

**Grand Isle Select Board**  
**Minutes of the Meeting for**  
**Monday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021, at 6:00pm at Grand Isle Town Office and via Zoom**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**Select Board Members Present:** Jeff Parizo – Chair; AnnaMarie DeMars – Vice-Chair; Adam White; Ron Bushway; Eric Godin

**Community Members Present:** Jean Prouty; Sue Lawrence; Mary Parizo; Melissa Boutin; Colleen Bushway; Mitchel Richardson; Joe Longo; Tonya Poutry; Lucille Campbell; Emily Clark; Josie Leavitt; John Lafayette; Jennifer Morway; Mike Donoghue

**Board Members to Amend Agenda for Matters Not Listed:**

Select Board Stipend – Anna – New Business

Personnel Policy – Jeff Parizo – Old Business

**II. GUEST OPEN COMMENT**

Jeff Parizo reads a letter sent to the Select Board dated November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The letter is from the Grand Isle library commission thanking Road Foreman Brad Sheridan for donating free pumpkins for the annual ‘Help Decorate the Library’ project. This is the second year that Brad has donated pumpkins and his time to make sure that there were enough pumpkins for all the children.

Emily Clark asks if the Board could comment on the recent BCA hearing regarding the redistricting issue that has been discussed lately. Emily says she also has an update regarding a timing update on the town vote on cannabis. Jeff says that at the recent BCA hearing there were two motions made, the first being to continue as is. The second motion was that if things were changed to a one-member district, that it be separated along town lines, with Grand Isle, South Hero, and North Hero in one district. Jeff says that there was an affirmation that the BCA was unhappy with how the redistricting committee had drawn up the maps. Jeff says that BCA chair Mike Inners was writing up the proposals to send in to the state. Emily Clark says that a recent rumor that Vermont towns had a time limit to have a town-wide vote on cannabis is misinformation. Emily says that she will forward the email she has on the subject to the Select Board. Joe Longo asks if there was a town sign update. AnnaMarie answers that she would like to talk to the sign designer, Karen McCloud about coming up with a design to show at town meeting, to see how the public feels. Jeff says we will add the town sign issue to the December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**III. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 25<sup>TH</sup> AND NOVEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup>**

***Ron Bushway moves to approve the minutes of October 25<sup>th</sup>. Adam White seconds. No discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

Ron says that on page 2 of the November 1<sup>st</sup> meeting there is a typo and would like historical society changed to historical site. Ron also says on page four there is a quote attributed to him that should have been from Rob Nolan and not him, regarding

knowledge of the Recreation Department budget was. ***Adam White moves to approve the November 1<sup>st</sup> minutes with Ron's corrections. AnnaMarie Demars seconds. No further discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

**IV. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT/BUILDING FACILITIES MANAGER UPDATE**

**Curb Cut at 3 Sweeney Farm Rd:** Ron Bushway says that the curb cut is for 3 Sweeney Farm Rd, with the applicant being Ernest Hoelhmer Jr. Ron says that this permit is for ingress only from Town Line Rd. Ron goes on to read the conditions as set by the road commissioner. ***Ron Bushway moves to approve the curb cut for 3 Sweeney Farm Rd. AnnaMarie DeMars seconds. No further discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

Ron says that the highway department is still hauling sand, and that the price of sand will be going up \$1 per yard, and the town tends to buy 1,000 yards per year. Ron says that he is going to look for a couple plug in thermostats for the town office, the library and in the Annex.

**V. NEW BUSINESS**

**Local Hazard Mitigation Plan Review:** Town Clerk Melissa Boutin says that a form needs to be filled out in case of a town wide FEMA event, and is due by December 3<sup>rd</sup> on the town's letterhead. Jeff points out that the town would have to pay a share equaling 25%, which would be \$2,780.50. ***Jeff Parizo moves to fill out the funding for the local Hazard Mitigation Plan Development Grant, with our local match being for \$2,780.50. Eric Godin seconds. No further discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.***

**Planning Commission Budget:** Adam White says that the planning commission budget is the same as last fiscal year, with the only change being an additional \$1,200 for IT expenses. Adam goes on to say that the total budget would be \$9,201 with adjustments still needing to be made for COLA and NWRC dues. The Board decides to move the discussion for the COLA raise up, as it will pertain to all departmental budgets.

**COLA Increase for Budgets:** Jeff Parizo points out that the federal government is giving social security an increase of 5.9%. Jeff says that the federal figure is what the town has used in the past to set its COLA raises and opens the floor for discussion. Adam White says that President Biden and the Senate are suggesting 2.7% for civilian federal employees. Ron Bushway points out that in the past, the town had given a 3% COLA increase. ***Ron Bushway moves to use 3% as the figure for the cost-of-living increase. Eric Godin seconds.*** Joe Longo suggests going back and looking at the wages and time served for all town employees. Ron says that this leads back into a pay discussion he has been trying to have for several years. Eric says that he feels the discussion on pay scale needs to be moved up to one of the next two meetings, as the issue has come up multiple times. Jeff says that the COLA percentage needs to be the same across the board. Adam agrees, noting that it feels like the town is currently just throwing numbers around when it comes to starting salaries, and that he agrees with a current

increase of 3% to COLA. Adam says that the town currently has no policy set to guide pay increases for town employees outside of COLA. **No further discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.** Jeff asks who on the Board wants to start the process of gathering information. Adam White agrees to begin gathering information for the upcoming pay scale discussion. Joe Longo asks if there is a timeframe for the discussion to take place. Eric says that he feels bad that the discussion on pay scales has been waffled as long as it has, but that the Board understands the urgency involved and will be working on the issue presently. **Adam White moves to approve the proposed budget for fiscal year 23 for the Planning Commission at \$9,427, with the amount to be adjusted once we know the final Northwest Regional Planning Commission Dues. Ron Bushway seconds. No discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.**

**Budgets – Departments:** Jeff Parizo says that the Board has received budgets from the Cemetery Commission and the Recreation Committee have been submitted. Adam White says that the cemetery budget changes were a caretaker position was added for \$1,000. Jeff says that there is administrative for \$500, IT services for \$600, and FICA is \$200. Jeff notes that the monument restoration allocation is lower than previous years. Lucille Campbell says that the cemetery commission has spent restoration money cleaning stones. Adam White asks what the role of the caretaker would be. Sue Lawrence says that the caretaker is the person who puts in the cornerstone, as there is a rule that when a plot is sold, the buyer has to purchase four cornerstones with initials on them. Sue goes on to say that the caretaker will trim brush and do small maintenance tasks. Adam White asks if there are still plans to buy more land for cemeteries. Sue Lawrence says that the land abutting the current cemetery is not available for purchase. Sue goes on to say that other properties are under consideration for cemetery expansion, which could mean the creation of another cemetery. Susan says that there is no time crunch on the issue. Adam asks if the cemetery commission has been approached about natural burials at all. Sue says that the cemetery commission has been advised not to get involved in that at this time, and to send people looking for that service to North Hero, as they have the correctly designated acreage. **Adam White moves to approve the proposed Cemetery budget for fiscal year 23 for \$20,000. AnnaMarie DeMars seconds. No further discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes with four ayes, with Ron Bushway recusing himself.**

Jeff Parizo says that the Recreation department is not asking for more than last year, and are staying within their revenue from the town of \$16,000. Adam White asks what their expense item for 'Supplies' are. Melissa Boutin says that supplies cover all the items for the events thrown at the Donaldson Park. Jeff says that he feels it is a well put together budget. **Eric Godin moves to approve the proposed fiscal year 2023 Recreation Department Budget of \$16,120. Adam White seconds. No further discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.**

**Select Board Stipend:** AnnaMarie Demars says that she wanted to inquire if the Select Board stipends would be going out in November. Adam says that the Select Board term ends in March, but historically the stipend had been dispersed in November. Town

Treasurer says that the stipends are already budgeted, and that stipends for all other town officers would go out at the same time. The Board agrees to continue the practice of having stipends dispersed in November. Jeff says that he would like to donate his stipend to be split between Grand Isle Rescue and Grand Isle Volunteer Fire Department. Eric Godin says that Jeff should bring it up as an item on the next agenda to be voted on.

## VI. OLD BUSINESS

**Vermont Bond Bank Application:** Melissa Boutin says that she has done this in the past, and that she is willing to fill out the paperwork again. Melissa says that it would just be easier for her to fill out the paperwork, rather than having a Board member calling her for all of the information. Jeff and Adam both agree. Jeff asks Melissa if there is anything the Select Board can do to help facilitate the process. Melissa says there is not, it is just a lengthy application. Adam White says that he will act as the point person between the town treasurer and the Select Board, and asks for the discussion to be continued on the December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting. Melissa says that an independent legal opinion has to be obtained as part of the application process.

**Courthouse Update:** Jeff Parizo reads an email exchange between States Attorney Doug DiSabito and Greg Mosley, chief of finance and administration for the Vermont Judiciary. The States Attorney is expressing frustration that the Judiciary will not provide specific updates in the effort to keep Grand Isle County Courthouse open 5 days per week. Mr. Mosley responds saying that there are no specific steps to share at this point and that the residents of Grand Isle County still have access to justice via phone and internet.

**Update on Stroz/Mary Crest Beach:** Ron Bushway says that he met with the Stroz family on November 7<sup>th</sup> and they walked the privately owned portion of the beach. Ron says that there was evidence of people leaving dog droppings and beer cans on the beach. Ron says that signage was discussed, and there will be four signs that say 'Private Beach' and are 12" x 18". Ron says that he wants the town to replace the private sign that stolen from the Stolz property. Ron says that there are a lot of people that don't realize that part of the beach is privately owned, and that the town has some responsibility to help them. Ron says that the signs will likely be welded to the posts to prevent theft. Ron says it might not get done for a bit, as the Highway Department is still busy hauling sand.

**Island Tree Service:** Ron Bushway says that Rob Nolan, of Island Tree Service reached out to him and said that there had been a posting on Facebook from November 2<sup>nd</sup>, with a thank you to Island Tree Service for their hard work. Rob was displeased that there was no apology included or mention of the recreation committee's previous posts. Jeff asks if the Select Board could make the apology publicly. Melissa suggests having town IT officer Chuck put out the apology and have it go out to all five towns. Ron Bushway agrees to draft the apology.

**Personnel Policy:** Jeff asks when we should have a discussion about the personnel policy. Adam says it should go on the December 6<sup>th</sup> meeting. Eric Godin says that it will segue nicely into the pay scale discussion.

Joe Longo asks what the Select Board stipend amount is. Adam White says he thinks Select Board members get around \$1200, and the Chair gets around \$1800. Joe Longo says he would like to donate \$1500 split evenly between Grand Isle Rescue and Grand Isle Volunteer Fire Department. Eric asks Joe to submit his donation in writing to the Board so it can be added to the agenda and voted on.

**VII. REVIEW AND APPROVE WARRANTS**

*Adam White moves to approve the warrants and have the Select Board Chair sign them. Eric Godin seconds. No discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.*

Jean Prouty asks if the Select Board had received the email from the historical society. Eric indicates they had. Jean then says she wanted to let everyone know that the town Christmas tree at the historical site had been lit.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

*AnnaMarie DeMars moves to adjourn the meeting at 7:08pm. Ron Bushway seconds. No discussion. Jeff calls the vote, which passes unanimously.*

Select Board Scribe: \_\_\_\_\_  
Eric Godin

Select Board Chair: \_\_\_\_\_  
Jeff Parizo