

## Town of Pittsford SELECT BOARD MEETING – December 4, 2024 – DRAFT

MEMBERS PRESENT: Alicia Malay, David Mills, Thomas Hooker, Mark Winslow and Dan Adams.

OTHERS PRESENT: Karen Rhodes, Vicki Disorda, Rick Conway, Joseph Bertrand, Ann Reed, Charles “Butch” Shaw, Lyle Jepson, Lisa Wright, Chris Shaner, Olivia Bucksbaum, David Atherton – Town Manager, Kelly Giard – Recording Secretary

The Select Board was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chair Malay.

Chair Malay stated that there was a need to remove Executive Session #2.

Chair Malay stated that there no need to amend the agenda. Motion by D. Mills and seconded by T. Hooker to adopt the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously 5– 0.

### **MINUTES:**

The November 13, 2024 budget meeting minutes and the November 20, 2024 regular meeting were signed no corrections.

### **TOWN MANAGER REPORT:**

Town Manager Atherton reported the following:

- The Tri-Town Trail scoping study met at the Rutland Regional Planning Commission on November 20, 2024 and the group was able to finalize most of the trail segments in the 3 towns. Some of the organizers of the Pine Hill Park trails were present and shared their experiences and expertise. The Select Board will receive a copy of the plan once Stantec has completed the draft plan.
- Attended the RRPC TAC meeting, also on November 20, 2024. This was a joint meeting with Addison County Planning Commission. VTRANS was present to discuss the Route 7 segments. Segment 4 is supposed to go to bid in early 2025 for late fall construction date. Segments 2 and 3 are still in Right of Way negotiations. (segment 4 is from Kendall Hill Road to Otter Valley, segment 2 is through town and segment 3 is from Plains Road to Kendall Hill Road).
- The Ford F 600 truck was received. Chad and the Town Manager will be making arrangements to deliver to the vendor chosen for the body and accessory installation.
- The Plains Road sewer line replacement project is making progress with 5 manhole covers installed.
- Bridge 108 construction update includes traffic control will be present during the working hours on Monday through Friday for intermittent one-way alternating traffic on Route 7; form work continues for the bridge deck.

The Select Board members also received the Recreation Department report, letter from the Department of Environmental Conversation (the Sanitary Survey Letter, which the items mentioned in the letter are being reviewed and repaired/addressed.); an invitation to the VLCT Advocacy Chats and the Police Department statistics.

**SELECTBOARD MEMBER REMARKS:**

M. Winslow inquired the status of the delinquent tax collections. Ann Reed reported that there is approximately \$236,000 to be paid and that the 6% penalty has been added and some property owners have come forward and made some agreements. Ms. Reed also stated that she will be attending a Tax Sale Law Webinar.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None presented at this time.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Budget Discussion:**

Town Manager Atherton reported that he met recently with Chief Hemple to discuss budgets and stated that there was approximately \$409,000 in the reserve fund for fire department vehicle replacement. Chief Hemple stated that there is not going to be a truck to be replaced for approximately 8 years. Town Manager Atherton has spoken with the leasing company regarding the balance due on the ladder truck, which is approximately \$180,000 and to pay this off would save approximately \$20,000 in interest charges. The only thing the fire department may be required to purchase in the near future is a new pump on the tanker truck. Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by D. Mills to pay off the ladder truck lease. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

Ms. Reed stated that the revenues have been adjusted to increase the delinquent penalty income from \$15,000 to \$18,000; and increasing the delinquent interest income from \$12,000 to \$15,000. D. Mills inquired if any of the income amounts have decreased amounts, which Ms. Reed stated they have not been decreased, other than the COPS grant income due to the payout amounts for the grant.

**Syndicate Road/Carver Street Discussion:**

Selectman Mills reclused himself from discussion on this topic.

Town Manager Atherton reported that the Brandon Select Board has had no contact with Pittsford and the process that has to happen is that both towns need to agree on the closure of a road that crosses into an additional town. Town Manager Atherton expressed concern of overgrowth if the road is closed and gated. Fire Chief Hemple also expressed concern as this is a road that is used when there is a reason to close nearby roads. Joseph Bertrand, a Brandon resident spoke and stated that the steel bridge is in good shape and would be too costly to rebuild, however, Brandon is proposing the closure of this road due to trash. Mr. Bertrand stated that there are volunteers that are willing to clean the trash and would like to see some cameras installed and more law enforcement patrol. Mr. Bertrand stated that the trash has been found to belong to residents of other towns. Mr. Bertrand stated that the area is

handicap/wheelchair accessible for folks to hunt and fish. Mr. Bertrand stated that he would like to see this as a public vote and not just a board vote. Karen Rhodes, also a Brandon resident spoke and stated that this is a nice road to just take a ride as there is not a lot of traffic and the elderly residents enjoy riding in that area. Ms. Rhodes stated that this is a fire access road. She is also concerned that closing would restrict people that are in wheelchairs that like to be in nature. Ms. Rhodes stated that there are drug deals that happen in this area and feels that there needs to be signs outlining the fines for violations in the area. Ms. Rhodes stated that the e-bike renters look at something like this as “exclusive” and does not include all folks. Vicki Disorda, also a Brandon resident stated that disabled hunters and people that enjoy fishing would not have this area and would be excluded from enjoying nature. Ms. Disorda explained that in a recent Brandon Select Board packet, it was noted that Brandon has the power to close the road and Pittsford could appeal the decision. Town Manager Atherton stated that both towns have to agree to the closure and the decision would need to be reviewed by the State Transportation Board. Chris Shaner, also a Brandon resident stated that he has legal permits to hunt from the road and enjoys fishing in the area. T. Hooker stated that it is a good idea to have cameras on Syndicate Road. Rick Conway asked that the Select Board notify those that attended this meeting to know the outcome of the road closing proposal. D. Adams inquired if the trash was the reason to close the road. Ms. Disorda explained that the Town of Brandon has stated that they pay \$1,000 to clean up the trash and she feels that this is “extreme” to close the road, especially with other expenses in the town. T. Hooker stated that once a road is “given up”, you don’t get it back.

Ms. Rhodes, Ms. Disorda, Mr. Shaner, Mr. Bertrand and Mr. Conway exited at 6:55 PM.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **CEDDR & Real Rutland VT Marketing Initiative:**

Olivia Bucksbaum and Lyle Jepson were present to update the Select Board on the happenings within CEDDR and the Real Rutland VT Marketing Initiative. Town Manager Atherton will be meeting with Mr. Jepson on the possibility of acquiring Northern Borders Grant funding for infrastructure lines for Plains Road to Kendall Hill so the project will be shovel ready for the Route 7 upgrade. Mr. Jepson stated that the Recreation Director is serving on the Marketing Committee. Ms. Bucksbaum reported that each participating town has 1 Concierge Volunteer and that Pittsford has 1 new resident from the “Weekend Getaway” that is issued for families that are looking to relocate to Vermont. Chair Malay inquired if the residents that are moving to the county have current jobs in the county or if they are remote workers. Ms. Bucksbaum stated that there is a mixture of remote and local employees with some of the remote workers looking for employment in the local area. Mr. Shaw stated that he supports the initiative, however, housing is a concern in the area. Mr. Shaw stated that the housing that is proposed for Killington will spread to other towns.

Mr. Jepson and Ms. Bucksbaum exited at 7:29 PM.

Motion by D. Mills and seconded by T. Hooker to continue sponsoring the Real Vermont marketing initiative by CEDRR at a cost of \$3,000 per year for the FY2026 budget. Motion passed 4 – 1.

**Reappraisal RFQ Needed:**

Lisa Wright was present to discuss the starting of the reappraisal process. Currently, there is \$124,095.86 in the account and the cost will be much higher once the reappraisal is completed. There was discussion on the Education Funding and the investment of the funds for the town to benefit from the funds. Currently, there is not investment of these funds. Motion by M. Winslow and seconded by D. Mills to start the RFP process. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0. Ms. Wright will work with the Town Manager and the Assistant to the Town Manager to draft an RFP.

**Personal Property Tax Appraisal:**

Lisa Wright was present and explained that she is not qualified to do Personal Property Tax assessments and the inventory needs to be filed yearly by the local businesses. Ms. Wright explained that personal property is 10% of the town's grand list. Ms. Wright stated that she is not comfortable signing off on the grand list without a Personal Property Assessor. D. Mills stated that he was under the impression that this was an exercise that was for 2 – 3 years and was not aware that this was an annual evaluation. D. Adams inquired how the Air BNB's were assessed. Mr. Shaw explained that there is a state tax on short term rentals. D. Adams inquired if the furnishings were included. Motion by M. Winslow and seconded by T. Hooker to accept the proposal from G & K Associates for (36 leasing accounts for \$2,000 total; 86 field accounts for \$12,000 total; valuation of newly appraised businesses at \$480 per account; meetings at \$1,600 per day). Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

**Bids for Body for new F600 Truck:**

Bids were received from Viking (\$78,300) and Fairfield (\$88,500), however, D. Mills had contact information for another vendor that the Town Manager will contact. This item is tabled until a future meeting.

**Act on Orders \$453,088.34; Payroll \$14,835.37 (town) and \$44,708.59 (Fire Department):**

The orders were signed with no discussion.

Motion by M. Winslow and seconded by T. Hooker to enter into Executive Session at 8:15 PM. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

In accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 313(a) where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the municipality or person involved at a substantial disadvantage to discuss the appointment, employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee, provided that a public body must make the final hiring or appointment decision and explain its reason for the decision, in open meeting. 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) to include the Town Manager and the Assistant to the Town Manager.

Motion by Chair Malay and seconded by T. Hooker to exit Executive Session at 8:30 PM with the following action taken: Motion by Chair Malay and seconded by M. Winslow to approve the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge Legal Defense Plan, Level 2 to be reviewed on an annual basis. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

Motion by D. Adams and seconded by M. Winslow to enter into the second Executive Session at 8:32 PM. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

In accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 313(a) where premature general public knowledge would clearly place the municipality or person involved at a substantial disadvantage to discuss the appointment, employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee, provided that a public body must make the final hiring or appointment decision and explain its reason for the decision, in open meeting. 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) to include the Town Manager.

Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by D. Adams to exit Executive Session at 8:55 PM with no action taken.

Motion by T. Hooker and seconded by D. Mills to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously 5 – 0.

The next regular Select Board meeting will be held on December 18, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Giard  
Recording Secretary

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Alicia Malay, Chair

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David Mills, Vice Chair

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Thomas Hooker, Selectman

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Dan Adams, Selectman

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Mark Winslow, Selectman