

**Town of Royalton
Selectboard Meeting Minutes DRAFT
11/14/2023 6:30 PM
Virtual / In-person Meeting**

Royalton Selectboard: Stuart Levasseur, Chris Noble, Jerry Barcelow, Tim Murphy, John Dumville

Town Staff & Committee Members: Victoria Paquin (Town Administrator), Rita Hull (Treasurer), Loretta Stalnaker (Police Chief), Brad Salzmann (EMD), Sean McRae (Officer), Patrick Dakin (Planning Commission), Geo Honigford (Planning Commission), Peter Anderson (Planning commission)

Public: Jo Levasseur, Pamela Vesilind (VLGS), Carlton Bottenbley (VLGS Liaison), Sarah Wraight (TRORC), Kevin Geiger (TRORC), Gene Kraus, Kathy Hassey,

Approve the Agenda: Tim moved to approve the agenda with the addition of personnel discussion. John seconded and the motion carried.

Public Comment: Peter Anderson requested that the board consider adding some stipend for the health officer to the FY 25 budget. It is a large, complicated job that should not rely on volunteer work to be completed.

Pamela inquired about the status of the Chelsea St Sidewalk Project – this is scheduled to begin construction in 2025. She also inquired as to whether the selectboard would support a request to VTrans to make improvements to the intersection of Route 14 and Route 110 that may enhance pedestrian safety. The board indicated that they generally would be agreeable to participating in this conversation.

Two Rivers Ottawaquechee Regional Planning Commission: Kevin Geiger presented the board with an overview of what a subdivision ordinance might look like. There was discussion regarding what the objectives of such an ordinance would be. TRORC is willing to work with the Royalton Planning Commission to develop an ordinance for the board to review and adopt, but wanted to ensure that the board was willing to adopt the ordinance. The board agreed by consensus that TRORC and the planning commission should proceed with developing the ordinance.

Sarah asked the board if there was anything that TRORC could do to aid next steps after the South Royalton Futures project. The project brought the community together and identified potential parcels for development including publicly owned land such as the town office property and the hope property as well as some privately owned parcels such as the old journey church and the old grain mill. Sarah offered that TRORC could help facilitate a meeting with Twin Pines if the board was interested in pursuing a housing project. Tim noted that he thinks we need to focus on bringing business back into the Chelsea Black and extending the sewer lines so that other village residences and apartments can connect to the municipal system. Jerry noted that the Crawford Property is being considered for relocation of the Recreation fields and should not be considered for

development at this time. John said he would love to see a housing project, Tim noted the need for infrastructure grants to focus on sewer and water availability.

Kevin requested that the board sign a letter of support for TRORC to apply for a grant that would fund an additional staff person to assist with transportation grants and projects. John moved to sign the letter of support. Stuart seconded and the motion carried.

White River Valley Energy Committee: Kathy Hassey and Gene Kraus were present to continue the conversation with the board about hiring an energy coordinator. There are currently seven towns that are interested in participating in the project. The cost to Royalton would be \$16,750 for the first year. Discussion continued regarding the potential benefits of having an energy coordinator, how the position would be established, and what services they would provide. The selectboard agreed by consensus that they are interested in continuing with the process provided that the other towns also remain interested.

Royalton Police Department: Tunbridge has accepted and signed the contract to receive policing services from the Town of Royalton. The Royalton selectboard executed the contract as well.

South Royalton Rescue: Jerry presented a land lease on behalf of the RFD#1 to allow for a rescue building on the town office lot. Chris moved to approve the lease. John seconded and the motion carried.

VLGS Community Dinner: Pamela requested that the town make a donation to support Vermont Law & Graduate School's annual community Thanksgiving dinner. John moved to give \$500 from the community betterment fund to support the dinner. Tim seconded and the motion carried. Rita was authorized to include this payment when checks are written for tonight's warrant.

Bid Review & Award – Gee Hill: The road team met and reviewed the bids that were received for repairing lower Gee Hill Road. Daniels Construction was the low bid, and the group recommends that the selectboard award them the contract. John moved to award the Gee Hill contract to Daniels. Chris seconded and the motion carried.

Road Projects / FEMA update: Road projects are on target to wrap up at the end of this week. Our damage inventory has been submitted to FEMA and is no longer able to be updated. Ian has prepared an RFP for repairs to carpenter field which will be posted in the next couple of days. Victoria reports that we have adequate cash flow to meet our current obligations. We are able to continue waiting for the Bond Bank to be ready to lend for storm repairs.

Warrants: The warrant was reviewed and approved as presented.

Other / Old Business:

Victoria reminded the board that the budget should be looked at. We have discussed a number of items that will impact the budget such as a town manager, pay for the health officer, public safety needs, and a regional energy coordinator. The board agreed to put the budget at the top of the agenda for the next meeting.

Chris suggests that there is a need to address the concerns of the town relating to public safety and that if he had to choose between a public meeting to discuss a town manager and public meetings to discuss resident's safety concerns he would lean toward the public safety concerns meetings. The board determined that they were not going to proceed with the question of a town manager at this time.

Chris noted that our regular meetings schedule for December has a meeting on December 26th. This meeting will be rescheduled to December 19th. Jerry proposes that the agenda for this meeting be limited to discussing the budget and public safety.

Tim noted a need to be consistent about leaving warnings on cars parked around the green. He also reported that there are a number of missing road signs that need to be replaced.

John mentioned that the parking signs on Chelsea St have not yet been replaced.

Jerry moved to enter executive session to discuss personnel at 8:15 PM. Tim seconded and the motion carried.

Executive session concluded at 8:32 PM.

Chris moved to raise the wage of the road foreman to \$32.50 an hour effective November 5th 2023
John seconded and the motion carried.

Adjourned 8:34 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Victoria Paquin
Royalton Town Administrator