

Grand Isle Select Board

Minutes of the meeting

Monday, May 3rd, 2021 – 6:00 PM via Zoom

I. CALL TO ORDER: Jeff Parizo called the meeting to order at 6:00PM

Board Members Present – Jeff Parizo-Chair, AnnaMarie Demars-Vice Chair, Diane Cota, Adam White and Eric Godin

Community Members Present – Sue Lawrence, Linda Effel, Randy Gover, Charles Hollan, Bill Baron, Mary Parizo, Melissa Boutin, Rachael Griggs, Ron Bushway, Don Cota, Kristina Botala, Mitchell Richardson, Jean Prouty, Bill Stone, Shannon Bundy, Esther Blow, Lucille Campbell, Mike Donoghue, Tanya Poutry, Joe Longo, John Lafayette, Ellen Paradee, Mark Cobb Sr., Emily Clarke, Fran Lafromboise, Jackie Hughes, Andy Paradee,

Select Board to Amend Agenda for Matters Not Listed:

Jeff Parizo adds KAS study on Asbestos in the town buildings – Old Business

II. GUESTS: Bill Baron – Conversation with the Second Gentleman: Bill Baron spoke about how he participated in a roundtable discussion with Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff. They spoke about the success that Vermont and Grand Isle County have had in battling COVID and administering vaccines. Bill praised the efforts of Grand Isle Rescue’s Ray Mitchell, JoAnne Wallace of Community Health Center of Burlington, and the Grand Isle Select Board; noting the number of vaccine clinics that had been held locally. Bill said it was a 35-minute meeting with several local politicians and medical staff from CHCB.

III. GUEST OPEN COMMENT:

Ron Bushway – Agenda Zoom Link Not Working: Ron said when he tried to download the agenda from Front Porch Forum that it wouldn’t let him and it gave him an error message. Charles Hollan explained that was a mistake in the link and the website was rejecting the request. Joe Longo said he also had trouble with the link. Eric Godin said it was likely his fault, as he had difficulty uploading it, but was attending training with town I.T. officer Charles Hollan the following day to make sure it didn’t happen again.

Ron Bushway – Fire Warden Training Session: Ron let the Select Board know he attended the training on April 8th.

IV. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT UPDATE:

Landscaping at Town Garage: Ron Bushway said the Highway Department, along with Randy Gover have been working on the landscaping, and it’s looking pretty good.

Transfer Station Trash Hauled Out: Ron informed the Board that all the trash had been hauled out of the transfer station the previous week, along with all the recycling, metal, and construction waste. He pointed out that it takes half a day to haul one load, and said that the construction dumpster was nearly full again.

Work on Tandem: Ron informed the board that the serpentine belts on one of the town tandems had been replaced the previous week.

Move to the new Garage: Ron said items are being moved to the new building and that the west wall of the old garage was now empty.

Building Facilities Manager Update:

Fire Extinguishers Inspected: Ron said that the fire extinguishers in most of the town buildings had been inspected, with the exception of the Town Office and the Library. This is because the extinguishers in those two buildings are serviced by a different company. He said that the Highway Dept. vehicles and the Fire Dept. apparatus had been checked out as well. Ron said there was one issue with the extinguisher over the range in the fire department, as it was inaccessible. Adam White said he was reaching out to the company that installed it to fix the issue. Jeff Parizo asks if there are plans to consolidate down to just one company to service the extinguishers, to which Ron replies that it was being done next year.

Fire Station Electrical Panel Inspection: Ron informed the board that the inspection on the electrical panel was due, and that Adam White had supplied him with the name of the company to contact and the service was scheduled for May 13th. AnnaMarie Demars asks Ron which company services the portable defibrillators. Ron says that he checks them himself. Adam states the batteries in the defibrillators are 10 Duracell batteries of a special size.

V. **REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF APRIL 19TH:**

Diane moves to accept the minutes of April 19th. Eric seconds. Mike Donoghue opened discussion by asking if those were the minutes he had asked to have edited regarding a statement he challenged. Jeff Parizo said that the April 5th minutes were the ones in question. ***Jeff Parizo takes the vote, which passes unanimously.***

VI. **NEW BUSINESS**

The Island Hub Liquor License Request: The Select Board acknowledge receiving the application for a liquor license. The Board had no questions. ***Adam White moves to approve the application for The Island Hub for the first-class restaurant/bar license to serve malt and vinous beverages. Diane Cota seconds. No discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote, which passes unanimously. Adam White then moves to approve the application for The Island Hub the third-class restaurant/bar license to sell spiritous liquors. Eric Godin seconds. No discussion. Jeff Parizo calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

Face Masks in Town Buildings: Jeff Parizo references the minutes of June 1st, 2020, when the Select Board made it mandatory to wear face masks in town buildings including the Town Office, Library, and recommended them at the Transfer Station. Jeff stated that a taxpayer had told him that masks were not being worn by some people in the Town Office. Adam confirmed that both the Select Board mandate and the governor's mask mandate were still in effect. Diane Cota asks if we should re-evaluate the policy now that the guidelines are beginning to change, with people getting vaccinated. Jeff points out that while the office staff may be vaccinated, we don't know about the residents that come into the office. After some discussion, it is confirmed that some officers do take their masks off for limited times during the day. Shannon Bundy comments that this is standard and allowed by the state. Town Health Officer Ron Bushway confirmed that he had received the complaint as well. AnnaMarie Demars asks if we could change the mandate. Emily Clarke recommends we study the written word of the governor's order before we take action, as she believes we are still supposed to wear masks. Adam read from the Agency on Commerce and Community Development website that while being unmasked outdoor public spaces was fine, they still recommend masks when inside public buildings. There was more discussion re-hashing the protocols. Don Cota expresses that he believes AnnaMarie and Jeff should be wearing masks as well. Jeff points out his home is not a town building. Mike Donoghue expresses that the rules seem to vary for different situations, and are confusing. Emily Clarke and Shannon Bundy concur.

VII. **OLD BUSINESS**

Town Office Key: Jeff Parizo reads an email from the town attorney saying he should have access to a key. Jeff requests a key to the Town Office. Adam White asks Jeff if he has requested a key since the last time this was addressed. Jeff says he has not. Adam asks Town Clerk Melissa Boutin if Jeff can have access to a key. Melissa agrees to have one made.

Minutes of April 5th: Diane Cota confirms the requested changes were made to the minutes. Mike Donoghue says that he hasn't seen the updated ones. Rachael Griggs explains that the minutes don't get updated on the website until the board has voted on the changes. Jeff reads the Vermont State Statute that stipulates minutes must be taken and accurately reflect the meeting, and that all votes that are not unanimous must be subject to a rollcall vote. ***Jeff motions to accept the minutes of the April 5th meeting that were done by incoming scribe Eric Godin. AnnaMarie Seconds. Jeff calls the vote: Jeff Parizo-Aye; AnnaMarie Demars-Aye; Eric Godin-Aye; Adam White-Abstain; Diane Cota -Abstain. Diane and Adam abstain, as they have not had time to review Eric's minutes.*** Rachael Griggs expresses her frustration with the decision. Emily Clarke asks if the rule about rollcall votes applies to the planning commission as well, which Jeff confirms.

Transfer Station Plan- Chain of Command and Large Items: Jeff Parizo says that he checked with Highway Commissioner Ron Bushway and Road Foreman Brad Sheridan about the proposed chain of command and both agreed to it. ***Jeff moves to approve***

the Select Board plan for the chain of command for the Transfer Station and the Highway department. Adam White seconds. Joe Longo asks if Jeff can read what the plan is. Jeff answers that from top to bottom it is: The Select Board, the Highway Commissioner, then the Road Foreman, who is in charge of the transfer station employees and the road crew. ***Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

Microsoft Office Suite: Town IT officer Charles Hollan says that he has tallied how many town officers want Office on their computers and recommended the town purchase 18 copies of Office, which would cost around \$2700. Charles also stated he wanted to start getting emails on the town's domain, rather than using other private email addresses. Jeff asks if the cost is annual or one time. Charles states that it is a one-time purchase and then proceeded to explain how the email addresses could be formatted. Emily Clarke and Adam White discuss what the best format for the town would be. Joe Longo asks what the protocol would be when a member left a board. Charles explained that the passwords would be changed, and the email could be deleted or changed. Adam, Mike Donoghue, and Eric Godin all concur that emails need to be saved under the Open Records Law. Charles states that he is looking at possible IT policies to put in place for the town, and will email the board with details. ***Adam White motions to approve the purchase of 18 Microsoft Office licenses for a one-time cost of \$2700, with the licenses to be used on town owned computers and laptops and for town business only. Diane Cota seconds. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.*** Charles says the policy he's looking at is the NIST 800/53 policy, which is recommended by the Vermont Agency of Digital Services. Charles goes on to explain the complexity of the policy and indicates he may need to reach out for assistance to implement the policy. Emily Clarke praises Charles for all the hard work and initiative he has shown in tackling the towns IT problems.

Friends of Northern Lake Champlain Bike Tour: Jeff Parizo asks Ellen Paradee about the date of the bike tour. Ellen states that it is happening on June 19th. Jeff apologizes for not having a form for the ordinance. Jeff asks to go through the questions on the ordinance. Ellen states the name and address are for Kent Henderson, with the Friends of Northern Lake Champlain; that the tour will be leaving from and returning to Knights Point State Park, copies of the planned routes were sent to the Chair via email along with the insurance documents. The ride is from 7am to 4:30pm. Ellen said that she thought there would be less than 250 riders, and they had a person making sure COVID guidelines were being followed. The ride is being advertised on FNLC's website and Facebook page. Ellen said there would be signs at the park and on Route 2, and that she is coordinating with the sheriff to identify spots for law enforcement to be. Ellen also stated that the event would be catered and there would be no loud music. Jeff asks if the groups will be staggered, which Ellen confirms. ***Adam White moves to approve the special events ordinance for the Friends of Northern Lake Champlain bike tour for June 19th, 2021. AnnaMarie Demars seconds. No discussion. Jeff calls the vote which passes unanimously.***

Town Garage Spreadsheet: The Board confirmed receipt of the spreadsheet from the Town Clerk. Jeff Parizo says that the remaining balance of the \$100,000 that was used from the Highway Department fund is \$49,147.39, and that he believes that the balance

should be returned to the Highway fund rather than the general fund. Adam asks if there are any remaining things that will have to be paid for, to which Jeff says there isn't, summarizing the remaining work to be done. Diane Cota asks what the actual cost of the bond will be. Jeff answers that it will be \$1.1 million. Joe Longo asks what the actual cost of the project is. Jeff says that the actual cost is \$1.25 million. Joe followed up by asking how much money was taken from the General Fund to reduce the bond. Jeff answers that no monies were taken from the general fund. Town Treasurer Melissa Boutin confirmed that no general fund money had been used. Diane Cota asks about the original plan to reduce the bond payment. Jeff states that originally the Board had planned to take \$100,000 from the Highway fund, and \$400,000 from the general fund to pay down the bond. As of now, Jeff states that we have taken \$200,000 from the Highway fund. ***Jeff motions to pay back \$49,000 to the Highway Department. Eric Godin seconds. No discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

Flags on Route 2: Adam White and Jeff Parizo explained that the flags traditionally on Route 2 get destroyed annually. Adam summarized the responses to his Front Porch Forum post requesting ideas from the residents of the town. AnnaMarie Demars suggested flag poles next to the signs at the town limits. It was agreed to talk about the signs at the next meeting. Discussion continued about possibilities to replace the flags. Joe Longo asks if he can take the old flagpoles that didn't work that are currently beside the Town Office. Jeff said he thought we should save the ones that were still salvageable, and AnnaMarie suggested storing them at the transfer station for now. Jeff said there were also several flags that needed to be properly disposed of. Diane asks if we can throw out the broken poles. Jeff agrees.

Transfer Station- Large Items: Ron Bushway says he looked into the disposal of large items, and that North Hero's transfer station was better suited for receiving those items. He recommended continuing to send people there. AnnaMarie Demars asks if there is a price list for the North Hero Transfer Station. Discussion ensued about the prices of disposal of large items. Adam pointed out that the prices are available on the website of the Northwest Solid Waste District.

Town Garage Spreadsheet Question (earlier topic): Mitchell Richardson asks via chat where the town stands on the \$400,000 general fund discrepancy and is there any explanation as to where the funds are? Adam White says it wasn't a discrepancy as much as a misunderstanding. Adam says that at the end of June 2020 there was roughly \$370,000 in the general fund, and the Select Board motioned to take the bulk of that and put it towards the garage project. He said that some of those monies had already been earmarked for the solar panels on top of the fire station, and as a result, the Board had to rescind its previous motion. Joe Longo asks if the confusion was because the fiscal year ended before the Town Report was out. Adam confirmed that the Town Report had to be edited because of this issue. Mitchell asks if there is a balance sheet that shows this. Adam explains that the Board had allocated too much money in the initial motion, and it had to be changed, and that it had been decided to wait until the end of fiscal year 2021 to see where the general fund stands. Jeff acknowledges he doesn't have a good answer to Mitchell's question.

Financial Discussion with the Town Clerk: Adam White said that he and Eric Godin had a meeting with the Town Clerk Melissa Boutin to discuss documents the Select Board would like to receive. Adam states that we are asking for financial reports to be provided on a quarterly basis, expecting to receive the reports no later than 30 days after the close of the quarter. It was determined the first three quarters of fiscal year 2020 would be provided at the end of the week or beginning of next week. Randy Gover asks why wait until the end of the following month. Adam explains that even at the end of the month there are still receivables and expendables to be accounted for, and the numbers won't yet be accurate. There was discussion between Linda Effel and Adam about possible conflicts of interest. Bill Stone says there is a list of conflicts of interest in the Select Board handbook that is available for view. Jeff Parizo points out the Town of Grand Isle has a conflict-of-interest policy in place as well. Bill and Joe Longo agree that it takes time to close books out after the end of a billing period. Adam points out the time frame proposed was decided on by himself and Eric. Mitchell Richardson asks if this means the books will be kept open longer. Bill Stone explains that the reports take time to generate and vet, and need to take into account money that is still moving. Town Treasurer Melissa Boutin says Grand Isle operates on an accrual system, like all other government entities do, and we have to wait for invoices, receipts, AR and AP to make the books accurate. Melissa confirmed we should have the quarterly reports by May 7th. Adam says we also had a discussion about receiving reports regarding the disposition of the CD's and renewal information on a regular basis, and what they are. Adam says that the board can request a different format for reports if necessary. Emily Clarke asks if the town treasurer is authorized on an ongoing basis to move monies from the general fund into other accounts in order to make the town more money. Jeff says that the state statute says that all transactions need to be approved by the Select Board. Diane Cota asks about the amount of money that are in CD's. Melissa Boutin says the 30-day general fund CD had \$350,000 in it that was renewing monthly. Diane confirms that moving forward the treasurer will bring CD investments before the Select Board before taking action. Bill Stone asks Melissa Boutin if any of the accounts are set up as 'sweeps' accounts. Melissa confirms the account sweeps into the town's checking account. Jeff asks about the interest rates, and Melissa responds that the town's checking account earns no interest, while the CD accounts do. Mitchell Richardson asks how many CD's the town has, and how much money is involved. Melissa says she believes there are six different CD's tied to the general fund, not including what the library or the cemetery commission has. Adam suggests that we have a discussion about the CD's, because we are making some interest money from these accounts. After a question by Linda Effel, Jeff confirms that previously, the general fund CD was being renewed without being brought to the Select Board, but moving forward, all transactions of this type would be brought to the Board for approval prior to any action. Melissa clarifies that the general fund CD was the only CD that had been automatically renewed, and that all the others were authorized by voters. Emily asks how much money the town is making on interest, and Melissa responded that the interest rates were very low, but still makes more than leaving the money in the town checking account. Emily Clarke and Mitchell Richardson suggest having the board set up

a schedule to discuss these investments so the town can continue gaining revenue through CD investments of extra monies. Jeff says that he thinks we should let the current CD move back into the checking account, and get the quarterly reports before authorizing reinvestment. Diane asks why we would want to do that when we could continue making the extra interest. Randy Gover asks about the money from the garage, which had been discussed and explained earlier in the debate. Mitchell suggests that we wait to roll money, agreeing with Jeff's earlier opinion.

Request for Select Board Action: Jeff Parizo asks where the board members stand on the issue. Diane and Adam indicated the issue wasn't on their copy of the agenda. Eric said he had updated it, but may have done it incorrectly. Charles Hollan indicated both versions were on the website. Bill Stone asks if the Board had contacted the auditor about attending a meeting. Jeff said he did reach out to the auditor, and hadn't heard back on the questions he had asked. Diane suggests moving this item to the next meeting, as we needed to speak to the auditor, or to hold a special meeting. Adam indicates that having another meeting on the issue would give the board more time to absorb the recently released draft version of the 2020 audit and develop more questions to put to the auditor. The remainder of the board agrees. Diane Cota asks if we could have a copy of the questions that were emailed to the auditor, to which Jeff agrees. Mitchell Richardson asks if those questions can be made available to the public. At this point, a vigorous discussion ensued about how quickly the Board should be acting on the request, and how much information was needed before there was Board action. After approximately 8 minutes, order was restored and Jeff read the questions he had sent to the auditor. Jeff had asked for an explanation of different audit types, and if the auditor would attend a Select Board meeting for about an hour. There was some more discussion about the conduct of the meeting participants, and Jeff indicated that he thought we were taking the steps we needed to move forward, and he would let everyone know when we could have a special meeting.

KAS Asbestos Study in the old Town Garage and Fire Station – Jeff Parizo says that the two older town buildings had no asbestos in them, but there was an issue with one of the sinks.

VIII. **REVIEW AND SIGN WARRANTS**

Adam White asks about an item in the warrants indicating we were still paying \$146 for water at the old fire station building, and asked if we could shut that off now that the building was going to be torn down. Ron Bushway said it would be about a month until everything was moved out of the old town garage. Melissa Boutin says there is no water usage there, and indicates she doesn't think the water district should be charging the town when the water isn't being used. Ron indicated that there was an agreement between the water district and the town to waive the hook up fee for the new garage if the water at the old building was kept hooked up until the new building was active. ***Eric Godin moves to have Jeff sign the warrants via email. Adam White seconds. No discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

Joe Longo asks about the success of Green Up Day. Adam White said he saw a lot of green bags on the sides of the road. Ron Bushway said he didn't see a whole lot of activity, including a lot of tires along US Route 2. Diane Cota asks Joe Longo if a lot of green bags had come into the Transfer Station, and he indicated 26 had come in thus far, and the town gave out over 100 bags.

IX. **ADJOURNMENT**

AnnaMarie Demars moves to adjourn the meeting at 8:51pm. Diane Cota seconds. No discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.

SelectBoard Scribe: _____
Eric Godin

SelectBoard Chair: _____
Jeff Parizo