

Grand Isle Select Board Meeting September 19th, 2022 06:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

Community Members Present: Colleen Bushway, Ron Bushway, Emily Clark, Rachael Griggs, Glenda Leake, Melissa Boutin, Jennifer Morway, Ellen Paradee, Randy Gover, Kristina Botala, Mitchel Richardson, Esther Blow, Lucille Campbell, Linda Effel, Jean Prouty, Sue Lawrence, Joe Longo, Suzanne Moquin, Mary Parizo, Mike Donoghue, Diane Cota

Board Members to Amend Agenda for Matters Not Listed:

Adam Added Road Commissioner/Facilities manager to the agenda (omitted in error).

Couper reminded everyone that this is a meeting in the public, not of the public. He asked community members to raise their hand if they have something to say, take a minute to say it, Adam will thank them for their comment and the board will return to the meeting. He stated that there are a lot of items on the agenda, and he wanted to make sure that things move smoothly. Couper asked Adam to enforce these rules, to get through this. Josie thanked Couper for reminding everyone of the rules.

II. GUEST OPEN COMMENT Ron has a grant form for the board to sign.

III. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES

5/26/22 Minutes: *Josie motions to approve the May 26th 2022 minutes. Couper Seconds the motion. Josie Leavitt, Couper Shaw, and Eric Godin approve. Adam White and Jeff Parizo abstain. The motion passes.*

8/15/22 Minutes: Nick corrected to Nate in rescue discussion, and added Couper provided that the IT person resigned in March of 2022.

Jeff motions to approve the August 15th 2022 minutes with the corrections. Couper Seconds the motion. Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Adam White, and Eric Godin approve. Josie abstained. The motion passes.

Racheal thinks it would be nice if last names were added. Adam mentioned that if there is duplicate first names, that last names are added. Mike concurs that full names 'oughta be in there just for, ya know simplicity and, for understanding and 10 years down the road you're gonna try to figure out who's who and everything like that. All the other towns do it that way, it makes it cleaner and everything so.' Adam responded 'that's what makes us unique, Mike'. Mike explained 'One town I know does it with initials and that's a treat trying to figure out who they are'. Adam responded that we can do it first name, initial next time.

8/26/22 Minutes: *Jeff motions to approve the August 26th 2022 minutes with the corrections. Eric Seconds the motion. Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Josie Leavitt, and Eric Godin approve. Adam abstained. The motion passes.*

IV. GUESTS

Emily Clark & Jennifer Morway - Planning Commission

1. Village center application requires SB endorsement/approval (by motion)

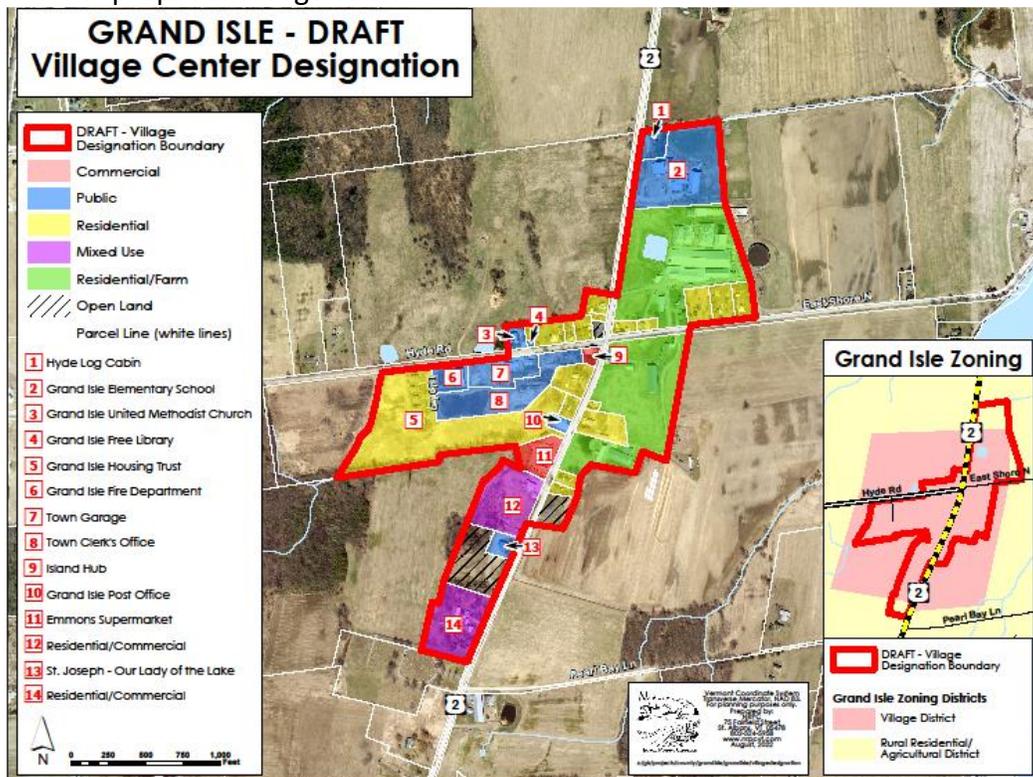
Emily- The planning commission has been working to prepare an application for village designation. Village center designation supports the revitalization efforts of small to medium-sized historic centers. She presented a 7 slide PowerPoint discussed below.

Vermont law defines a village center as “the core of a traditional settlement, typically comprised of a cohesive mix of residential, civic, religious, commercial, and mixed-use buildings, arranged along a main street and intersecting streets that are within walking distance for residents who live within and surrounding the core.”

The designation brings financial incentives, training, technical assistance and probably above all, priority in in grants and loans from the state.

Once designated, a community may further apply for neighborhood development areas which accrue additional benefits to the town in terms of financial support, grants, technical assistance, etc.

Draft of proposed village center:



The lower right-hand corner shows the center superimposed over the existing village zoning district. Northwest Regional Planning and the state were consulted to see if the

boundaries could be extended for the proposed village center, but they have strong rules on what parcels they want to include. The planning commission feels that they got the biggest swath of land that they could included in the proposed center. This map will be revised to include more properties such as the Methodist church which is on the national historic register.

Village Designation benefits include:

1. Priority consideration for various ACCD, VTrans and ANR grants and incentives including, ACCD's Municipal Planning Grants, State Historic Preservation grants, Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) grants, VTrans Bike/Ped and Transportation Alternatives grants, Northern Border Regional Commission Grants, ANR Water and Wastewater subsidies and loans, and various other state grants and resources.
2. Downtown and village center tax credits:
 - 10% Historic Tax Credits
 - Available as an add-on to approved Federal Historic Tax Credit projects.
 - Eligible costs include interior and exterior improvements, code compliance, plumbing and electrical upgrades.
 - 25% Historic Tax Credits
 - Eligible facade work up to \$25,000.
 - 50% Code Improvement Tax Credits
 - Available for up to \$50,000 each for sprinkler systems; up to \$75,000 for elevators; and \$12,000 for lifts.
 - Eligible code work includes ADA modifications, electrical, fire safety, or plumbing up to \$50,000
3. NDA (Neighborhood Development Area) Eligibility

Grand Isle is the one of the only towns in the islands and state that does not have a village center designation, South Hero has 2, North Hero has 1 as well. Emily feels that Grand Isle may have been missing out on opportunities by not having this designation. This was discussed in the spring with the selectboard, but the planning commission wishes to formalize it because they would like to submit the application next week.

The following copy of the Planning commission's application was e-mailed to the selectboard:

Name of Municipality: Town of Grand Isle, VT

Narrative:

The Town of Grand Isle seeks a Village Center Designation to recognize the core of the town's traditional settlement. Grand Isle's proposed Village Center largely overlaps the Town's existing Village Zoning District (see Document #1 - Village Center Designation Map). The Grand Isle Planning Commission (PC), with support of the Town of Grand Isle

Selectboard (SB), seeks a Village Center Designation on behalf of the townspeople. The PC seeks approval for Village Designation, at this time, in preparation for the revision of the Grand Isle Town Plan, to commence in spring of 2023.

The town of Grand Isle has pursued and supported various revitalization activities over the last 5-10 years, including

- construction of the new Grand Isle Volunteer Fire Department Facility
- construction of the new Grand Isle Town Garage & Salt Shed
- support for the re-establishment of a Child Care Center & Pre-school/Pre-K in the Town-owned “Annex” Building
- planning and conceptual drawings for new Town Center buildings – to include new Library, Community Space, Town Office (Hyde Road)

Municipal Infrastructure:

Grand Isle Residents have access to two municipal water systems – Grand Isle Consolidated Water District & Grand Isle Fire District Four, serving more than 900 properties in town. Grand Isle does not have municipal wastewater currently.

Primary Contact for this Application:

Emily Clark, Chair of Grand Isle Planning Commission
412 US Route 2
Grand Isle, VT 05458
802-316-6721 mobile
emily.plancom.grandislevt@gmail.com

Emily will be the primary contact for the planning commission. The application asks what the town has done to pursue revitalization activities in the town. The planning commission added things that appeared to be applicable like the construction of fire department, the salt shed, the town garage, supporting childcare, preschool and pre-K in a town owned building, planning conceptual drawings of the town library, community space and town hall.

The list of items that need to be included in the application for town center designation:

1. [PENDING] Minutes from publicly held meeting, showing Application for Village Designation has been authorized by Town of Grand Isle Selectboard, meeting September 19, 2022
2. Email notifying Northwest Regional Planning Commission of intent to apply for Village Designation
3. Email notifying Lake Champlain Islands Economic Development Corporation of intent to apply for Village Designation
4. Letter from Northwest Regional Planning Commission, stating that planning process is “confirmed” under 24 VSA 4350 by the Commission, dated September 13, 2022
5. [PENDING – FINAL VERSION] Village Center Designation Boundary Map

6. Color photographs showing key areas of Village Center Designation – keyed on Village Center Designation Boundary Map
7. Grand Isle Zoning District Map
8. Grand Isle Bylaw Language corresponding to Village Zoning District

The items left to gather prior to application submission:

- Selectboard motion “authorizing” Grand Isle Village Designation Application
- Minutes from SB Meeting (draft) added to Application
- Application submission on or before 9/26 for October 2022 review by Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)
- PC Chair to attend October DHCD Downtown Board Meeting, (Board typically meets on the fourth Monday of each month to review and consider applications)

Linda stated that not all of the proposal’s listed revitalization efforts are within the village. Emily replied that they aren’t necessarily things we have done in the village, they are things we have done as a town for revitalization. Someone has to attend the downtown board meeting, which happens the 3rd Monday of every month in support of the application. Adam said he was glad it is the PC chair and said thank you. Emily asked the selectboard to authorize the application.

Jeff asked it was possible to add additional designated town centers. Emily replied it is possible, and expanding town center boundaries is possible as well. Jeff asked why the boundaries needed to wait to be expanded, why couldn’t the town go for the max now? Emily responded that they did go for the maximum with this application. The planning commission would like to make moves that justify extending the boundaries to Mary Crest. Emily provided that if the center were extended south on 2 to East Shore South, one could imagine linking East Shore South to East Shore North with a sidewalk, or a multi-purpose bike path/sidewalk access-way. There are constraints around what is included-open land is not included unless it connects the next thing that is part of the historical center. The planning commission tried to push, but didn’t want to preclude getting the town center designation completed. She shared that when there is a good story backing the application for a grant, they allow you to extend the boundaries in terms of how the grant can be applied-even if it’s not technically in the town center.

Jeff asked if the village designation helps non-entities of the town get grants. Emily answered that it should.

Adam asked to see slide 4 of the PowerPoint which had village designation benefits listed. He asked about the 10% & 25% historic tax credits sections on the slide, and if the items below the percentages were what is eligible for the credits. Emily stated she believed so, she didn’t have the detailed list with her. Adam asked what a historic tax credit is, because the church buildings are tax exempt. Emily responded that there may also be entities that act as go betweens for not for profits similar to what the town had to do to get solar panels. In order to get

a tax credit, you work with some entity that allows non-taxable entities to get some benefit from the tax credit.

Adam asked what the benefit would be for an organization such as Emmons Supermarket, would they be able to obtain grants? Emily responded potentially, yes. She also provided that historic does not necessarily mean national historical register. There were a lot of places the planning commission looked up that were not on the register but had a long history. Adam responded that so historic is not set on a registry, it's just kind of an open-ended criteria based on what you're applying for. Emily responded yes, and she imagined each of those has its own criteria. Jennifer provided that some of the buildings that the planning commission is including such as the former parsonage are privately owned homes, but there is a history to them. There are a lot of tax credit or grant opportunities for citizens that live within the district. Colleen mentioned Arns Lodge, the Hub, the farmhouse across the street, the old Poquette House date back to the 1800's, that would help the people who own the property to restore.

Jeff asked if the planning commission found the parsonage, Jennifer responded they did.

Adam asked if there were any drawbacks to having a village center. Emily replied that her understanding is there were some issues with obtaining permitting and develop outside of the village center historically. Adam mentioned this killed a business on Ferry Road in South Hero. Emily explained this has been changed and is no longer true.

Glenda asked if there were any restrictions on any buildings that fall in the historic district. Emily responded 'not that I understand' and that she feels that the idea is to encourage town centers and encourage activity in those town centers. There are a lot of advantages in terms of getting priority grants and loans, but she doesn't think they have any restrictions if somebody wanted to move a house or change something. It's not like a historic designation for each building.

Adam motions for the planning commission to move forward with the Grand Isle Village designation application. Jeff Seconds the motion. Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Josie Leavitt, Adam White, and Eric Godin approve. The motion passes.

2. Preliminary/directional recommendations for ARPA funds

Jennifer- The selectboard tasked the planning commission with providing recommendations on best use of ARPA funds for the Town of Grand Isle. The planning Commission has stayed up to date with ARPA funding approved uses, restrictions, rules, how other towns are investing their ARPA money and reporting guidelines. We discuss ARPA funding regularly at each meeting and many members are completing research or training / information webinars and reporting back to the commission.

The planning Commission surveyed the town of Grand Isle citizens to see what they would like to see the ARPA money be designated for as well as what their long-term vision for Grand Isle looks like. The planning commission has already shared these results with the selectboard and

community, but as a reminder, the top survey results where to spend the money on a “town center / town space” or water infrastructure.

The planning commission members were repeatedly told during webinars and training that ARPA funds should be used to touch as many citizens as possible, and to try and leverage ARPA funds with state and / or federal grants – also known in many webinars as “other people’s money”.

Guidance from the American Rescue plans states “The funding provided under ARPA provides a unique opportunity for state and local governments to make strategic investments in long-lived assets, rebuild reserves to enhance financial stability, and cover temporary operating shortfalls until economic conditions and operations normalize.”

The Commission has extensively discussed and debated ARPA funds use for the water department, the fire department, Grand Isle Rescue and Town Center Project. We think each department could use the ARPA funds to provide a temporary relief for their budget. We discussed the option of splitting the money between different departments to help each department some, but realized the impact for each department would be small. Each time the discussion brought the commission back to the original goal of ensuring the money impacts as many citizens as possible and we leverage the money to make the largest impact.

At our last meeting, September 6th, 2022; the planning commission by unanimous 5-0 vote, approved to provide the following recommendation to the Selectboard:

The Planning Commission recommends to the Selectboard that the town's ARPA monies be earmarked for building a town municipal center (to potentially include e.g., Library, Town Office, Community Space, Meeting Space, Senior/Teen/ Recreation department/Fitness Center), to have the greatest benefit to residents of Grand Isle, pending the upcoming Town planning process and Village Center Designation. While the Planning Commission recognizes the financial needs of Grand Isle Fire, Rescue & Water Districts, we suggest that these needs are better addressed through the Town's annual budget processes.

We thank the Selectboard for entrusting the Planning Commission to work on this project and hope to be able to further assist with any projects in the future. We are happy to answer any questions and explain our thought process out loud.

Jeff asked if the town had received the second installment of ARPA funds. Melissa responded half of the second half (so the town has $\frac{3}{4}$ of it). Jeff asked if we know when the second half is coming. The response was no. Emily asked Melissa if she had heard anything from other town clerks, Melissa responded no.

Adam explained that the ARPA funds are a drop in the bucket compared to what the pre-COVID price tag was for the proposed multi-use town space. Jennifer responded that it is and it isn't. there is \$600,000+ in ARPA funds, the library has about \$350,000 and then you start talking about a grant for up to (depending on how we do it) 50, 60, 70, 80% depending on the grant. The ARPA money can be leveraged, even if it is a planned approach, one way or another the

town of Grand Isle is going to have to build. Incorporating as much as possible into these buildings saves tax payers money by being able to leverage the money the most.

Adam asked when ARPA funds need to be used by, and if it is to be completely used by a certain date or earmarked by a certain date. Jennifer responded that it has to be designated by December 2024, and used by year end 2026. The funds need to be committed in 14 months.

Adam asked if an ARPA coordinator would need to be hired. Jennifer replied that Northwest Regional Planning Commission will help with these grants. The planning commission will work on budgeting and grants prior to returning to the selectboard, and everyone would know the cost of the project.

Couper asked why the town multi-use space is inevitable. Jennifer explained that historically the town has had to build emergently after condemnation of a town building or there is radon, and things essentially had to be done. We are in a situation of knowing that the town office vaults are almost full, and the town office is going to need more space. COVID has taught us that we might need a little more meeting space, without having to borrow spaces from Grand Isle rescue or the school.

Couper responded that the school has space for town meetings. He mentioned that he never sees anybody use the car-port style community building at the Rec Park. The last town meeting had room for 3 or 4x as many people than actually attended. He can't think of a situation in this town where 3-400 people would attend. Couper asked Melissa if she needed more room in the town office. She responded that the vaults are filling up, there is no break room, there are no closets, there is a need for certain things. Jennifer responded that the idea is to put 2 needs into 1 to save money, rather than have two separate town buildings. She explained that the meeting space could be multi-use such as providing tax help for seniors, or a place for the rec committee to meet. Emily provided that the planning commission wants to take a proactive look at what the future needs of the town are in terms of community and municipal space, as opposed to reacting when the garage is too small for the trucks or gets condemned or the fire house can't fit the new ladder truck or whatever it is, and we are up against a wall at the last minute without planning and forethought. Maybe it will be a phased approach and only the library and an annex will be built, but undergo the exercise so that we have a set of thoughts and plans that have been shared with the community that can be taken to the voters.

Josie added that she hears constantly that the town is lacking community space. We don't have a lot of community here. If we can build out the library and make it larger and more comfortable, it will get more patrons, they will need space, we can have more computer desktops available so people who don't have the internet at home can use the computer lab. Town hall is definitely going to be busting out at the seams and Josie thinks its important to have a place where we can gather. Josie asked if the funds have to be allocated by '24, what happens if the funds aren't spent by '26, if we don't get a grant, then what do we do? Jennifer responded that we would know this well in advance, and at the end of the day other town departments could immediately take on cash.

Adam responded that it is important and we need a place of community. The farmer's market is running out of space at St. Josephs. Grand Isle doesn't have many businesses that are putting on events for the community. The town needs to fill that void, and welcome people in. This town was built in the 1700's, and they didn't think about this, there was no true village green or center. He feels that this (community center) is definitely something worth looking into to see what the opportunity is, and it will be a large project. He thanked the Grand Isle planning commission and Northwest Regional planning commission for taking this on. This is a once in a life time funding opportunity, and he feels it is time to move forward. He feels that the course that the planning commission is looking at does benefit the majority of the town. Adam asked the planning commission what the next steps are.

Jennifer responded that the planning commission would like the select board to let them know if they would like the planning commission to move forward with the plan. The village designation will be a part of this. The town plan will have to be up soon, a grant will be due in December, the planning commission wishes to apply for the grant. Emily added that the town plan isn't due for an additional year but Northwest Regional planning let the planning commission know that it doesn't hurt to start early. The planning commission would like to have a living document that supports the town planning process but also supports the municipal center as the centerpiece.

Adam asked if the select board would like to have a joint public meeting with the planning commission to let the community know the course that is being proposed. Josie thinks that is a good idea. Jennifer thinks this is a good idea, but wants the community to know that the planning commission will not be able to present the proposed numbers, and feels that would be the main question from taxpayers. Adam recommended the planning commission share examples of grants with community members that could be applied to this project, stating that these funds are not definite, but funds the town has the opportunity to obtain. Eric responded that the reality of a project like this is that you can't have any definite numbers until you have already thrown some dollars at the project. Adam admits that the grant finances could be confusing for community members, but feels it is best to let them know. Jennifer provided an example that if there were a space within the community center for local artists to display their work, there is a \$25,000 grant available. The more different things that are incorporated into the community center, the more grants it becomes eligible for.

Jeff asked if the library could apply for their own grants separate from the planning commission? Adam responded that the library would apply for grants for items inside the library, the planning commission would apply for grants for the building. Jeff asked if grants are available for the library too. Jennifer responded yes. Collen replied that there are some grants that are available for the library. The library has put out surveys and letters for money/grants, the response they have received is that the library needs to take action when they are ready to start prior to receiving the funds. Until the library has a start date, funds/grants are being kept in their accounts making money, and the library is hanging out waiting.

Adam asked the planning commission when they would be available to have a joint meeting to present their proposal. Adam mentioned that the school would need to be asked permission to use their space for the meeting. Emily provided that the planning commission would be

meeting tomorrow (9/20/22) and they would let the select board know when a good time for the meeting would be.

Jennifer provided that the grants that the town needs for the town plan need selectboard signatures, and asked if the selectboard could be emailed the items that need approval and address them at their future meetings. Adam asked that they be sent to the scribe to be put on the next agenda, along with an explanatory write up, and ask for a motion to approve.

Adam informed Emily and Jennifer that the selectboard will be using some of the ARPA funds, one item they will be used for is IT infrastructure. Emily responded that 'It's yours to do so'. However, the planning commission's guiding principle has always been that to the extent that we can, do things that are enduring, that are strategic assets as opposed to just filling the gap in operating budgets. This has happened in many municipalities across the country where they had deficits due to COVID, they refilled coffers for revenue replacement. To the extent that Grand Isle wasn't a community that experienced revenue losses per se, the planning commission's directive was to think about strategic, long lived asset investments.

Adam reiterated that after the next planning commission meeting that they will reconvene with the select board for a public joint meeting, Emily agreed.

~~Trever Larrow Dog Matter~~ To be addressed in the Dog Ordinance VLCT Update

V. ROAD COMISSIONER/FACILITIES MANAGER UPDATE

Ron provided a letter to the select board for a grant application for municipal assistance from Northwest Regional Planning. Adam explained that the letter states that the town of Grand Isle will pay a fee of \$1,000 for services in support of municipal roads grants and aid. Adam asked if it was coming out of Ron's budget or if it is part of the grant that pays for the fee, Ron explained that it is part of the grant that pays for the fee. Adam asked Ron if they apply for this every year. Ron responded yes.

Adam motions that the town selectboard approves and signs the agreement for municipal assistance to support the SFY 23 municipal roads grants and aide construction project. Eric Seconds the motion. Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Josie Leavitt, Adam White and Eric Godin approve. The motion passes.

Ron:

- South Hero assisted Grand Isle with ditching and stone lining on East Shore North by Bessette's Bay, in turn Grand Isle went to South Hero to help them with ditching and stone lining on Kibbe Point Road.
- Roadsides are still being mowed; however, the John Deere tractor is currently out of commission. Ron does not feel that any more money should be put into it, and he recommends discussing at future meetings. Adam responded that he had spoken with Brad, and asked if cost could be presented at the next meeting. Ron responded that him and Brad had a meeting today to discuss this, and they will have something ready for the next selectboard meeting.

- 3 culverts are being set up for replacement on Pearl St. Pearl St. has been in bad shape for a while and in order to pave next year, the culverts need to be replaced 1st.
- A culvert inventory was performed with 20-year plan. Due to the aggressive start, Grand Isle is ahead. Culverts have been done down by West Shore, Vantines, all of the ditching that has been done, they are ahead of schedule for the 20-year plan. Jeff reminded Ron that there is a big culvert on Hyde Rd. that needs to be done. Ron responded yes, and that will be a structures grant. Jeff responded, yes next time we get a structures grant.
- After culverts are done, the Ron wants to start on winter sand.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Personnel Policy Updates

Adam wants to address housekeeping items:

- Juneteenth isn't listed as a holiday,
- Discrepancy about when vacation time accrues after start date
- Comp time
- Payment over 40 hours at the request of the highway department.

To be discussed at October meeting.

Review FY22 financials

Adam stated that FY 22 ended June of 2022, and there were questions. The following are Adam's questions with Melissa's responses:

1. Where does the unassigned fund amount stand at? Unofficially \$167,000.

Adam brought up that there should be a separate 'rainy day fund' to cover 30, 60 and 90 days of expenses and this fund could come from the unassigned funds.

2. For the Highway Department what is the amount of their unrestricted/unassigned fund? Unofficially \$225,000.
3. Computer was budgeted for \$4,600 and actual was \$11,044.04. What caused the overage? NEMRC annual fee implemented \$5K, increased Comcast fees, Zoom business (not free service, was not budgeted for).
4. Highway Garage Bond P&I budget was \$9,300 and actual \$18,470.04, what caused the overage? There were 2 payments issued to People's United on the new garage project before it was turned into a bond
5. Solid Waste Equipment - budget at \$5,000 and actual is \$30,035. What caused the overage? 2nd and final payment on Autocar Roll-off - Under Transfer Station revenues are the funds transferred in from Transfer Station CD to cover this (paid through the highway department and through the transfer station).

6. Municipal Insurance - budget at \$42,000 and actual was \$54,375.25. What caused the overage? New buildings - garage/salt shed, equipment for highway/transfer station as well as claims for accident/injuries - not aware of anything else
7. Cemetery PSI Unrealized Investment budgeted at \$0, actual was \$11,835.13, what caused this? The Cemetery has an investment account with People's Securities - this is the total loss on the investments for FY '22. Also shown are investment gains under revenues. No way to predict the outcome of stocks and bonds.

Jeff's questions and Melissa's responses:

8. When will the due/to due/from equal zero? page 1 of 1. That will not happen unless highway and recreation have their own checking accounts, and all funds that have been appropriated voted on receive them.
9. Page 1 General ledger: Revenue Del Tax- interest \$10,129.03 and Del Tax - penalty \$14969.23 what share of this goes to the town? And what share goes to the tax collector? The town keeps all of the delinquent interest, charged at 1% once the taxes go delinquent. The penalty is charged at 8% and when it is collected, it will then turn over to the delinquent tax collector. So, it should go in then out- the timing of this isn't always perfect, which explains question 10 below.
10. Page 3 same dept: Expense Del tax penalty \$13,544.00 please explain.
11. Page 3 same page: Audit \$26,450.00 what account was this paid from? Gets paid out of the general fund operating checking account. Jeff stated that he thought that we were going to take the money out of the unassigned, and asked if this had been done. Melissa explained that this will eventually affect the unassigned balance. Jeff asked if they needed a source to pay for it. Melissa responded that so far it was reported at the end of FY 22 it's about 167. There will be a couple of adjustments because its not final the audit is not complete yet.
12. Page 4 same dept: Telephone \$3312.90 is this including internet? Internet is not included; it goes under computer.

Eric asked if the phone service is provided by Comcast. Melissa responded yes, Comcast. The 2-year window that the town committed to with a contract has passed and their pricing keeps increasing. There has been discussion about using a different source for phones (Voice over internet), with all new equipment there are enhanced capabilities that will create efficiencies in the town office. Eric provided that he has experience with these systems, and likes that the end user (the town) can direct where things go, versus needing contractors to come in and adjust phone system. Melissa feels that the town would be able to upgrade phones for the same amount of money, if not less. Jeff asked if this should be added to the IT discussion. Eric explained that the IT person would have to be integrated into the phone systems for VOIP. Couper added that the 2 IT companies that visited the town office both mentioned that they would be able to implement something like that. Jeff feels this would be beneficial because if the town office does get a new building it will be easier to move.

13. Page 8 Emerald ash borer \$10,000 was this amount allocated? Melissa responded that it didn't get used, so in FY 23 \$20,000 can be used instead of \$10,000 and that the selectboard would need to earmark the money.
14. What happened to the MOU monies for the fish hatchery? Melissa responded that it rolls into the general fund. In FY 23 there was a change to divide it up differently.

Adam encouraged board members to ask questions about budget items that are confusing.

Racheal asked about the money that was voted on 2 years in a row to clean the lake (totaling \$20,000) to Grand Isle Lakeshore Restoration Association, Inc (GILRA). Melissa responded that they have been paid, but she doesn't know what they have done. Adam and Eric agreed that they have not heard from them. Adam responded that the person who ran the organization sold their home and is no longer living in town. Eric stated that he remembers speaking to 2 members of the organization at a previous meeting, and the organization was looking to cut the weeds.

Glenda asked when the town appropriates money to organizations in the future, if the select board could demand a reckoning of what the town money was used for. Adam's response was absolutely. Adam shared that the area that GILA was working on had no public access, it was just in front of private homes. Townspeople wanted clarification, but it was swept away. Eric recommended that the board consult with VLCT before asking for how town funds were appropriated, there are some things that are ok to be asked for and other items that are not. Adam will reach out to VLCT.

ZAO salary adjustment discussion.

Adam: The zoning admin officer requested a salary increase that was not in FY 21 budget but was in FY 22. At the December 6th meeting this was discussed and it was decided that this would go back to the planning commission for discussion. At the planning commission a motion was made to reappoint Scott Brown but no mention on budgeting. At the December 20th meeting the selectboard motioned to appoint Scott Brown as ZAO for a term beginning January 1st 2022 for a 3-year term. There is no reference in the minutes regarding a salary increase. April 14th 2022 Adam addressed the increase again, and it was discussed that the increase would occur in FY starting July 1, 2022. Melissa responded that she would make Scott aware that it is effective July 1st. Scott emailed the selectboard and Emily asking where this stands.

Emily responded that it was her understanding that reappointing Scott included the increase. Eric stated he remembered this discussion and feels that there was a question as to when this was going to take effect. Emily responded that she remembered another discussion with the planning commission where Scott came to them asking for help figuring this out. His understanding was that the salary increase was part of the agreement when he was appointed for the ZAO position. He asked the planning commission if they could help him get the money in arrears, and the planning commission responded that they don't budget or pay for his salary and sent this information to the selectboard.

Ron thought that they had given Scott the raise from his recollection, and that Scott asked for \$25.00/hr.

Adam asked Melissa to calculate the amount if the selectboard were to make the salary increase retroactive to January 1st and bring it to the next meeting.

ZAO Large format printer discussion

Jeff: A large format scanning printer would be helpful for the ZAO for scanning mylars and different things for the DRB. This will provide the capability of making things bigger and easier to read. The board previously approved \$3,400 for large format printer acquisition. Because there was a delay between approval and available funds, the price has since increased. The current proposal for this equipment is \$4,081.36, this is an increase of \$681.36. Scott Brown would like to know if the select board will approve the purchase with the increase in price.

Jeff motions the selectboard approves Scott Brown to spend another \$690.00 for the large format scanner/copier. Josie Seconds the motion. Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Josie Leavitt, Adam White and Eric Godin approve. The motion passes.

Jeff will email Scott.

NEMRC modules Payroll, Fixed assets.

Jeff: For the audit updated letter there is 2 areas that NEMRC can help with:

- 1.) Leave time accrual - Once the leave time policy is completed, which Jeff believes it is, and we know where employees are in regards to leave time, the payroll module can be programmed to keep track of vacation, sick time, comp time. The board could receive an accrual time report each pay period or month to track the liability.
- 2.) Fixed assets not fairly stated- NEMRC has a module available at a cost of \$1,795.00, plus the cost to train about 1-2 hours. After the 22 audit is completed, it is an ideal time to start with values from the audit moving forward. Given the 2 projects together may be approaching 10 hours, it might be good to consider 10 hours both consulting time at \$110.00 per hour.

Josie asked if this would be an annual payment for the module. Jeff responded no, it's one and done.

Adam asked if this is something that can be put in and start in July 1 of next year. Jeff responded that Wendy Wilton said that after the 22 audit is completed, which is in process now, that information is entered into the module.

Adam asked Jeff to be reminded when Wendy is here to have a list of what fixed assets we are looking at and what the module would demonstrate. Jeff responded sure, when

would you like that to happen? Adam asked if she could come to the next meeting. Jeff responded yes. Adam asked Jeff who would be putting time into the system. Jeff said he couldn't answer, his assumption is that when Melissa cuts a check the information would be entered at that time. Adam was wondering if this could be used in lieu of a paper time sheet, he has concerns that some departments do not have a computer.

A townspeople (asked Adam 9/21/22 no response as to who this is) asked how many people accrue vacation. Adam responded that from his understanding it is Melissa, the two highway employees, and zoning. Colleen added the librarian does as well. The townspeople asked if it was worth spending that money for 5 people. Eric replied that \$2000 dollars is reasonable if it makes things more clear and easier to understand. Adam replied that when Wendy comes to the October meeting, she can explain it to the board.

Emily replied that small business payroll systems allow you to add columns and allow you to run reports by day, year and quarter for budgeting easily.

Internal Controls

Jeff: wants to know when the selectboard will be gathering to develop internal controls. The selectboard has a questionnaire and a template to aid in this process from VLCT. Adam replied this could be addressed at the next meeting. Josie and Adam attended the financial training for selectboards hosted by VLCT, and there was a section that mentioned policies that towns should have. Josie and Adam will connect and discuss a starting point. Jeff asked when the VLCT town fair is. Josie responded October 6-7th. There is a person at VLCT who is available to review what policies the town has developed.

~~EOY numbers 2022~~ Duplicate

~~Unassigned funds balance as of 2022~~ Duplicate

~~Town meeting day ballot items~~

Adam: Town meeting day is the 1st Tuesday in March. There are 2 ways for items to make the ballot, either the select board puts the item on the ballot, or an individual collects enough signatures to get on the ballot. In the past, non-profit organizations have come to the selectboard – the unwritten policy has been that 5% of the town's signatures are required (roughly 85 signatures). Adam asked if this is still the case with everyone, because the selectboard received an item on September 8th from the food shelf for \$1500.00. Eric agrees that the selectboard should require signatures, he knows that during COVID this requirement was modified, but life seems to be returning to normal so the signature idea is a good one. Jeff asked how everyone feels about forcing the food shelf and organizations like the VNA to get signatures, because they do such good work for the community. Josie stated she feels the policy needs to be consistent. Jeff asked if Adam wanted a motion, Adam replied that no he just wanted a general understanding for consistency. Information will be sent to entities about collecting signatures to be placed on the ballot.

Fire station unused proceeds-Melissa

Bond bank notified the town clerk that \$3,434.05 that was unused from the bond for the fire station building. Melissa suggested putting the money towards the bond for that purchase.

Adam asked why there is unused proceeds. Melissa replied that she was just notified by the bond bank that there are excess funds.

Adam motions that the fire station building bond proceeds that are currently \$3,434.05 that are unused for the Vermont Bond Bank go back into the bond as payment for principle for the fire station building bond project. Eric Seconds the motion. Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Josie Leavitt, Adam White and Eric Godin approve. The motion passes.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

Timesheets – wait until the board hears from NEMRC, Adam has created a paper time sheet that looks similar to the library time sheet.

IT RFP Bid Review

Couper opened 4 bids for the IT RFP:

- 1.) SNS South Hero (\$1,360/month in fees)
- 2.) Rural Solutions, came to town office, located in Georgia, VT.
- 3.) Soft Sages Technology located in PA.
- 4.) VTC Tech, came to town office, located in St. Albans

RFP bids were due 9/16/22 at 4:00, and they were all stamped before 9/16. The bids will be scanned and emailed to board members. Board members will review the contents, and decide if a special meeting needs to be called for next week, or if it could be addressed at the first meeting in October.

Diane asked who the last business was that came and visited town hall, Couper responded that it was Rural Solutions.

Batchelder & Associates Audit

Adam: Bonnie reached out the selectboard in early August about an outstanding item. Adam read the following correspondence:

'In completing the 2018 audit I found that the changes made to the original audit are minor and were eventually reconciled by RHR Smith through the 2021 audit. Since you now have a 3rd auditor who should be able to rely on the 2021 audit as reasonable in addition to the management letter and findings, it would be a cost savings to the town for Batchelder to not reproduce the 2019 and 2020 audit reports which will save approximately \$7,600.00. We have completed all of the audit work, but feel it would not be beneficial to you (for us) to produce these reports since in 2021 they were for the most part corrected cumulatively or retroactively.

Please let me know your thoughts.’ Adam stated that he believes that this is 1 item that the selectboard never addressed.

Jeff responded that he wanted to talk about the information that Bonnie is still looking for which may help Bonnie wrap up the audit. Adam responded that the information that she is still looking for falls into 2019-2020. Jeff responded that it says ‘please run a detailed payroll for yourself for calendar year 2018, 2019, and 2020.’ She wants the invoice for the school’s 2018 town wages and a backup supporting this item. From an email sent to selectboard August 8th, which hasn’t been responded to unless Melissa has responded to it. Adam told Melissa to hold off because the selectboard needs to decide about 2019 and 2020. He said that the items Bonnie asked for on August 8th have already been uploaded twice to Batchelder and Associates, as well as provided hard copies during the site visit.

Jeff asked if the board would like to have her attend the next meeting to explain this request. Adam responded yes, if Jeff would like to have her attend. Adam asked Jeff if the selectboard had received the final 2018 audit. Jeff found a copy that he had of it and stated that he didn’t know if it was a draft or a final. He stated he could ask Bonnie at the next meeting when she comes.

Josie asked if Batchelder is only performing the 2018 audit, then why are we still communicating with her in terms of giving her data when she is basically saying she is not going to do 2019 or 2020. If she is ready to sign off on 2018, then we are done, according to her.

Jeff responded that he doesn’t think that she has really said that, the selectboard all got the email August 8th.

Eric felt the selectboard should ask Bonnie for a list of what she is still looking for and see what she says at this point.

Adam stated that on August 4th Bonnie said ‘we have completed all of the audit work’, then on August 8th she did not complete the audit work. In the August 4th letter stated ‘but we feel it would not be beneficial to you (the town of Grand Isle) to reproduce reports since in 2021 they were for the most part corrected, cumulatively or retroactively’. Adam is confused as to why she sent an email August 4th stating she’s done and August 8th that the work is not done. Eric stated that she should attend the next meeting and the questions can be asked.

Ellen stated that Mr. Smith corrected a slew of items, and Bonnie found things and is still waiting for information, why can’t we just give Bonnie what she is asking for? She asked if the reports could be pulled from NEMRC and be done? Jeff responded that they can.

Adam responded that this would mean the reports would have to be sent for the 4th time to Bonnie, and on August 4th Bonnie stated that the audit was complete.

Randy asked how long this will go on for, the townspeople asked for the request for Bonnie to act upon this and we haven’t seen the board acting upon this. Adam interrupted Randy and

replied that Bonnie's 18-point management letter was discussed, she has provided the 2018 audit and now she's saying for 2019 and 2020 that RHR Smith's audit is correct. To say the selectboard didn't act is incorrect, to say that she didn't get the information she requested is also incorrect. That is why Bonnie will attend the next meeting to end this.

Diane asked if the town has to pay Bonnie to attend meetings, and if the town gets the money back if they don't request the audit reports. Adam responded that if Bonnie does not produce the 2019 and 2020 audit reports, it will save the town \$7,600. Jeff replied that it is part of the contract if Bonnie attends a town Zoom meeting, she will not get paid extra for attending.

Ellen wanted to know why Adam said last comment before he checked with anyone else, in case there is more discussion to be had. Adam asked if anyone had anything else on this topic. No further discussion.

Sign update

Kyle asked for the computer file for cutting the sign letters, Adam informed Kyle that the sign was too old to have a file for the lettering. Next meeting Adam hopes to provide an update.

Turn to joy- Evacuation discussion

Jeff asked if the selectboard could send this to their town attorney to speed up the agreement process.

Eric motions to authorize Jeff Parizo to contact the town attorney in regards to drafting the evacuation plan for the town annex to go to the town garage. Couper Seconds the motion. Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Josie Leavitt, Adam White and Eric Godin approve. The motion passes.

Dog ordinance- VLCT update

Jeff was unable to attend the meeting, so he emailed VLCT, they will send him a copy of the Zoom presentation. He is waiting for them to send it to him and will share with the selectboard when he receives it.

VIII. REVIEW AND SIGN WARRANTS

Eric moved that the board authorize chair Adam White to sign the warrants for the week. Jeff seconds the motion. Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Josie Leavitt, Adam White and Eric Godin approve. The motion passes.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Josie motions the selectboard to adjourn at 7:58. Eric Seconds the motion. Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw, Josie Leavitt, Adam White and Eric Godin approve. The motion passes.