

GUILFORD SELECTBOARD MEETING
Monday, April 27, 6:30 pm, 236 School Road, Guilford, VT

SELECTBOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Sheila Morse, Mike Szostak, Kim Frost, Chip Carter, Tara Cheney (Zoom)

STAFF PRESENT: Erika Elder, Elly Majonen, Jim Freeman, Uriel Najera (zoom)

PRESENT IN PERSON: Tammy Sargent, Deborah McNeil, Kyle Parker, Dolores Clark, Rick Zamore, Jeannette Tokarz, Steve Lembke, Verandah Porche

PRESENT VIA ZOOM:

Cindy Clark, Laurie Carter, Kerri and Paul Beebe, Lyle Howe, Sheila Adams, Amber Hunt & Judith Serkiin
Kerri and Paul Beebe, Elise and Andy Burrows, Pat Haine

Minutes

- I. Call to Order by Sheila at 6:30 commenting on strong meeting attendance
- II. Rules of Procedure read by Chip
- III. Welcoming of Public; Community Comment Period
Verandah: BBCC Mothers Day Brunch at 7:00 am. Elly: Green-Up Day is Saturday 5.2
- IV. Changes to Agenda Order (none)
- V. Announcements
 - a. Special Town Meeting Process Overview - Rick Zamore
Rick: There is one Article and if that passes, there is another article. Tara and Jeannette will take questions. Rick asks if SB will be there. Sheila says not a SB meeting. Verandah Porche recommended to arrange chairs in a circle for the meeting.
 - b. 4/13/26 Selectboard Meeting Error Acknowledgement
Sheila read a statement concerning 4.13.26 Correspondence about Act 181. This correspondence was added to the Agenda without notice of potential Motion being taken. On 4.18 SB received a letter requesting the drafted letter not be sent. The letter was not sent. Deb McNeil noted an additional procedural error that there was a vote with no motion or second.
- VI. Updates & Reports
 - a. Highway (5 minutes)
Roads are dry and postings are removed. Salt vendor came through. Foreman meeting coming up. Both salt and sand sheds are full. Generator at garage is getting old, needs to be addressed. Grading continues. In May we try to grade and chloride every road and grade. Green-Up day two trucks at BBCC for metal and other trash.
 - b. Town Administrator (5 Minutes)
VTrans letter has been sent to District Manager. Marc Pickering followed up saying he would send it up to Montpelier Operations. ARPA reporting due April 30. Guilford Permit

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Guide is available at the Town Office and website. Working on a job description for Selectboard liaisons to Commissions. Vernon holding informational meeting about Act 181.

Steve Lembke: VPR recent show on 181 Jeannette described Permit Guide. Jeannette described the new Permit Guide. Tammy asked about decision to send the letter to VTrans but not to Legislators. Tammy also asked about ARPA funds and the Algiers Scoping Study.

c. Library

Amber Hunt & Judith Serkin shared a flyer with March statistics. Poetry and Sound workshop ages 8-12 completed. Participants were invited to Guilford Sound. Kids' Writing Workshop for 8-10 year olds also completed. Upcoming programs: Zumbini, Sandglass puppet show, Library Dance Party. "Little Library Big Programs" Linda H comment. Judith: Trustees are working on a new Strategic Plan. Two new Trustees. John Shaw is the new chair. Shifting the bookkeeping to the Town. Thanks to Elly.

d. Guilford Conservation Commission

Linda Hecker: Natural Resource Inventory is available free online or printed for \$20. #13 covers the printing costs, \$7 goes to the Guilford Conservation Fund.. Guilford Conservation Fund helps landowners with legal costs related to conservation. We share info at Town Meeting and the Guilford Fair, Front Porch Forum. Act 59 is another state conservation Act we are monitoring. New series of monthly walks planned, Weeks Forest Trail Maintenance. Will work with the Library on invasives there. Series of three Beaver public meetings. Beaver Deceiver built at the Fairground and a working group of residents. Co-sponsored iNaturalist challenge. Act 59 is a conservation act that overlaps with Act 181. 59 (incentives) is a carrot (regulations), 181 is a stick. Identifying critical natural habitats. Known as 30x30/50x50. Currently in year 2 of 3. 27% of VT is already conserved. Act 59 included community outreach and input. Deb MacNeil asked about Current Use land being not considered conserved. Linda answered that current use land isn't considered conserved for the future and not included in the 27% figure. Steve Lembke asked if people are notified that the \$7 is a donation.

VII. New Business

a. Online Donations to Guilford Conservation Fund **ACTION: MOTION** (5 minutes)

Request from Conservation Commission for Treasurer to set up online donations to the Guilford Conservation Fund via Municipay

Linda formally requested the Town set up Guilford Conservation Fund to accept online payments. Elly Donations would go from the Municipay account to the Conservation Fund, is reconciled and moved monthly.

MOTION: Sheila moved to authorize the Treasurer to set up online donations Guilford Conservation via Municipay. Mike seconded. Kim asked about fees. Elly answered that Municipay charges users a fee. The Town doesn't pay any fees. The vote was by roll call. All were in favor, no objections, no abstentions. Motion passed.

b. SB Community Engagement Strategy -**DISCUSSION**

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- i. Solicit Feedback on Communicating with Residents who are Not Online for SB to Consider and Act On at a Future Meeting

Chip read several ideas about communication to residents who aren't online and reiterated current practice.

1. Proposal from Town Clerk - Textmygov

TMG is municipality-focused company that provides text-based updates to residents. It's important to talk about how we share info with residents. TMG seems like a good starting point, on the expensive side. Thinking of people who aren't online. For this program we would need SB support, then Town support. If SB is interested, Uriel can set up a demo for the SB.

Jeannette: Has there been an attempt to ask people what they would prefer for communication? Using a smartphone platform may not reach people who aren't online.

Rick suggested utilizing hub managers who can include information in packets.

Verandah: What are the top 10 questions being asked? What is the key info people want to have?

Dolores: I got a postcard about registering dogs but not Special Town Meeting.

Elly: Thinking about staff time.

Jeannette suggested robocalls. Tara: comments about opt-ins. TextmyGov expensive and requires online opt-in.

Uriel: Make a paper survey available at the Special Town Meeting and all gathering places.

Sheila: Can Uriel and Erika create a survey to bring to the 5.6 Town Meeting. Use table at Guilford Fair for getting sign-ups.

- c. Highway Crew recruitment and retention - **DISCUSSION**

- i. Apprise Residents of Challenges Guilford is Facing and Solicit Feedback

Mike: Our Crew is four of five. Fortunate to have previous crew members help out. Open positions not getting applicants. We compared crew pay to other towns. Crew pay is low. Three of the four are at or near retirement age. Please share your ideas for the next meeting.

1. Steve L suggested a Signing Bonus after a probationary period.
2. Verandah suggested an article in Reformer and Commons interviewing present & past crew members about what they like about the work.
3. Dolores: how do the benefits compare to Brattleboro for instance?
4. Chip: Benefits don't have the pull for younger applicants.
5. Kim: VMERS has a standard contribution. Health benefits have room.
6. Sheila: Benefits Policy also applies to everyone on staff.
7. Mike: Vermont is the second oldest state. Another option is to have a non-CDL option.
8. Tara: National shortage of laborers and CDL drivers. We should be talking about the benefits total.
9. Steve: Job Titles are inexpensive and can make a difference.

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10. Sheila: We will talk about this at the May 11 meeting.

VIII. Finance **ACTION: MOTION**

- a. Budget Status
- a. Warrants

Payroll - WE 04.19.26	\$7,969.21
Payroll – WE 04.26.26	\$6,594.52
Expense Warrant #2620	\$86,696.07
Expense Warrant #2620F	\$125.00
TOTAL	\$101,384.80

MOTION: Tara moved to accept the warrants. Chip seconded. The vote was by roll call. All were in favor, no objections, no abstentions. Motion passed.

IX. Approval of Minutes **ACTION: MOTION**

- a. Minutes of the regular meeting of 04.13.26

MOTION: Sheila moved to approve. Kim seconded. The vote was by roll call. All were in favor, no objections, no abstentions. Motion passed.

X. Other Business

XI. Correspondence **ACTION: MOTION**

- a. Letter Requesting SB 04.13.26 Letter to Legislators not be sent (10 minutes)

Potential MOTION: Consider Rescinding Decision to Send Letter Approved on 4.13.26

MOTION: Sheila moved to rescind the motion to send the letter approved 4.13. Kim seconded. Tammy asked why not send it. Sheila: Legislation moved so fast the letter would have been irrelevant. Tammy: Act 181 is not good for the Town of Guilford. Ask the Town what they feel about it. Sheila: Individuals should send letters. The SB originally asked for legislative action to slow down. Tammy: Many Selectboards and Planning Commissions are opposing. There is nothing positive for Guilford. Jeannette: Act 181 attempted to encourage conservation. Tier 3 and the Road Rule are likely to be repealed. More detail at Wednesday's Planning Commission Meeting. Without Tier 3 and the Road Rule the impact on Guilford is minimal. The state is working on community engagement. Sheila would like the SB to be guided by the Planning Commission's work on this and community feeling. Tammy: Have a meeting and hear from the town. Jeannette: Some elements are positive. Jeannette proposes a position paper. Elly watched some testimony. Over 4000 people showed up to complain. Jeannette: Tier 2 is status quo.

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Tara: I don't approve of the letter. It doesn't represent what everyone feels. The Selectboard doesn't know what everyone in Guilford feels. Vote was by Roll Call: Tara abstained; all others in favor.

- XII. Actions from Previous Meeting
- a. Approved letter to VTrans re: GCR/Rte 5 intersection
 - b. Approved 2026 VTrans Town Roads & Bridge Standards
 - c. Adopted the TA 60 Annual Financial Plan
 - d. Authorized FY27 Town Highway grant applications
 - e. Authorized letter of intent to VTrans Grants in Aid FY27
 - f. Adopted the 2026-2027 LEMP
 - g. Reviewed and tabled NEWA
 - h. Reviewed Email and Social Media Policy
 - i. Amended procedure to create policy on SB correspondence
 - j. Approved policy on SB correspondence
 - k. Approved Warrants
 - l. Approved the minutes of the regular meeting of 03.23.26
 - m. Agreed to send a letter to VT Legislature on Act 181
 - n. Entered into Executive Session with no action
- XIII. Action Taken
- a. Approved online donations to Conservation Fund
 - b. Approved Warrants
 - c. Approved 4.13.26 minutes.
 - d. Agreed to not send letter to Legislators
- XIV. Actions to be Taken
- Advertise community engagement issue and get input on Highway recruitment.
- XV. Adjournment
- MOTION: Chip moved and Kim seconded. The vote was by roll call. All were in favor, no objections, no abstentions. Motion passed.

ADDENDUM: Statement regarding 4.13.26 error

Meeting Video: <https://www.brattleborotv.org/guilford-selectboard/guilford-selectboard-mtg-4-27-26/>

Next meeting 05.11.26

Sheila Morse

Tara Cheney

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Chip Carter

Michael Szostak

Kim Frost
