

**Grand Isle Select Board**  
**Minutes of the Meeting for**  
**Monday, October 17, 2022 at 6:00 at Grand Isle Town Office and via Zoom**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Board Members Present:** Adam White, Chair; Josie Leavitt, Vice Chair, Jeff Parizo, Couper Shaw and Eric Godin.

**Community Members Present:** Sue Lawrence, Emily Clark, Melissa Boutin, Mitchell Richardson, Joe Longo, Thomas Dukeshire, Lucille Campbell, Bianca Adams, Rachael Griggs, Diane Cota, Ellen Paradee, Ester Blow, Jean Prouty, Michael Inners, Ronnie Bushway, Colleen Bushway, Mike Donoghue, Sue Moquin, David Mahoney and John Lafayette.

**Board Members to Amend Agenda for Matters Not Listed:** Nothing to amend

**Review and Approve Minutes:**

Jeff Parizo motions to approve minutes for Oct 3, 2022 Selectboard meeting, Josie Leavitt seconds. No discussion. Voted unanimously all in favor.

Minutes for the October 7, 2022 Selectboard meeting were tabled until Nov 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Highway Department Update:**

Ronnie Bushway noted that the salt and sand had been hauled and mixed. The cost of sand has gone up 50 cents a yard while salt has gone up \$13 a yard. The Kubota tractor is not working currently, needs a new battery. The hinges on the 2012 Western Star needed to get welded and was able to be done inhouse with help from South Hero Highway Department, however the truck will need a new radiator with a cost expected around \$1,000.

Ronnie Bushway did mention he believes the Town needs to a send a letter to Cianbro, company responsible for Grand Isle/North Hero Drawbridge construction project, requesting they repair damage they have caused to Griswold Road in the area to the entrance of their staging area they have on Griswold Road.

**Buildings Facilities Manager Update:**

Ronnie Bushway provides an update that Allen Landry is still expecting to replace the door to the library. Howard DeMars will be called to schedule a cleaning of town building furnaces except the Town Garage and Fire Station as another company deals with those furnaces.

Diane Cota mentioned that the front of the Town Office is very dirty with dirt and mildew. Eric Godin mentions the Town could reach out to the lawn care company the town uses, however cleaning exterior of buildings is not in the contract.

### **John Deere Tractor Update:**

Ronnie Bushway provided responses to the questions the Selectboard wished answered from its last meeting. Talking with Brad Sheridan it is unknown how many hours the 1993 John Deere Model 6200 has as the hour meter stopped working years ago. While the hour meter reads 4100 hours it is believed to be much more. At the time the Kubota tractor was purchased the trade in value for the John Deere was \$6,000 and the decision was to keep the John Deere as it has a bucket and Kubota does not and it could possibly be used at the transfer station or good to have use of a bucket. Over the years a lot of repair and money has gone into the John Deere for maintenance and replacing parts. Ronnie Bushway mentions that the John Deere tractor was purchased in 1993 for \$28,000 and in current condition Champlain Valley Equipment would take it as part of trade for \$20,000.

Jeff Parizo asks why a second mower is needed. Ronnie Bushway responded for convenience and when the Town has had two mowers it has been sure to use both mowers at the same time to mow the sides of the Towns roads. Jeff Parizo brought up the backstory of the idea when the Kubota was purchased that it would be looked at for the Highway Department to hire a part time person who in the summer would be responsible for mower and thus only needing one mower.

Diane Cota asked if the Town has investigated the surplus auction that the State of Vermont holds for its old equipment. Ronnie Bushway mentioned it has not been looked at it primarily because the State of Vermont has contracted out roadside mowing for the last few years and tractors needed are likely not in the auction.

Rachael Griggs asked if the tractors are serviced each year. Ronnie Bushway replied that the tractors are on a service plan and serviced annually.

Ronnie Bushway will reach out to Champlain Valley Equipment to have them do a full diagnosis of the John Deere tractor to see what exactly is wrong with it and the cost to replace.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **Cost of Living FY23 Rate:**

Adam White mentions that the Selectboard needs to set the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) rate for Town Departments to use for their budgets. Adam White noted that the Town in the past has generally looked to see the rate set by the Social Security Administration for Social Security Beneficiaries and noted that the State of Vermont employees are mostly union so annual increases are decided for years at a time. Adam White mentioned for FY22 the Selectboard set a COLA rate of 3%. It was asked what Social Security had set for that time period and it was mentioned 5.9%.

Ellen Paradee mentioned that the military COLA rate was recently set at 5.9%.

Eric Godin motions to set the FY24 COLA Rate at 6%, Jeff Parizo seconds. During discussion Sue Moquin notes that the warned agenda has FY23 listed and the Selectboard is setting the rate for

FY24. Eric Godin and Jeff Parizo retract their motion. Rate will be set at next Selectboard meeting.

### **IT RFP Decision**

Josie Leavitt asks Rural Solutions to explain Block Time better. Thomas Dukeshire of Rural Solutions explains that block time is a set of time each month that clients have budgeted for to call for IT help. If the client doesn't use its block time each month it gets rolled over and does not expire, however if the client uses more time than allocated it gets charged. Couper Shaw mentioned that the Rural Solutions proposal is 5 hours a month of block time allocated.

Diane Cota asks if references were checked. Couper Shaw mentioned that for VTC Tech all three references were checked with positive reviews. For Rural Solutions only one reference was able to be reached, Town of Cabot, and a positive review was given.

Josie Leavitt asks about contract term lengths. VTC Tech mentioned they offer a variety of plans including month to month, one/three/five-year contracts. Rural Solutions responded they only offer month to month, but clients can prepay if they prefer.

Diane Cota mentioned that both companies did visit the Town Office and VT Tech talked with Couper Shaw and Rural Solutions talked with Couper Shaw and did make sure to talk with office employees to hear their concerns and suggestions.

Eric Godin provided a hypothetical questions for both companies in that if the Town were to build a new town office/library/community space, would the IT company have that project be a separate account for work done. Rural Solutions mentioned the Town could use its block time for the project but there would be a separate account for the project. VTC Tech responded that under the contract this would be included as scooping for the design and consulting and that a fixed fee would be provided for project work and submitted.

Jean Prouty asks what response time would be. Rural Solutions responded that within 15 minutes of a ticket being submitted someone is reaching out. VTC Tech noted that within 20 seconds of a ticket being placed someone is on the phone and in person visits are that day or the next.

Josie Leavitt makes a motion to go with Rural Solutions for IT Services and Couper Shaw Seconds. During discussion it was noted before contracts are signed the Town attorney would need to review and approve. Motion voted unanimously.

### **Personnel Policy Discussion:**

Adam White provides the update that he has passed a redline version to Selectboard members adding in Juneteenth as a holiday and vacation accrual hours start after 6 months of employment. Adam White is still waiting to hear back from Vermont League of Cities and Towns on a cell phone use section and the Selectboard will need to decide if vacation, holiday, and sick time count toward initial 40 hours for overtime to start to incur.

### **Batchelder & Associates Audit Update:**

Adam White provides the update for the three outstanding items the W2 and payroll data information has been submitted and for the 2018 memo from the school district they are aware of this and looking for it and will provide.

Michael Inners (School Board Chair) noted that there was a broad request for information that would have taken days of staff time to compile but this request was done in a personal compacity and has been lowered to what information is requested and is manageable. Michael Inners mentioned the 2018 information is in an off site storage and he would like a request from the Selectboard if that as to what exactly is being requested. Adam White will reach out to Michael Inners on what document is being requested.

Michael Inners wanted to address some confusion about reimbursements that the school district provides to Town. The School District Board Treasurer is paid a \$3,000 stipend and once a year the School District receives a bill from the Town for reimbursement for expenses such as postage, copies and an assed portion of the Town Meeting ballot as well as inclusion in the Town Report. Michael Inners noted Grand Isle is the only Town that bills that School District for inclusion in the Town Report and for the Town Meeting Day ballot.

Josie Leavitt asked for the information requested in a personal compacity who requested this? Jeff Parizo noted he made the request and used his Selectboard email address with the reasoning if the information gathered is used later on in his capacity as a Selectboard member he did not want his personal email account to come into play for public records.

Ellen Paradee asked how much the school reimburses to Town. Michael Inners responded \$814.30 for the Town Report, \$927.15 for election staff and \$1,375.88 for ballots. Melissa Boutin mentioned that for Town Report its based on pages used for School business.

Adam White will reach out to Michael Inners on the document requested from 2018 that shows the school reimbursement to the Town.

### **National Opioid Settlement Update:**

Adam White provides the update that earlier in the year the Selectboard opted to join in on a class action lawsuit against various drug manufacturers and their role in that opioid crisis. As part of the settlement the Town of Grand Isle is expected to get around \$555 dollars. Adam White will work with Melissa Boutin on providing the needed banking information for the Town to get this settlement amount.

Eric Godin mentions that he abstains from this discussion topic as he is employed by one of the drug manufacturers involved in the lawsuit.

### **REVIEW AND SIGN WARRANTS**

Adam White makes a motion that Vice Chair Josie Leavitt signs warrants on behalf of the Selectboard, Eric Godin seconds. No discussion. Passes unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Eric Godin motions for adjournment at 7:12pm and Couper Shaw seconds. All in favor.

Minute respectfully submitted by: Adam White