

## Selectboard Minutes

### January 13, 2025

Selectboard Present: Jessica Pollack (chair), Andy Coyne (vice-chair), Greg Meulemans and Kate Ullman

Public Present: Paul Fraser, Karen Ameden, April Green, Benzi Ross, Tena Mowrey, Andrew Ghosh, Janel diBiccari, Emma Spett, and Andrew Baldracchi

Jessica called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1. There were no late additions to the agenda.
2. Jessica made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 9, 2024 meeting. Seconded by Kate, all in favor.
3. *FEMA update*: Tomorrow is the last day to complete work without an extension, we did file some extensions. The extensions have been approved so we have until October 1, 2025, to complete them. The December storm has officially been closed out and everything has been obligated. There are still some repairs to finish this summer. The July 2021 storm has also finished. We are obligated to give half the funds from the July 2023 storm to the Vermont Bond Bank. The December 2023 storm has been changed to 90% reimbursement. The buyouts are still being worked on. The one on Water Street and Raschid's are still going through the process. The town needs to seek three bids for appraisal. We would be reimbursed for the cost.
4. An update for those who didn't attend last week's informational meeting. There were members from the school board and people that worked for the school board. There were a lot of questions and discussions. The issues were heavily explored. The impact of closing the school does not really save any money, the school taxes will still go up either way. Some residents were concerned about taking on the cost of the school building. If we do not buy it back, it will belong to the school district. Jessica would like the budget to have a best-use study done for the school if the town votes to buy it back.

There is a petition to leave the school district that must be signed by 5% of the voters. It is a long process, a committee will be formed, it would go to the state and then the other towns would have to vote to let Jamaica out of the district.

5. We are required to appoint an ethics liaison. It is a new position that we are looking to fill. If anyone is interested, please contact the Selectboard.

6. *Town Hall rental insurance requirement*: Sara reached out to VLCT (our insurance provider). They recommended having a contract. They also said to do a risk analysis for each event. Depending on the number of people, is it open to the public, etc. We would like to encourage the use of the building and have events in town.

7. Jessica sent around the previous MOU for the Arts Council. The Arts Council wants to redo the MOU with the town. They would like to update the previous MOU and continue with the previous agreement. Andrew Ghosh will look through the previous agreement and send it to the Selectboard.

8. Vermont Bond Bank Loan is due this spring. We will probably have to roll it over. We do have access to another line of credit.

9. Jessica made a motion to approve the contract for Rescue Inc., seconded by Andy. The contract is for 3 years, at a 1% annual increase. Andy mentioned that you can pay an amount each year which includes 3 ambulance rides. All in favor.

10. There was a recent communication from Ernie at the Transfer Station. There are residents who are concerned and/or unhappy with the compostable bags. When we get close to the point of needing to order more bags, we could consider doing something else. Jessica uses the green bags. She said she follows the rules on the one-page hand out. She feels we need to do a better job of incorporating Ernie into the discussion and educating people on composting. Kate said we will revisit once we have used more of the bags. Tena Mowrey joined zoom. She had submitted the petition. She said she is using way more plastic with the compostable bags. She would like the issue to go to vote at Town Meeting. Kate said we hear you, but we are in a bind and need to use these bags first. We will change when we are able.

11. Jessica made a motion to approve the highway mileage certificate, seconded by Kate. Andy asked what it is? State funding is based on highway miles, this certifies what we have for our highway mileage. All in favor.

12. Greg Meulemans has an agreement to work for the Town doing the work the Town Administrator was doing. The previous agreement expired at the end of December 2024. Greg is asking to continue in his current role. He would ask that it goes through the end of this fiscal year (June 2025). Jessica made a motion to continue the previous agreement in the role of Town Administrator until June 2025, seconded by Kate. 3 in favor, 1 abstained (Greg).

13. Jessica made a motion to approve the timesheets for the town office, listers, highway and transfer stations, seconded by Kate. All in favor.

14. Jessica made a motion to approve the pay orders seconded by Andy. All in favor.

15. Karen said they are starting to work on Jamaica Day, which will be August 16, 2025.

The Arts Council had a successful yoga session at the Town Hall. It will be the first Sunday of every month at 10:00 a.m.

Emma and Andrew, introduced by Karen, are living over the post office and have taken over River & Rye (formerly Asta's) and hope to be opened by St. Patrick's Day.

Andy Coyne said the work on Water Street held up during the last storm. It looked like it did what it was supposed to do.

Benzi said she is really proud that they got people to light up the town for the holidays.

Discussion on putting plastic bags into compostable bags.

Greg made a motion to adjourn at 8:24 p.m. Seconded by Kate.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sara Wiswall