow stated that the Veteran’s Day Ceremony was a success.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mr. Raptour inquired the reason of the high police presence recently at St. Alphonsus parking lot. Mr. Bowman stated that there was a radar class that was practicing in the area and Chief Warfle indicated that he was out of town.

OLD BUSINESS

None Presented at this Time.

NEW BUSINESS

Burditt Fund Request – Otter Valley Football Club:

A request from the Otter Valley Football Club has been received to the Burditt Fund. T. Hooker explained the process that included the Otter Valley School Board representatives need to make a presentation to the Select Board following a 2/3 vote of the school board, that the Select Board must vote unanimously to approve the request, then on to the Trustees of Public Funds for approval. Chair Malay inquired when the project would be complete. Mr. McKay explained that the hope is to have the project completed in the Summer of 2024. T. Hooker inquired the amount that would be requested. Mr. McKay stated that the hope is to have a total of \$20,000 approved to be paid out over 2 years. J. Gagnon inquired where the remaining funding would be obtained. Mr. McKay explained that there are commitments for donations received, as well as “in kind” commitments. This item was tabled to a future meeting.

Budget – Fire Department – First Response:

Ann Reed reported that she worked with Chief Hemple and Asst. Chief Tom Shannon on the budget for the Fire Department upcoming fiscal year. Increases include a modest wage increase due to minimum wage increasing, which would increase the taxation liability. Other modest increases include insurance rate increases and truck fuel. The truck maintenance and replacement lines were increased to continue with the market. J. Gagnon inquired the

percentage increase. Ms. Reed stated that the overall increase for the fire department budget is 11.98%.

Ann Reed worked with Bob Foley and Tony Lockwood on the budget for the First Response. There were over 200 night and evening calls last year and they would like to institute a stipend program, similar to the Fire Department, however, it is not currently in the budget. The Suburban vehicle is uninspectable, therefore will need to be replaced. The First Response would like to purchase a Lucas Machine or a Life Pack, both of which cost between \$54,000 - \$56,000 each new or about \$16,000 each for refurbished. There is currently \$29,158 in the New Equipment Fund. The overall budget increase is 67.77%. M. Winslow inquired the stipend proposal. Ms. Reed stated that she would need further information from Mr. Foley and Mr. Lockwood. She will work on this and will provide that information in the near future. There was discussion regarding the vehicles and the options available. There as also discussion that Emergency Medical Services are an essential service.

Mr. and Mrs. McKay, Tom Shannon, Mr. Bowman, and Mr. Hemple exited at 7:09 PM.

Municipal Reappraisal and Act 68 (H480) Discussion:

Lisa Wright was present to discuss the Municipal Reappraisal and Act 68 (H480) bills as presented in the packets. Motion by M. Winslow and seconded by T. Hooker to instruct the Town Manager and Ms. Wright to compose a letter against Act 68. Motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.

Ms. Wright exited at 7:30 PM.

Reappointment for Rutland Regional Emergency Management Committee:

Motion by M. Winslow and seconded by T. Hooker to reappoint Tim Cornell as the Emergency Management Coordinator and Steve Shortsleeve as the Emergency Management Manager. Motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.

Recreation Area Improvements – Swimming Area:

Ann Reed reported that the dock structure was rotting and pulling away from the land. Rick Reed has agreed to volunteer his time and machinery to do the repair; J.P. Carrara has agreed to reduce the rate for the concrete; and Florence Crushed Stone has agreed to supply the stone for the wall and supports. The estimated cost for the concrete work is \$6,000 to \$6,500, which the Recreation Capitol Budget has available funding. Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by M. Winslow to approve the project as presented. Motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.

Town Forest Fire Warden Appointment Form:

Motion by M. Winslow and seconded by T. Hooker to reappoint Bradley Keith as the Town Forest Fire Warden. Motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.

Historical Society Warning for Property Tax Exempt Status:

Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by M. Winslow to approve the request from the Historical Society for Property Tax Exempt Status. Motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.

Abatement of Well Drilling Loan:

There was a Well Drilling Loan that was awarded and the property went to foreclosure several years ago. The property was sold and the well drilling loan was not paid off at the time of the sale. The loan recipients filed bankruptcy. There is no way to collect these funds at this point, as there is no way to locate the recipients of the loan. J. Gagnon asked if there was a lien on the property, which Town Manager Atherton stated that there was not and the documentation from previous Town Managers was discussed. Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by M. Winslow to abate the entire \$6,000 loan. Motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.

Bridge 108 Funding Bond Vote Discussion - DWSRF:

Craig Jewett was present via Zoom to discuss the funding for the Bridge 108 project bond vote. Mr. Jewett stated that this project has moved to the fundable low interest loan criteria with the Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund. The water line will need to be placed 1 – 2 years before the payout. Town Manager Atherton stated that VTRANS will include the wastewater sleeves and hangers. M. Winslow inquired the interest rate, which Mr. Jewett stated was currently at 2% with the possibility of subsidies. Mr. Jewett stated that the recommendation is to place the topic on the Town Meeting Day warrant for the bond vote. T. Hooker inquired the amount of money that would be required for project bond. Mr. Jewett stated that there would be a requirement of approximately \$415,000. Motion by M. Winslow and seconded by T. Hooker to move forward for the bond vote. Motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.

COPS Grant:

Chief Warfle was present to discuss the award of the COPS Grant which would assist the Town with \$125,000 in expenses to hire a full-time officer over the next 3 years. Chief Warfle explained that the Town was made aware of this grant through an article in the Rutland Herald. There was discussion of the grant award and the differences between this award and the previous grant award. Chief Warfle explained that this would possibly move a part time officer to a full-time officer and not increase the number of employees. There was discussion that with 2 officers on duty, it would allow the officers to enforce speeding more and the additional officer would be involved to respond to actual calls for assistance. Motion by T. Hooker to accept the grant. Motion passed 3 – 0 – 1. M. Winslow inquired the possibility of sending a letter to the State of Vermont to inquire the increasing of the percentage that is received from speeding fines on state highways.

Act on Orders \$2,149,325.49 Payroll \$13,266.92:

J. Gagnon inquired the expense to Brookfield Services. Town Manager Atherton explained that this was for repair of the generator at the Wastewater Treatment Facility when the equipment would not start.

J. Gagnon also inquired the expense for an excavator. Town Manager Atherton stated that this was rental for the project on Oxbow Road.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

M. Winslow made the motion and seconded by J. Gagnon to go into Executive Session for legal and personnel. Motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.

In accordance with 1 VSA§ 313 (a), where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the Municipality or person involved at a substantial disadvantage, the Board unanimously agreed to enter into Executive Session, to include the Town Manager at 8:15 PM.

Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by M. Winslow to exit Executive Session at 8:30 PM.
Motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.

Motion by A. Malay and seconded by M. Winslow to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously 4 – 0.

The Select Board adjourned at 8:30 PM.

The next Select Board meeting will be held on December 6, 2023.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Giard
Recording Secretary

Alicia Malay, Chair

_____ ABSENT _____
David Mills, Vice Chair

Thomas Hooker, Selectman

W. Joseph Gagnon, Selectman

Mark Winslow, Selectman