

Grand Isle Select Board Meeting

Monday, May 16th, 2022 at 6:15pm at Grand Isle Town Office and via Zoom

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board Members Present: Adam White- Chair, Josie Leavitt- Vice Chair, Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Eric Godin,

Community Members Present: Tonya Poutry, Joe Longo, Jean Prouty, Kristina Botala, John Lafayette, Mary Parizo, KC Fantoni, Mitchel Richardson, Dave Capen, Emily Clark, Mike Donague, Melissa Boutin, Suzanne Moquin , Randy Gover, Rachael Griggs, Linda Effel, Randy Gover, Glenda Leake, David Leake, Colleen Bushway, Ron Bushway

Board Members to Amend Agenda for Matters Not Listed:

Couper added the Select Board Meeting Procedure.

Eric added Commercial Dropbox account proposal to the next agenda.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES

Jeff brought up there were minutes to approve, to be moved to next meeting agenda.

III. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT / BUILDING FACILITIES MANAGER UPDATE

Ron Bushway – Highway Department is building up and grading on Landing Road. Crack sealing done on Griswold Road, Moccasin Avenue, a small portion of West Shore Road, and a section of Hyde Road by the intersection of Hyde and Reynolds.

Free Metal Day is Saturday 5/21/22

The library needs a new metal door, will cost around \$1800, will fall on FY '23 budget.

Adam thanked Ron and his highway team for their work on Green Up Day.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

VLCT Internal Control Discussion: There is a person that works for VLCT in Essex and could be a valuable resource and provide training; there is a template on the website. Adam to contact VLCT regarding financial control review.

Select Board Meeting Procedure: Couper reviewed the following items from the procedure.

- 1.) There is no limit to the number of times a member of the body may speak to a question. A member may speak or make a motion only after being recognized by the chair. (Organization, Item 6). Adam was identified as the chair.
- 2.) If a member of the public has already spoken on a topic, he or she may not be recognized again until others have first been given the opportunity to comment. (Public Participation, item 5).

- 3.) All meetings of the body are meetings in the public, not of the public. Members of the public shall be afforded reasonable opportunity to express opinions about matters considered by the body, so long as order is maintained. (Public Participation, item 1).

He stated this is an effort to keep things civil and act as a reminder to the public and board members.

<https://www.grandislevt.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2022-Rules-and-Procedures-of-the-Grand-Isle-Selectboard.pdf>

V. OLD BUSINESS

Audit Update: Adam- RHR Smith has been communicating with Bonnie Batchelder. Jeff Confirmed that Batchelder & Associates is busy with other audits, and shared that he is waiting for a response to several emails. Jeff read the letter from the town attorney in response to the previous discussion with RHR Smith and the Select Board on 5/2/22. Bianca agreed that she wanted to hear the letter after discussion between Couper and Jeff about whether or not to read it.

Link to letter: <https://www.grandislevt.org/lawyers-letter-for-select-board-minutes/>

After reading, Jeff discussed what he felt were inconsistencies with RHR Smith:

- 1.) The select board is looking at using 1/3 of unassigned funds not general fund balance.
- 2.) ARPA- Have standard deduction, can borrow from if needed.
- 3.) Unassigned funds for solar project are being used for fire station.
- 4.) RPR's assessment of the payment for the 21 audit should not affect the 22/23 funds used for Batchelder audit.
- 5.) RHR says they can't finalize audit without state statute, will change the product.
- 6.) RHR said CD's couldn't be cashed out; CD has matured, closed, and moved to general fund.
- 7.) Board engaged RHR Smith, Jeff wants the board to do a better job engaging the auditor to audit the town/town treasurer.
- 8.) Scope of the RFP changed according to RHR. Jeff does not see this as true.
- 9.) RHR does a best practice audit, not a full-blown audit; the select board should get a full-blown audit moving forward.

Adam brought up that the Select Board should decide if the RHR Smith FY 2021 audit should be finalized and asked board if they needed any more information to do so.

Jeff moves to approve the FY 21 RHR Audit, Eric Seconds the motion. No discussion. Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Adam White, Josie Leavitt, and Eric Godin approve. The motion passes.

Racheal brought up that the scope RFP changed based on RHR's statements. Jeff clarified it went from best practice to full blown audit, that the RFP didn't change. Racheal inquired about the location of the RFP for the audit. Jeff agreed to share the RFP with Rachael. Josie mentioned that there was no mention of forensic audit in the RFP.

Joe Longo stated that in the Islander it said it was a forensic audit.

Adam explained that a forensic audit is used to focus on an identified issue (ex. embezzlement). The audit Batchelder is doing is a more inclusive audit than a best practice audit (RHR performed in 21) but is not a forensic audit.

Couper explained that it necessary to have a best practice audit prior to an audit. Jeff explained that a full-blown audit includes a best practice audit. Adam will reach out to VLCT for education on the types of audits and what they include. Jeff mentioned that a vote will have to be made on the type of audit the board chooses in the future.

Glenda stated if these are 2 different entities and 2 different audits, RHR Smith should not be concerned with the RFP for Batchelder.

Emily Clark thought that RHR Smith was describing Batchelder's RFP as a best practice audit to develop practices moving forward for financials and morphed into an audit of the auditor. RHR Smith's proposal to the RFP for the audit has no mention of the words best practices.

Tonya clarified Joe's statement. The petition in the paper stated that they asked for a public accountant licensed in the state of VT to perform a forensic audit of all the funds for at least the last 3 years. The Select Board members corrected that it wasn't a petition but a request for action.

Ellie mentioned that RHR Smith didn't answer questions directly and was disrespectful to the board. She feels that people would support a more in-depth audit.

Ron brought up how RHR Smith repeatedly mentioned the Select Board broke state statute, and feels that RHR Smith actually broke state statute because the Select Board hires the auditor. Jeff explains how the Select Board selected RHR Smith for the 21 audit, the select board works for the people, RHR Smith does not work for the individuals of the town.

Adam explains this audit was performed on the opinion of the attorney.

Rachel wanted to know if Batchelder's references were checked. They were not, the license and accreditation were verified.

2022 Audit RFP: Josie has put it together and sent it to VLCT classified ad. 8 firms have been contacted, 2 have said no. 1 Firm has questions that Josie is answering. Josie has not heard from the rest. Adam mentioned there is a sealed envelope response in the select board folder. A meeting was created for Tuesday the 24th of May to open bids at 6 p.m.

Bianca asked if and why RHR Smith was given the RFP. Josie stated RHR Smith and Batchelder are both given the RFP, and the select board will review their proposals.

Old Town Garage Demolition: Jeff stated that Tyler Billingsly of East Engineering was contacted to see what he would charge to put together a bid for demolition. His bid will describe the cost to take down the old town garage. There is asbestos in the old town garage. Ron confirmed that there is asbestos in the insulation vermiculite. Tyler will be the one to get estimates for asbestos removal; he was involved in the confirmation of asbestos and should have the information needed to make the assessment for asbestos removal costs.

Adam asked where the payment for Tyler is coming from, and if the tear down is another un-budgeted cost. Jeff clarified he is asking for permission to ask for the cost of hiring Tyler to do the RFP.

Ron asked how much is left in the Select Board maintenance budget for buildings. Adam stated he thought \$8,600. Ron said that he thinks we are supposed to keep \$15,000 in there. Jeff found the documentation stated the budget was \$7500 and \$8194 was spent. Adam stated that he thinks they should get a quote from East Engineering (Tyler).

Rachael asked if an RFP was needed, Adam stated not if it is less than \$10,000.

Josie asked if we needed to get another bid from another engineering firm. Eric stated that he didn't think that the expenses will be that high.

Melissa brought up that they were under budget for the Annex, but there still needs to be electric, fuel, and water which costs \$4000.

Eric moves to get a bid from East Engineering for demolition of the old town garage Couper Seconds the motion. No discussion. Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Adam White, Josie Leavitt, and Eric Godin approve. The motion passes.

Jeff asked permission to ask the Town Road Crew to help with dumpsters. Ron asked if they could repurpose lumber from the building. Randy stated the rafters would work with the rafters they have already.

Eric asked how much salt is left, Ron stated quite a bit.

IT Update: Couper has contacted SNS and a couple of other organizations and is waiting to hear back. He expects it to be under \$10,000 and that he won't need to create an RFP, he hopes to bring bids back to the next meeting.

Adam stated that he is meeting with Marie Prescott from the DRB to train on how to edit the website. Couper asked if he could receive training as well, Adam said yes. Eric brought up that there should be unique users created for the individuals who have the ability to edit the website. Adam thinks that they will be moving in that direction with the town website.

VI. REVIEW AND SIGN WARRANTS

Adam mentioned the Sheriff's department only has 3 deputies. This staffing shortage is incurring overtime hour expenses that will affect the budget.

Jeff moves to approve warrants and allow the chair to sign them Eric Seconds the motion. No discussion. Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Adam White, Josie Leavitt, and Eric Godin approve. The motion passes.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Jeff moves to adjourn at 7:20 p.m. Josie Seconds the motion. No discussion. Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Adam White, Josie Leavitt, and Eric Godin approve. The motion passes.