

1 **TOWN OF WAITSFIELD, VERMONT**

2 **Selectboard Meeting Minutes**

3 **Monday, January 22, 2024**

4  
5 **I. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Christine Sullivan. The meeting  
6 was held in person at the Waitsfield Town Office and remotely via Zoom.

7 Members Present: Chach Curtis, Fred Messer, Brian Shupe, Christine Sullivan

8 Staff Present: Randy Brittingham, Town Treasurer; Annie Decker-Dell’Isola, Town Administrator

9 Others Present: Anthony Italiano (MRTV), Lisa Loomis (Valley Reporter), Robin Morris (Water  
10 Commission), Joshua Schwartz (Wastewater Project Team)

11  
12 **II. Regular Business.**

13  
14 **1. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 VSA 312(d)(3)(A).**

15 Approval of the minutes was removed from the Consent Agenda, as they were not included in  
16 the meeting materials.

17  
18 **2. Public Forum.**

19 Nobody requested time to address the Board.

20  
21 **3. Revisit Skatium tax exemption request.**

22 A representative had let Ms. Decker-Dell’Isola know that they would not be in attendance, and  
23 will attempt to submit a petition next year.

24  
25 **4. Review draft FY25 Budget.**

26 a. FY24 Q2 budget status update

27 Mr. Brittingham reviewed the budget for the period covering October 1 through December 31,  
28 2023, noting that all was relatively consistent with what was expected. He indicated that the  
29 higher than anticipated interest income will not continue, explained that State Highway Aid was  
30 all received earlier in the year, and that the rise in current use receipts indicates that some  
31 parcels have recently enrolled in the program. Mr. Brittingham also pointed out that some  
32 expenditures look to be on the high side, but that is related to the timing of the payments.  
33 Finally, he noted that grant money received was related to East Warren Road culvert work  
34 reimbursement and some CWSRF money for the Wastewater project.

35  
36 b. Review draft FY25 Capital Improvement Plan

37 Board members reviewed with Ms. Decker-Dell’Isola the Reserve Summary Table (balance as of  
38 December 1 and projections through end of FY) and Capital Improvement Plan (five-year  
39 outline) which she had provided.

40  
41 Ms. Decker-Dell’Isola then explained that the original plan had been to complete the East  
42 Warren Road paving in two or three phases, but that two quotes had been received for the  
43 entire stretch of road, indicating that if the Town waits until 2025, there will be enough in the  
44 associated Reserve Fund to cover the entire project. She noted that Charlie Goodman supports  
45 this approach, even though it means waiting a year. No concerns were expressed regarding any  
46 significant cost increase associated with waiting, and the grant does not expire until the end of  
47 2025; it was agreed to move forward with this plan.

48

49 The Road Department Vehicle Reserve was reviewed, it was noted that this fund will be running  
50 a deficit at the rate contributions are being made and the planned schedule of purchases. Ms.  
51 Decker-Dell'Isola confirmed that voters can approve moving funds from another Reserve, but  
52 the Board cannot do so without that approval.

53

54 The culvert inventory is from 2020, and will need to be updated in a few years in order to  
55 include further-out projections.

56

57 The planned purchase of an office printer was moved to capital expenditures rather than being  
58 included as an operating expense, as it will likely have a 10-year life span.

59

60 c. Review draft FY25 Operating Budget expenditures, revenues, and debt service schedule  
61 The draft Revenues spreadsheet was reviewed, with Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola explaining that the  
62 Town's taking on snow clearing at the school is projected to be a \$7000 charge; the school has  
63 not yet replied to communication of this information.

64

65 Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola then reviewed the line items for which she had noted changes in her staff  
66 report and for which questions were raised:

67

68 • Computer Services – covers Zoom and storage, tax map software, remote server, Adobe  
69 contract, Salesforce (currently being used for Wastewater project, but use will be  
70 expanded), purchase of Outlook for new email associated with new web site, plotter  
71 maintenance, computer replacements

72

73 • Equipment Maintenance and Contracts – includes NEMRC, elevator, generator, sprinkler  
74 system

75

76 • General Engineering Services – These expenses all fell under the East Warren Road for  
77 the current year, so are not reflected in this general line item. Going forward, there will  
78 be work required related to culverts and developing the scope of other upcoming work.  
79 It was agreed that the amount is not significant enough to create an associated Reserve  
80 account. Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola will look into historical average and possibly reduce the  
81 line for the upcoming year.

82

83 • New Wastewater Project line – specific to public outreach materials; the Town may  
84 qualify for a related grant, but the cost might exceed the \$5K included in this budget  
85 line.

86

87 • Crushed gravel – this amount was moved to create a Reserve fund for gravel purchases,  
88 which happen on alternate years.

89

90 • MRVPD – this amount is higher for the first time in a while; the PD budget is available  
91 for review for those interested.

92

93 • Sand – There is a contract in place with the current supplier, but an estimate of  
94 upcoming purchases was necessary. This is the last year with the current supplier,  
95 although another entity may take over operation of the pit.

96

97 • Town pond maintenance – funds are included to cover the potential hiring of an  
98 engineer to determine what work and reporting is necessary.

99

100 • Maintenance of Parks – The \$12K needed for mowing will no longer be necessary; town  
101 landscaping is also included here, and will tentatively be reduced due to the extra Road  
102 Crew member doing work associated with issues such as downed trees.

- 94           • Contribution to Planning Commission – It was agreed that if the proposed Reserve fund  
95           is approved, the \$12K currently in Operating will go into Reserve instead.

96

97 It was noted that any approval of new Reserve funds and associated contributions will  
98 necessitate on-the-spot recalculation of an updated tax rate for approval at Town Meeting.

99

100 There was some discussion regarding placing some more funds in the Fire Department  
101 Equipment Reserve and potentially creating and funding a Town Office Capital Reserve; as the  
102 budget increase as things stand is minimal. Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola will provide some projections  
103 related to the impact on the tax rate of increases in the budget of up to \$25K.

104

105 Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola confirmed that the budget currently reflects 3% across the board salary  
106 increases.

107

### 108 **5. Wastewater Project Updates.**

109 Joshua Schwartz provided a slide presentation, updating the Board on the progress of the  
110 Project. He explained that the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) and Environmental  
111 Information Document (EID) submissions marked the end of the planning phase; Mr. Schwartz  
112 provided a summary document of the detailed final PER.

113

114 The Project is now moving into the Final Design phase, which is anticipated to be completed in  
115 June 2024. Mr. Schwartz has met with the PC to discuss timing and coordination with their  
116 Irasville planning work, a submission to the CWSRF Project Priority List has been submitted, and  
117 a variety of State and Federal funding opportunities are being explored, with contacts  
118 established with several relevant parties. Mr. Schwartz noted that to date there have been no  
119 costs to Waitsfield taxpayers associated with the Project, and that the intent is to follow a  
120 model similar to the Water System, where users cover what is needed for loan payments after  
121 all grant monies have been received. The total amount anticipated to be sought is \$14.6M.

122

123 Mr. Schwartz outlined upcoming efforts in more detail, noting the following:

- 124           • February – property owner outreach will commence, public engagement efforts will  
125           begin
- 126           • March – information will be available regarding rankings for State grant eligibility,  
127           Congressional discretionary funding applications submitted
- 128           • April – submission of USDA Rural Development applications
- 129           • May to June – Selectboard wastewater connection decisions
- 130           • Summer – bond vote likely; November likely too late to provide show of commitment  
131           for certain funding applications, positive vote necessary by August for State ARPA  
132           funding request
- 133           • Through February 2025 – continued work through several design phases
- 134           • 2025 – Construction

135

136 Work on the immediate horizon will include creation of additional community engagement  
137 materials, outreach to Legislative and Congressional representatives, and obtaining clarity on  
138 State ARPA deadlines.

139

140 There was some discussion regarding the positive outlook on the multiple grant funding sources  
141 available; it was indicated that meeting milestones and being in the final design phase of the  
142 project benefits the Town, as there is funding available which needs to be distributed. Further  
143 information regarding a proposed date for a bond vote will be available at the next Selectboard  
144 meeting.

145

## 146 **6. Town Meeting planning.**

147 a. Discuss options for Town Meeting (in person or ballot):

148 It was agreed that the Meeting should be held in person this year, as it was last year. Kari Dolan  
149 is willing to moderate the meeting again this year.

150

151 b. Review draft Town Meeting warning

152 Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola explained that February 3 is the deadline for adoption of the Budget, but  
153 that she intends to have everything ready for final review and adoption at the January 29  
154 meeting. It was agreed that the Articles for creation of new reserve funds can be explained in  
155 the Budget or the Selectboard Report, and that they may also be discussed during the pre-Town  
156 Meeting informational session.

157

158 b. Town Report due to printer on 2/9

159 Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola will have drafts of the Selectboard Report available for review at the next  
160 meeting, and that she is working to ensure that other groups/commissions have submitted  
161 their reports. She reminded Board members that a dedication/thank you for this year's report  
162 still needs to be decided upon.

163

## 164 **7. Consent Agenda.**

165

166 **APPROVAL:** *The consent agenda was approved without objection.*

167

- 168 • Bills Payable and Treasurer's Warrants

169

## 170 **8. Selectboard Roundtable.**

171 Mr. Shupe asked Mr. Brittingham to provide a template for use in drafting an RFP for the  
172 landscape work planned at the Farley property, for which funds have been raised.

173

174 Mr. Messer noted that the General Wait House Committee held their organizational meeting  
175 earlier in the evening, and that it went well.

176

177 Mr. Shupe acknowledged that the Historical Society has offered to cover the cost of some tree  
178 removal at the Wait House property, and has obtained a quote from Whitney Tree Services.

179 Ms. Decker-Dell'Isola will get necessary clarifications regarding funding, which trees are to be  
180 removed, and so forth. Mr. Messer pointed out that public notification would be beneficial  
181 before the work begins.

182

## 183 **9. Town Administrator's Updates.**

184 The upcoming schedule was reviewed.

185

## 185 **10. Executive Session**

186 **MOTION:** *A motion to find that pursuant to 1 V.S.A § 313 (a) (1) premature general knowledge*  
187 *of confidential attorney- client communications made for the purpose of providing professional*  
188 *legal services to the public body would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a*  
189 *substantial disadvantage passed unanimously.*

190 **MOTION:** *A motion to enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (3) [Personnel] and*  
191 *1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (1F) [Confidential attorney-client communications] passed unanimously.*

192 The meeting entered Executive Session at 7:45 pm and came back into open session at 9:35 pm.

193 **IV. Other Business**

194 **1. Correspondence/reports received** were reviewed.

195 **IV. Adjourn**

196 The meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm.

197 Respectfully submitted,  
198 Carol Chamberlin, Recording Secretary