

Bristol Town Administrator's Report

January 4, 2019

The Town Administrator's Report is intended to assist the Selectboard, and in its other capacities as Water Commission, Sewer Commission, Liquor Control Commission, etc., with the conduct of their regular or special meetings. References made to enclosures relate to printed or electronic documents provided to them in advance of or at the meeting. This report is also intended to provide information to Town officials and the public about Selectboard activities and other Town affairs. Except as provided under Vermont's public records laws, all documents are available upon request.

Monday, January 7, 2019 Meeting Agenda and Materials

I. CALL TO ORDER.

Item I.1. Review agenda for addition, removal, or adjustment of any items per 1 VSA 312(d)(3)(A). Among the amendments to the open meeting law that took effect July 1, 2014 is a requirement that "an item may only be added or removed from a meeting agenda as the first order of business at the meeting. Other adjustments to an agenda may be made at any time during the meeting."

RECOMMENDATION: Review and vote on any adjustments to the agenda.

II. PUBLIC FORUM.

Item II.1. Public Forum. This is an opportunity for citizens to briefly share comments and concerns with the Board about matters not already on the agenda. Public Forum should not be used for lengthy discussion of a new topic, not only for time management of the meeting, but to allow for the public to receive notice of the matter on a future agenda.

III. REGULAR BUSINESS.

Item III.1. Budget workshop: Recreation Department and consideration of Pottery Studio contract. Enclosed is an updated FY2020 budget for the Recreation Department. As noted at the December 3 meeting, a key change from this budget from the prior year(s) is the transition from two full-time and two part-time employees to three full-time employees. Recreation Director Meridith McFarland and Hub Director Brian LaClair will be present to provide more information.

Related to the budget is a recent query regarding a contract with the Pottery Studio Artist in Residence. It is both a budget and an administrative topic. In part because of the transitions of last year, a contract has not been in place for some time. Previous contracts were signed by the Selectboard. Contracts, particularly routine ones, are often an administrative function. For example, the Recreation Department has contracts and agreements with numerous instructors that the Selectboard is not directly involved in. A question here is to what degree the Selectboard wishes to continue to be involved in signing off on Pottery Studio contracts in the future.

RECOMMENDATION: Determine if more information is needed. Decide how Pottery Studio contracts should be handled in the future.

Item III.2. Budget workshop: Police Department. Enclosed is the proposed FY2020 budget for the Police Department. It reflects the current configuration of three full-time employees and two part-time employees. Chief Nason will be present to address any questions.

You'll notice that the proposed budget includes an Administration line item for \$5,800. As it relates to the discussion in the next agenda item, this administrative allocation is proposed to be eliminated. It is still reflected in the proposed budget pending the outcome of that recommendation, in which case, that expense would be absorbed back in the General Fund.

RECOMMENDATION: Determine if more information is needed.

Item III.3. Budget workshop: General Fund overview. Enclosed is a work-in-progress draft of the FY2020 General Fund. It reflects the departmental budgets reviewed to date and the overall operating budget. Input is still pending from the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer on other areas of the overall budget. This is an opportunity to double check that department budgets already reviewed have been accurately incorporated in the overall budget.

Administrative Expenses. In prior budgets, expenses (salary and benefits) associated with the Administrative Assistant, Town Clerk/Treasurer, and Town Administrator were divvied up among the various departments based on presumed percentages reflecting the level of support provided. Because the Administrative Assistant's role and level of support to other departments has evolved over the past year, a significant change is proposed: creation of a new section in the budget for the Administrative Assistant and elimination of the proportional administrative expenses to the other departments, with the exception of the water and sewer enterprise funds. The formulas and tracking for budget purposes is cumbersome and, at this point, of questionable value, since it is all coming from the same General Fund. Though the Police Department is a separate district, it has evolved to require much less front office support than in the past, so its proportion would be negligible.

The operating budget is a tool to ensure we match our financial resources with the delivery of essential and desired levels of services to the community. The departmental and program budgets should reflect their direct expenses and needs, with the overarching premise that we are all working together to deliver those services.

Please note: the salaries and benefits lines of the Clerk/Treasurer, Town Administrator, and the new Administrative Assistant sections in this draft General Fund budget have not been updated to reflect any adjustments or corrections. These will be adjusted depending on the feedback from this recommendation and will be in better shape for the next meeting.

COLA. The draft budget currently bakes in a 2% increase in salaries for FY2020. What other municipalities and organizations are using to budget for cost of living adjustments is all over the map. Enclosed is information from various sources relevant to Vermont and the northeastern consumer price index. The Selectboard may wish to discuss this in Executive Session as it relates to personnel matters.

Petitioned Appropriation Requests. The two and potentially three new petitioned appropriation requests have not yet been reflected in this budget draft.

RECOMMENDATION: Discussion. Determine if additional information is needed.

Item III.4. Bristol Core Area Sewer upgrade: consider authorization to reapply for the 2020 CWSRF priority list, initiate an RFQ process for engineering services, and to proceed with a CWSRF planning loan application. Enclosed is the Bristol Core Area Sewer report from January 2018 prepared by Green Mountain Engineering (GME). GME has assisted the Town of Bristol over the years with keeping this project on the State's Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF) Project Priority List. In addition to evaluating the options to increase the capacity of the sewer system, the report identifies critical components of the system that need immediate attention.

Also enclosed is an e-mail from Thomas Brown from the Vermont ANR Dept. of Environmental Conservation notifying us that the project has been bypassed for FY2019 Project Priority List for construction funding. A requirement for eligibility is the submission of a Preliminary Engineering Report (PER), which is like a NEPA environmental review that assess a range of potential environmental and other impacts of the project. The CWSRF program also requires that the engineer selected to complete the PER be procured through a request for qualifications (RFQ) process. Once an engineer is selected based on qualifications, the scope of work and fee would be negotiated. If the negotiations do not work out, we would go to the next on the qualified list.

However, the CWSRF program offers planning loans at 0% percent interest with no payments for five years. I believe the payback period is 15 years. In addition, a 50% subsidy of the principal is currently being offered. A planning loan would fund the development of the PER and perhaps identify possible funding options in addition to a CWSRF construction loan.

Although the price tag for the recommended sewer capacity upgrade in the January 2018 report is daunting, the report also outlines important maintenance issues that need to be dealt with regardless. The PRE could potentially approach the project in two ways: the entire upgrade package and alternatively, a focus on the more immediate improvements without the capacity upgrade at this time. Having the PRE completed would enable the Town to apply for a CWSRF construction loan.

RECOMMENDATION: Authorize the Town Administrator to initiate the RFQ process for engineering services to prepare the Preliminary Engineering Report. Consider establishing a review committee consisting of members of the Bristol CORE board, a Selectboard representative, and perhaps a member of the district. Authorize GME to assist the town in applying for a planning loan for the PRE engineering services and for reapplying to get on the FY2020 CWSRF Project Priority List for construction.

Item III.5. Review of preliminary Town Meeting warning. Enclosed is draft warning for Town Meeting. Thursday, January 17 is the deadline for petitioned articles with 5% verified voter signatures to be submitted for inclusion on the warning. Unless a special meeting is needed on January 28, we should plan on finalizing it at the January 21 meeting.

Shaded appropriation requests have not yet been received. A new letter of request from NeighborWorks of Western Vermont for \$500 was received, but the required petition has not been provided yet. If a qualifying petition is received by Jan. 17, it would be added to the warning as a new article.

Articles 10 and 11 will need to be updated to reflect the actual descriptions included in the enclosed petition pages for Turning Point and Habitat for Humanity, which I received after the draft warning was already copied. (I based the descriptions from their Web sites.)

At the January 14 meeting, we will be discussing the capital budget, undesignated general funds, use of the proceeds from the sale of the Stoney Hill/Lovers Lane properties and the Andrew Johnson bequest. A proposal to reallocate some of the undesignated fund balance to a particular use or uses will need voter approval as an additional article on the warning.

RECOMMENDATION: Corrections or adjustments as needed.

Item III.6. Consider Errors and Omissions Report from the Bristol Listers related to the 2018 Grand List. Enclosed is a report from the Listers identifying two corrections to be made to the Grand List.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval.

Item III.7. Approval of meeting minutes of December 17, 2018 and January 8, 2018. Draft minutes for the December 17, 2018 and January 8, 2018 (last year) meetings are still in progress and are not enclosed. If not e-mailed and posted prior to Monday's meeting, they should be available by the next meeting.

V. OTHER BUSINESS.

Item V.1. Correspondence, documents, reports received.

- Correspondence, received 01/02/2019, from Claire Corkin regarding the Silver Maple.
- Letter of support, 12/28/2018, from the Addison County Regional Planning Commission for the Bristol Trail Network's grant application to the VT Recreational Trail Program.
- Letter from Vergennes Police Chief George Merkel, 12/28/2018, re grant-funded Addison County Traffic Safety Coordinator Support.
- Letter from the VT Dept. of Taxes, 12/24/2018, re 2018 equalization study results.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION.

The Selectboard may deliberate in Executive Session per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3) regarding the appointment or evaluation of a public officer or employee, potential real estate negotiations per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(2), and/or potential contract negotiations per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(1)(A).

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Woodland Apartments Water Connection

The connection of the Woodland Apartments to the municipal water system was completed on December 22, 2018 and is now a consecutive water system. We thank Susan Bowen, Tyler Billingsley of East Engineering, Jamie Simpson and Alan Huizenga of Green Mountain Engineering, Cyrus Marsano of Vermont Utility Management Services, and the DeBisschop Excavating team for nothing short of leaping tall buildings to make this happen. The wells serving the Woodland Apartments have been abandoned and source protection area will be eliminated, opening up redevelopment opportunities for areas of Stoney Hill, Lovers Lane, and Woodland Apartments. We are working with VTUMS and the State to ensure the appropriate management systems for the Woodland Apartments consecutive water system are in place.

Town Reports Due

Reminder: Department heads and agency representatives are asked to please provide your 2018 annual reports to Administrative Assistant Sharon Lucia at town@bristolvt.org no later than Tuesday, January 8, 2019. She would prefer reports in Word and/or Excel in case something needs to be tweaked. Photos, illustrations, graphs, or other enhancements are welcomed.

Selectboard and Town Administrator Annual Reports

Selectboard Chair Peter Coffey and I began working on our respective annual reports and realized there are a lot of areas that overlap. Because a lot happened over this past year, the range of topics we want to report on is lengthy, which translates into two long, potentially redundant reports. So, we are kicking around the idea of consolidating them.

Schedule

Unless otherwise noted, I expect to be in the office from 8:00am to 4:30pm.

Week of Jan. 7

Monday: 6:00pm – Selectboard.

Tuesday: In by 12:00noon.

Thursday: 7:30am PT appointment. I expect to be in by 9:30am.
3:00pm – ACEDC Economic Development Strategy Committee in Middlebury.

Week of Jan. 14

Monday: 6:00pm – Selectboard.

Tuesday: 9:00am–3:00pm - Master Scenario Events List (MSEL) conference, Berlin. This is a preparatory event for the Category 4 statewide emergency response exercise planned for October 2019.

Thursday: 7:30am – ACEDC board meeting.

Friday: 10:00am – meeting with Meridith and VLCT loss control rep.

Upcoming Meetings

Below are meetings that citizens, staff, board members, or others might be interested in. Underlined entries include on-line links for more information about the organization.

- [Selectboard](#): Mon., Jan. 7, 6:00pm, at Holley Hall.
- [Planning Commission](#): Tues., Jan. 8, 7:00pm, at Holley Hall -- *tentative*
- [Conservation Commission](#): Thurs., Jan. 10, 6:00pm, at Holley Hall.
- [Selectboard](#): Mon., Jan. 14, 6:00pm, at Holley Hall.
- [Planning Commission](#): Tues., Jan. 15, 7:00pm, at Holley Hall.
- [Bristol Energy Committee](#): Weds., Jan. 16, 7:00pm, at Lawrence Memorial Library.
- [Selectboard](#): Mon., Jan. 21, 6:00pm, at Holley Hall.
- [Bristol CORE](#): Weds., Jan. 30, 9:00am, Holley Hall.

Upcoming Agenda Items

Likely agenda items for upcoming meetings include:

- Consider computer security services from DominionTech.
- Preliminary capital budget review.
- Consider recommendations for the Andrew Johnson bequest.
- Bristol Fire Dept. policies review.
- Select Main Street Lighting & Sidewalk project engineer.
- Town Report review.
- Human Powered Parade request.
- VTrans 2019 Highway Mileage Certification.
- Continued appointment/reappointment of local officials.
- Water Ordinance updates.
- Adirondack View right-of-way status.
- Police Union contract review.
- Continued consideration of the Orchard Terrace water line extension and cash flow projections.
- Other stuff.

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Capels, Town Administrator