

SANDGATE VERMONT TOWN PLAN REVIEW AND SELECTBOARD MINUTES – JANUARY 2, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:05 pm

ATTENDANCE: Board Members: Karen Dzialo, Joe Nolan, Charlie Pike and Karen Tendrup. Also present: Elizabeth Daut, Linda Schmidt and minute taker, Sandy Reidy.

CITIZENS CONCERNS: No citizen's concerns.

OTHER BUSINESS: Sandy Reidy states that the proposed budget needs to be completed by the Selectboard by the 26th of January, for the warning to be out in time. Karen Tendrup makes a motion that the board meet Wednesday January 11, 2023, for an Executive Meeting regarding the budget. Karen Dzialo seconds. All in favor

REVIEW DECEMBER 19, 2022 MINUTES: The Board reviews the minutes. Karen Tendrup makes a motion to approve the minutes. Karen Dzialo seconds. Minutes approved.

SIGN ORDERS: The Selectmen sign the orders.

ADJOURN: Joe Nolan makes a motion to adjourn. Charlie Pike seconds.
Meeting adjourned at 6:26 pm.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY JANUARY 16, 2022 AT 6:00 IN THE SANDGATE TOWN HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy.

A complete recording of these minutes is available upon request.

SELECTBOARD MINUTES – JANUARY 16, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:05 pm

ATTENDANCE: Board Members: Karen Dzialo, Joe Nolan, Charlie Pike and Karen Tendrup.
Also present: Elizabeth Daut, Linda Schmidt and minute taker, Sandy Reidy.

CITIZENS CONCERNS: No citizen concerns.

OTHER BUSINESS: No other business.

REVIEW JANUARY 2, 2022 MINUTES: The Board reviews the minutes. Karen Tendrup makes a motion to approve the minutes. Karen Dzialo seconds. Minutes approved.

SIGN ORDERS: The Selectmen sign the orders.

ADJOURN: Joe Nolan makes a motion to adjourn. Charlie Pike seconds.
Meeting adjourned at 6:24 pm.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY FEBRUARY 6, 2022 AT 6:00
IN THE SANDGATE TOWN HALL.**

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy.

A complete recording of these minutes is available upon request.

SELECTBOARD MINUTES – FEBRUARY 6, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:02 pm

ATTENDANCE: Board Members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike and Karen Tendrup. Also present: Linda Schmidt and Minute Taker, Eleanor Lacross.

CITIZENS CONCERNS: None.

There was a discussion about the dirt roads being icy.
Also discussed was the cleaning of the Town Hall and the garage.
Cemetery maintenance was discussed. The road crew will install a culvert in the driveway to cemetery.

REVIEW JANUARY 16, 2023 MINUTES: John Phelps makes a motion to approve the minutes. Karen Tendrup seconds. Minutes approved.

ORDERS WERE SIGNED

OTHER BUSINESS: No other business.

Karen made a motion to adjourn and Charlie seconded.
Meeting was adjourned at 6:35 PM.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY FEBRUARY 20, 2022
AT 6:00 IN THE SANDGATE TOWN HALL.**

Respectfully submitted, Eleanor Lacross

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECT BOARD MEETING – FEBRUARY 20, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:02 pm

ATTENDANCE: Board Members: Karen Dzialo, Joe Nolan, Charlie Pike and Karen Tendrup (on speaker phone). Also present: Elizabeth Daut, Suzy dePeyster, Vonda Grogan, Eleanor Lacross, Marge Peff, Peter Peff, Linda Schmidt, and minute taker, Sandy Reidy.

ABATEMENT REQUEST: The abatement request was cancelled by the tax payer.

CITIZENS CONCERNS: Vonda Grogan, who is helping her brother that owns a home on Chunks Brook, has requested Selectmen and Health officer; Karen Tendrup advise them on what more needs to be cleaned up on the property. Vonda says her brother's home, which had gone up for tax sale, has been paid off in the time allotted. Marge Peff is concerned with the appearance of the roadside brush and tree removal on the West Sandgate Road. She had inquired if there is a road work plan available. Joe Nolan explains that the road crew turn in a weekly work log at the end of the week and road work is planned according to the weather and time of year. Marge would like to know if the roadsides will be seeded before the spring. Joe states that he will talk to the road crew and find out.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer, Sandy Reidy submits the Treasurer's Report to the Selectboard present. Sandy states that we have received \$91,000 in FEMA grant money.

OTHER BUSINESS: No other business.

REVIEW FEBRUARY 6, 2023 MINUTES: The Board reviews the minutes. Charlie Pike makes a motion to approve the minutes. Joe Nolan seconds. Minutes approved.

SIGN ORDERS: The Selectmen sign the orders.

ADJOURN: Charlie Pike makes a motion to adjourn. Karen Dzialo seconds.

Meeting adjourned at 6:59 pm

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2023
AT 6:00 IN THE SANDGATE TOWN HALL.**

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy.

SELECTBOARD MINUTES – WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:03 pm

ATTENDANCE: Board Members: Joe Nolan, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt and Karen Tendrup. Also present: John Grover, Jessica Hill, Margaret Phelps, Sheila Kearns & minute taker, Sandy Reidy.

APPOINTMENT OF TOWN OFFICIALS: The current elected Selectboard: Charlie Pike, John Phelps, Linda Schmidt and Karen Tendrup, are sworn in. John Phelps makes a motion to appoint Joe Nolan as Chair of the board, Karen Tendrup as Vice Chair, Sandy Reidy as Select Board Secretary, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt and himself as board members. Karen Tendrup seconds. All in favor. Appointed Officers document is attached.

CITIZENS CONCERNS: Jessica Hill states that she had witnessed a resident pass her and the school bus on the Sandgate Road. She is concerned about the speeding in town and the safety of the children. Joe Nolan states that he spoke with Jamie Paustian and Jamie called the state police. An officer pulled over a speeder on the Rupert Road going 65 in a 35mph zone and another going 60 in a 35mph zone. Jessica states that she would like action taken to get a patrol car in Sandgate. Sheila Kearns states that, at town meeting, Jim Henderson said he would conduct a speed study for the town. Sandy Reidy states that the town has \$6,000 budgeted for patrol expenses and \$6,000 from the previous budget in the rainy-day fund. Joe Nolan will call the Sheriff's office and invite Sheriff James Gulley to a Select Board meeting. Margaret Phelps states that she would like to see information about the organizations that we appropriate money for every year. Sandy Reidy states that the annual reports from these organizations can be found on the town's website. Margaret states that she would like them to be put back into the printed copies as it was in the past.

ROAD REPORT: The Road Foreman has turned in 2 weeks of daily work logs, filed at Town Hall.

REVIEW FEBRUARY 20, 2023 MINUTES: The Board reviews the minutes. Charlie Pike makes a motion to approve the minutes. Joe Nolan seconds. Minutes approved.

SIGN ORDERS: The Selectmen sign the orders.

OTHER BUSINESS: No other business.

ADJOURN: Charlie Pike makes a motion to adjourn. John Phelps seconds.

Meeting adjourned at 6:51 pm

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY- MARCH 20, 2023 AT 6:00 HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy.

SANDGATE APPOINTED OFFICERS - March 8, 2023

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Jean Eisenhart, Chair; Jim Henderson, Harry Rich, Rob Viglas, Dottie Sundquist

PLANNING COMMISSION / ZONING BOARD

Richard Zoppel, Chair; Brad Kessler, James Aschmann, Caroline Kimball, Rob Viglas,

Jean Eisenhart, Alternate

911 ADDRESSES

Road Foreman, Town Clerk

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

Sheila Kearns

FIRE WARDENS

Lynn Fielding (State appointed)

POUND KEEPER

Erin McDermott - Small Animals and Suzanne dePeyster - Large Animals

TOWN SERVICE OFFICER

Karen Tendrup

EMERGENCY FUEL COORDINATOR

Select Board

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR

Select Board

BCRC REPRESENTATIVES

Sheila Kearns

BCSWA/ISWAP REPRESENTATIVE

Select Board

INSPECTOR OF LUMBER, SHINGLES & WOOD

Dona McAdams, Karen Tendrup and Sandy Reidy

FENCE VIEWERS

Suzanne dePeyster, Joe Nolan and Sandy Reidy

TREE WARDEN

Joe Nolan and Select Board

ARTS GRANT SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Jean Eisenhart, Pat Hall, Dona McAdams, Hasso Wuerslin, Jeanne Zoppel

HEALTH OFFICER

Karen Tendrup

GREEN UP DAY COORDINATORS

Sandy Reidy and Karen Tendrup

SIGN CONTROL

Road Foreman

SANDGATE VT SELECT BOARD MEETING - MONDAY, MARCH 20, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:04 pm

ATTENDANCE: Board Members: Joe Nolan, Charlie Pike, John Phelps, Linda Schmidt and Karen Tendrup. Also present: Sheriff James Gulley and Director of Administration, Stephanie Peters; Road Foreman, Jay Wilson; Rob Viglas, John Grover, Jessica Hill, Margaret Phelps, Elizabeth Daut, and Richard Zoppel.

SHERIFF JAMES GULLEY SPEAKS: The Selectboard has asked James Gulley to give some information about the Town entering into a Law Enforcement contract with the County Police. James Gulley listed off the new expenses and improvements he has incurred since entering in his position. He states that there are 24 people employed at the Sheriff's Department currently. These employees are getting much needed paid training, raises, and health insurance. Workmen's Comp. insurance is budgeted at \$140,000 per year for the Department. He continues that the fleet is comprised of older vehicles that will need to be replaced or maintained. Communications has to be brought up to current standards and the cost for communications is budgeted around \$60,000 per year. The officers did not have any body worn cameras, the cost for each camera is \$1,000-\$2,000 per camera. Joe Nolan asks what the hourly cost would be if the Town entered into a contract. Sheriff James Gulley replies that the cost is on a sliding scale based on the amount of hours the town requests. He continues that 1-29 hours per week at the rate of \$70/hour, 30-39 hours per week would cost \$65/hour, and 40 hours and beyond would be at a rate of \$65/hour. Richard Zoppel asks when the time would start for the hourly rate the town chooses. James Gulley replies that the time clock would start when the officer gets in the vehicle and drives to town. James Gulley adds that he does not believe in routine patrols, which are predictable and ineffective. He asks his officers to patrol at different times of day. Richard Zoppel states that we would need patrolling around school pickup and drop off. John Grover asks why the State Police could not catch the perpetrator who passed the school bus a few weeks ago, using the recording from the bus cameras. James Gulley states that his department can verify a vehicle from the school bus cameras and use that information. The revenue from the tickets written in town is a 40%-town and 60%-state split. The town would have to request and apply with the State, to receive ticket revenues. The patrolling contract can be effective immediately. The town can customize the hours patrolled on the contract. James Gulley asks that if the town enters into a patrolling contract, he would like to deal with one person on the Selectboard.

CITIZENS CONCERNS: John Grover asks for his land marker stake to be placed back where it had previously been. The Road Crew will look into finding the right spot. Rob Viglas states that he is concerned about the condition of West Road. He states that one area is becoming impassable. Jay Wilson replies that he is aware of this and will be grading and gravelling West Road soon.

OTHER BUSINESS: Karen Tendrup states that she is taking a Health Officer course and this will certify her for this year.

ROAD REPORT: The Road Foreman has turned in 2 weeks of daily work logs, filed at Town Hall. The Selectboard is considering purchasing an excavator. The town spent around \$30,000 renting an excavator to bring our roadways up to current state standards. Joe Nolan states that Jay and himself have found a couple excavators for some price comparisons. The first being a 2019 excavator with 17 hours that costs \$109,000 and the second is a machine with 55 hours for \$107,000. The Treasurer is asked to come up with some ways the town could pay for a new excavator.

REVIEW MARCH 8, 2023 MINUTES: The Board reviews the minutes. Charlie Pike makes a motion to approve the minutes. Linda seconds. Minutes approved.

SIGN ORDERS: The Selectmen sign the orders.

ADJOURN: Linda Schmidt makes a motion to adjourn. John Phelps seconds. Meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY- APRIL 3, 2023 AT 6:00
IN THE SANDGATE TOWN HALL.**

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy.

SANDGATE VT SELECT BOARD MEETING – MONDAY, APRIL 3, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:02 pm

ATTENDANCE: Board Members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt and Karen Tendrup. Also present: Elizabeth Daut, Suzanne dePeyster, Jim Henderson, Jessica Hill, Melissa Mattison, Roy McDermott, Lucas Pike, Jay Wilson, Skipper Wilson, & Minute taker, Sandy Reidy.

CITIZENS CONCERNS: Melissa Mattison asks who from the Town approved the grant for the Grogan property. Karen Tendrup as Health Officer answers that she had assisted Grogan with the grant he received. Jim Henderson asks if Heath Grogan's unregistered vehicles are still parked on the side of the road. The answer is yes. He states that something needs to be done to get the vehicles moved and the place cleaned up. Karen Tendrup states that she has been over there helping to clean up the garbage in the yard. She will continue to make sure that progress is moving in cleaning his property. Richard Zoppel states that he would like the Town to have a speed study done, as this will help in determining when we should have officers patrol. Linda Schmidt has called the Rupert Town clerk to ask how they deal with speeding. The Rupert Clerk has told Linda that they are not planning on getting a contract with the County Sheriff's office and pay \$4,000 a year to the State Police. Rupert owns a speeding cart, that they paid \$4,000 for. She continues that these options help some with speeding. Linda adds that if we went with a contract with the County Sheriff's, 5 hours a week at \$70/hr., would cost the Town over \$18,000 for the year. Jessica Hill would like to see action taken immediately. She continues that the speeding in Town has gotten so bad and a life taken is worth more than \$18,000. Karen Tendrup states that she would like to see a speed study done before deciding. Jim answers that he can have the study conducted in various places in Town. He continues that there is no cost to the Town, it comes out of the BCRC Transportation program. Joe Nolan asks how soon Jim can set it up. Jim can set it up immediately and have some data prepared for the next meeting.

ROAD REPORT: Joe Nolan states that at the last meeting John Grover was present and concerned about the Highway Department digging up a corner pin. He continues that Jay, Charlie and himself went to the boundary line with an app and followed the line. The pin was in the place it should be and had never been removed. They had also taken a picture of the fence post that John claims had been broken by the Road Crew when they were digging ditches in the fall. Jessica states that she doesn't believe that the pin is where it belongs and the Road Crew did in fact break the fence post. She continues that she had taken pictures of the damage last fall when it occurred. She will send the pictures to the Board to be printed and viewed at the next meeting. Joe Nolan states that they have found an excavator to purchase, the cost is \$107,000 for a 2019. Melissa Mattison asks if the Town is going to buy a trailer to move the machine. Jay Wilson states that he has a trailer, which is not being used and he would be willing to use it. John Phelps makes a motion to buy the excavator in question using the ARPA funds

the Town received, which sits in the Town Recovery Fund. Karen Tendrup seconds. All in favor. Lucas Pike asks if the Board is planning on reclassifying the Tate Hill Road back to a class 3. Joe Nolan states that the board would like to reclassify to class 3, as the Town maintains this road, in a contract due to the Dry Hydrant located at Constance West's residence.

REVIEW MARCH 20, 2023 MINUTES: The Board reviews the minutes. Charlie Pike makes a motion to approve the minutes. Linda seconds. Minutes approved.

SIGN ORDERS: The Selectmen sign the orders.

OTHER BUSINESS: none.

ADJOURN: Linda Schmidt makes a motion to adjourn. Charlie Pike seconds. Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY- APRIL 17, 2023 AT 6:00
IN THE SANDGATE TOWN HALL.**

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy.

A complete recording is available by request at the Sandgate Town Hall.

SELECTBOARD MINUTES – MONDAY, APRIL 17, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:02 pm

ATTENDANCE: Board Members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt and Karen Tendrup. Also present: Julie Robertson, John Grover, Jessica Hill, Karen Dzialo, Jim Henderson, Jay and Skipper Wilson and Vonda Grogan.

APPOINT COLLEEN SCHOLZ AS INTERIM LISTER: Linda Schmidt makes a motion to appoint Colleen Scholz as Lister until the next town election. Karen Tendrup seconds. All in favor.

SPEED STUDY UPDATE: Jim Henderson hands out a report for his speed study and a comparison report from 2020. The area in which he has tested is Sandgate Road, a little south of S.E. Corners Road. The average speed collected was 39 MPH. 65% of the vehicles were going over 35 MPH. The times in which the most speeding occurs is from 7:00-9:00 am and 3:00-5:00 pm on the weekdays. The fastest speeding car was going 73 MPH at 4:00 pm. In comparison to the 2020 speed study there is less speeding currently by about 20%. Jim will conduct more speed studies at different spots around town and keep the Board updated.

DISCUSS SPEED PATROLLING OPTIONS: Joe Nolan states that Sheriff Gulley mentioned most towns would like patrolling for the times when people are going and coming from work. Julie Robertson asked if we have considered using the Town Constable for patrolling. Joe Nolan states that we have discussed this topic at a couple meetings and it would cost too much in infrastructure and training to be worth it. Joe continues that it is a small town and we all know who the speeders are. Julie adds that the Constable could pull people over and warn them to slow down. Jim Henderson asks Skipper Wilson if the speed sign in Rupert is effective in keeping the speeders down. Skipper says that people hit the gas when they see the speed flashing. Jim Henderson will ask Rupert if we can borrow their speed sign to conduct another speed study and see if this makes a difference. Rupert owns their speed cart and paid \$3,200.

CITIZENS CONCERNS: Jessica Hill states that she would like to discuss her fence post that she thinks was broken by the Road Crew. She continues that Karen Tendrup was the only Select Member to meet Jessica at her house and inspect the fence post in question with her. She has taken and brought more pictures of the damage. She continues that too much time and energy has been wasted on this issue and all she needed was a fence post hole dug. Jessica Hill continues with the other issue being the property marker. Karen Tendrup asks why Jessica called the police on Joe and Jay. Jessica Hill states that she did not appreciate Joe and Jay trespassing on her property without telling her. Joe states that he had told Jessica at the last meeting that he and Jay would go and check out the property marker in question. John Grover states that it is common courtesy to call before going to someone's property and he would have walked the property with them if they had given him a time and date. Karen Tendrup

thinks that the Road Crew out of common courtesy should fix her fence. Joe Nolan states that he believes the fence post rotted at the ground and fell over. Karen Tendrup states that she has been over at the Grogan residence helping to clean up. Vonda Grogan states that she knows the town has been receiving calls about their animals getting out. She wanted the Selectboard to know that someone has been cutting their fence and releasing the animals. She has bought a new fence. Sandra Reidy asks Vonda to take pictures of the damage to their fence.

OTHER BUSINESS: Julie Robertson representing the Cemetery Commission is inquiring about the culvert for the Centerville Cemetery that she had mentioned before. She would like to know when that could be addressed by the Road Crew. Jay Wilson states that he will get to it ASAP.

ROAD REPORT: Jay Wilson states that they have been grading and graveling roads. Joe Nolan states that there has been some talk about removing trees on the Rupert Road. He continues that the advantages being more sunlight on the Rupert Road and the timing as GMP will be putting in new poles. The quote the Board has received from a tree cutter who can begin the job immediately is \$40,000. Joe continues that this tree crew can grind and clean up all the cut trees on the Rupert Road. Linda Schmidt asks Treasurer Sandy Reidy if the town has the funds to swing for a bulk tree removal. Sandy answers that the Reserve Fund for construction has \$24,500 and the budgeted amount for construction is \$20,000. The new Excavator cost the town \$109,900 and the funds were taken from the ARPA money.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Sandy Reidy presents the Treasurer's Report to the Selectboard.

REVIEW APRIL 3, 2023 MINUTES: The Board reviews the minutes. Joe Nolan makes a motion to approve the minutes. Linda Schmidt seconds. Minutes approved.

SIGN ORDERS: The Selectmen sign the orders.

ADJOURN: Linda Schmidt makes a motion to adjourn. Karen Tendrup seconds. Meeting adjourned at 7:13 pm.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY- MAY 1, 2023 AT 6:00
IN THE SANDGATE TOWN HALL.**

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy.

A complete recording is available by request at the Sandgate Town Hall.

SELECTBOARD MINUTES – MONDAY, MAY 1, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:03 pm

ATTENDANCE: Board Members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt and Karen Tendrup. Also present: BCRC Representative-Scott Grim-Lion, Elizabeth Daut, Suzy dePeyster, Bill Haggerty, Jessica Hill, Melissa Mattison, Roy McDermott; Minute Taker, Sandy and Alias Reidy.

BCSWA REPRESENTATIVE: Scott Grim-Lion introduces himself as a Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance representative. The Town of Sandgate and 12 other towns are members of “BCSWA”. One of the important roles of this organization is to keep the towns compliant with the State laws regarding solid waste disposal. The comprehensive plan they have in writing is the Solid Waste Implementation Plan. This plan is required to be revised every 5 years. One important aspect of the Plan deals with collecting and disposing of household hazardous waste. A new facility will be built by BCRC for household hazardous waste collection. The building will be open to Sandgate residents 16 weeks a year to collect and dispose of hazardous waste, such as paint and hazardous chemicals. Residents can call BCRC to reserve an appointment for drop off. Collectively the towns would be saving money with the new facility. The proposed annual budget for this facility is \$14,000. The facility is set to open in June. There will be a small drop off fee of \$5.00 for up to 15 gallons of hazardous chemicals. Scott provides a revised copy of the Solid Waste Implementation Plan to the board to read the additions. Joe Nolan makes a motion to accept the additions to the revised Solid Waste Implementation Plan. Linda Schmidt seconds. All in Favor. Scott states that the Board must decide who the new representative to BCSWA for Sandgate will be. Linda Schmidt volunteers.

SPEED STUDY UPDATE: Jim Henderson not present.

CITIZENS CONCERNS: Melissa asks the Board what authority Karen Tendrup has to approve the grant that Heath Grogan received to retain his property from being sold through the tax sale. She believes that it was inappropriate for town Selectmen to get involved with the property in question. Karen states that she has a right to help anyone. Melissa replies that she thinks it's fine to help, the problem is that the VHAP Grant requires approval from someone in the Town and Karen did not get a vote from the board to approve such a grant. Karen states that she did not approve any grant, she simply guided Mr. Grogan toward some grants to which he could apply. Melissa states that she and her neighbors have all spoken to the grant program directors and state legislatures and they have all said that they do not release grant money unless it is approved by the Town. Karen answers that she did not speak to anyone about approval of money, she simply told the resident where he could go to apply for help. Joe Nolan states that no one else on the board was contacted. Sandy Reidy states that the VHAP program director

had called the town office but they did not ask for any approval. They required the tax sale amount and stated that the tax sale was on hold, by law, being that the application was pending. Melissa Mattison states that Grogan's animals have been out including large boars. Suzy dePeyster states, as large animal control officer, that she will look into the regulations on fining property owners who continually have large animals at large. Bill Haggerty mentions that Steve Saltonstall had written an ordinance that covers this subject. The Board will research and discuss when they convene.

OTHER BUSINESS: Linda Schmidt states that she attended the Rupert Selectboard meeting and asked if the Sandgate would be able to borrow their speed cart. The Town of Rupert will decide at a later date. Suzy dePeyster states that Phoebe Sheres is selling her property and she feels it would be a good time for the town to look into purchasing the garage, small building and drive from her parcel. She continues that the curve around the small building is important for passing cars, as the drive is narrow on both sides. The Board will look into this. Green Up day will be this Saturday May 6. There will be a table set up and coffee at the old fire house until 12:00 pm.

ROAD REPORT: The Road Crew has been grading the roads. 3 weeks of completed work logs were turned in by the Road Crew. For any interested residents the Road Crew logs are available at Town Hall in the public records.

REVIEW APRIL 17, 2023 MINUTES: The Board reviews the minutes. Karen Tendrup makes a motion to approve the minutes. Linda Schmidt seconds. Minutes approved.

SIGN ORDERS: The Selectmen sign the orders.

ADJOURN: Charlie Pike makes a motion to adjourn. Karen Tendrup seconds. Meeting adjourned at 6:56 pm.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY- MAY 15, 2023 AT 6:00
IN THE SANDGATE TOWN HALL.**

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy.

A complete recording is available by request at the Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – MAY 15, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Jim Henderson, Sheila Kearns; Minute takers, Sandy and Alias Reidy.

ZONING BYLAWS UPDATE: Sheila Kearns says the Zoning Board has almost completed its draft of the bylaws. There are a few significant changes, including **incorporating subdivision regulations into the zoning bylaws**. Once the new bylaws are approved, Sheila advises the Selectboard to repeal the existing subdivision regulations (because they will then be part of the bylaws). The biggest bylaws change is an **update of the Town's flood-zone regulations** to conform to current state regulations; the way in which the state and federal governments define flood zones has changed since the last time Sandgate updated its zoning bylaws. The Zoning Board is drafting bylaws changing Sandgate's "fluvial erosion hazard zones" to "river corridor protection," which includes smaller streams and rivers. The new protections would not be any more restrictive than the current fluvial erosion zones: the area surrounding the smaller rivers and streams is not as wide as that around the Green River. The restricted area around smaller rivers and streams would be 25 feet from the top of each bank. No existing structures would be affected: all are grandfathered. New construction, however, would be reviewed in light of river corridor protections. Linda asks for clarification on the benefit of this change, and Sheila confirms that it brings more land under better protection. Joe asks for clarification on the effect of this change on large rivers and streams already covered under existing bylaws: Sheila confirms that protections for large rivers and streams would be unchanged. The Zoning Board is carefully weighing the impact of this change.

The Zoning Board has already rejected a suggestion by the state to reduce **lot size** in Rural Residential areas from 2 acres to 1 acre.

Sheila reminds everyone of the importance of obtaining required **permits**.

Linda and Sheila point out that, although there is a brief reference to **junk storage** in the current zoning bylaws, there is no Town junk ordinance. Sheila states the Zoning Board does not feel the zoning bylaws are the appropriate place for this topic and would prefer that it be a Town ordinance, as it is for many nearby Towns. If it stays in the zoning bylaws, Sheila predicts the language will change so that junk storage must not be visible either from the road or from neighboring properties. The current bylaws specify only the former. Sheila shares the current bylaws language with the Board. Charlie asks about grandfathering current situations. Linda points out that an ordinance might at least help the Town avoid new problems developing. Joe

and Karen express concern and suggest leaving the current zoning bylaws as is. John asks what determines that a stored vehicle is inoperable, and Sheila answers that unregistered vehicles are considered inoperable. To conclude, Sheila confirms that this issue will be brought up in the public hearing on the revised bylaws draft (*see below*).

Next steps for the draft bylaws: Once the draft is finalized, the Zoning Board will hold a public hearing (expected late summer/early fall). The Selectboard must then review the draft and hold a public hearing of its own and return the bylaws to the Zoning Board with any revisions. Projected implementation date for the new bylaws is the first of next year.

The **next Zoning/Planning Commission meeting** has been moved to Thursday May 25 at 7:00 p.m.

INSTALLATION OF FIBER OPTIC LINES: Sheila reports that Fidium is scheduled to begin installing fiber optic cable in Sandgate around June 15. She says Consolidated Communications (which owns Fidium) has contacted Town hall to address citizen questions/concerns about the installation. Sheila will ask a Fidium representative to appear at one of the June Selectboard meetings. Karen asks about the effect on land lines, and Sheila states that arrangements can be made with Consolidated to keep individual land lines. Sheila mentions the value of land lines in power outages and confirms that this is being worked into Fidium's plans. Fidium is also working in concert with the federal Affordable Connectivity Program, which reduces monthly costs for qualified people. Linda asks if fiber will be laid along private as well as Town roads, and Sheila confirms that it will. John points out how much work Sheila has done on the entire effort, and the Board thanks her.

SPEED-STUDY UPDATE: Jim Henderson hands out his analysis of West Sandgate Road speed-study data and states that the data does not indicate a speeding problem. The average speed during the week of the study was 36 mph. Highest volume (and incidence of speeding) was during morning and evening weekday commutes. Joe reaffirms the request for speed-study data, so the Board has the information it needs to back up a decision on the speeding issue. Linda points out the high expense (for a low number of hours) of a police contract, and our lack of control over when the police would patrol. Charlie points out that we can always call the state police when needed. Jim will set up a third speed study on Rupert Road in the next few days. Linda says the Rupert Selectboard has approved our borrowing of their speed cart for one week. Linda/Jim will coordinate with Jason Norton, the Rupert Town Constable, and the Sandgate Road Crew will pick up the device in the next few days. Jim would like it installed on Sandgate Road. He will re-run the speed study on that road after the cart has been there for one week. Jim also presents data on the size of trucks traveling on West Sandgate Road. He plans to write a summary

of his recent speed studies to be included in this year's Town report. Charlie asks that sample costs for police coverage be included in this summary.

UPCOMING GRANT: Jim shares the existing **storm-water master plan** for Sandgate, created in 2017, and points out the large volume of work already completed, including projects on Wuerslin Road, Beartown Road, Rupert Road, and Wilcox Hollow Road. He wants to give the Board a chance to revisit the plan and reprioritize if necessary and to approve another project to move toward development this year. He suggests the next project be one on West Road, involving replacement of culverts, creation of new turnouts, and additional ditching. He has discussed this with the road crew, and they will scope. When the project is decided upon, Jim will apply for a Better Roads Grant to cover it. Better Roads Grants are covering current projects on Snow Road and Rupert Road.

Jim mentions another potential grant for housing, water, and sewer (for example, for a package treatment plant), but states it does not seem applicable to Sandgate. Sheila reiterates that the Zoning Board has rejected suggestions to reduce lot size in Rural Residential districts. Jim also mentions the **Emergency Relief Assistance Funding (ERAF) rating** given to each town. This rating determines how much money the state will contribute to recovery in the event of a disaster. Towns that adopt certain protections (including river corridor protections; *see above*) receive a higher rate of state funding.

ROAD REPORT: The road crew is clearing brush on West Sandgate Road. Jean Eisenhart asked if the area will be seeded, and Joe confirms that it will. The road crew has obtained quotes on a **ditching bucket** for the excavator: \$4,400 for a standard bucket, \$7,200 for a hydraulic bucket, plus \$1,200 of modification would be needed on the excavator. John points out the large amount of Town money spent recently but says that it has been spent on necessary equipment. He asks the Treasurer to confirm that the Town has the money, and she confirms the money is available and says the Town Highway account is in better shape at the moment than it usually is toward the end of the fiscal year. Joe points out that by July, when the budget rolls over, the Town should not need additional equipment and will be paying only for basic maintenance going forward. Joe will ask Jay to confirm there will be no additional costs associated with buying the bucket for the excavator. Joe makes a motion to purchase the hydraulic bucket, and a vote is held: all in favor.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Sandy distributes the report and the Board confirms the money available for highways/equipment/maintenance. Linda raises a question from Shelley Finn on how **ARPA money** has been spent so far. Sandy confirms that it has been used for the Town generator and the excavator. Sandy must file an audit soon on the ARPA portal to document the expenditures. Joe and Karen stress the value to residents of the **Town generator**, which has been delivered and is awaiting installation.

OTHER BUSINESS: Joe brings up the potential purchase by the Town of **property adjacent to Town Hall** (including the two small buildings and turnaround). The Board wants the owner of the property to settle the question of a buried gas tank before this step can be considered. Karen reminds the Board that the **Flag Day** celebration is coming up June 10 and she will be organizing the children who will participate.

REVIEW MAY 1, 2023, MINUTES: Joe makes a motion to accept. Karen seconds.

SIGN ORDERS.

OTHER BUSINESS: Karen thanks Sandy and Linda for covering at Town Hall on Green-Up Day. Many kids helped out this year.

ADJOURN: Joe moves to adjourn the meeting. Charlie seconds.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY JUNE 5, 2023, AT 6:00 IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – JUNE 5, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Scott Brooks (CCI/Fidium), Elizabeth Daut, Clemma Dawsen, Jean Eisenhardt, Sheila Kearns, Greg Povey (CCI/Fidium) and Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

CONSOLIDATED (FIDIUM) INSTALLATION OF FIBER-OPTIC LINES: Sheila Kearns says there will be Consolidated vehicles throughout Sandgate in the coming weeks, as fiber-optic lines are installed. Greg Povey says installation has begun: a new network is being built on top of the existing network. Internet and voice services will be provided over fiber rather than copper. The copper lines in Sandgate date from the 1960s and are breaking down. He expects fiber service will be fully installed and ready for sale to customers in Sandgate by October 1st. Sheila asks if old telecommunication lines (like Clemma Dawsen’s) that were run to coincide with power lines will be retired/moved; Greg says they will not. They will be used for fiber. Clemma wants a fiber line laid in a better location and wants the old cable removed from her yard; Greg takes her contact information and will address this with Consolidated engineers. Greg’s email address is gregory.povey@consolidated.com, and Scott’s is scott.brooks@consolidated.com. They are available to answer questions.

Karen Tendrup asks if **landline service** will still be available, and Scott Brooks says it will: landline phone service, like Internet service, will be run through fiber-optic lines and will be standard with the new service. Customers need make no change to their existing service if they do not want to. Linda Schmidt asks if new **routers** will be provided, and Greg says they will: a technician will come to each house twice, first to run the line to the house and make sure it functions, and again to initiate service. Various packages (for different internet speeds) are available and can be preordered now at **fdiumfiber.com**. Sheila says some properties have unusually long “drops” (distance from telephone pole to house), of more than 2,000 feet. It is in the interest of customers to preorder in these cases so Consolidated engineers can plan ahead.

CITIZEN CONCERNS: Jean Eisenhardt has **hay to donate** to the Town, for covering seeding on West Sandgate Road, where banks have been cut back. Joe Nolan says the road crew appreciates this and will arrange to pick up the hay. Jean says **wildflower seeds** should be planted on these banks. Karen says the road crew needs a **flagger** for the work on West Sandgate Road—she was almost hit from behind recently. Joe will talk with the road crew.

OTHER BUSINESS: Sandy Reidy asks if Joe contacted Randy Novotny about the **Town generator**. Joe says the road crew will do the excavation and will coordinate timing with Randy. Joe will arrange timing of payment to Randy. Joe says the road crew's \$400 **clothing allowance** is due this spring: Charlie Pike makes a motion to approve, and Joe seconds. Linda distributes the data we received from the **speed cart** that was installed on Sandgate Road for the past week. The results coincide with the data Jim Henderson gathered on Sandgate Road and West Sandgate Road, showing a low incidence of speeding. John Phelps asks if the road crew bought the new **bucket for the excavator**. Joe says not yet: they will wait until the budget rolls over in July. Elizabeth Daut asks what will be done with the large **brush pile by the excavator** on West Sandgate Road. Joe says it will be burned.

ROAD REPORT: Joe says the road crew has been working on West Sandgate Road, moving material from one side of the road to the other to widen both shoulders. They will get back to the usual grading throughout Town once we have rain.

REVIEW MAY 15, 2023, MINUTES: To lighten Sandy's work, a new approach was tried on 5/15/23: Sandy took notes during the meeting, then Linda compiled Sandy's notes with the recording of the meeting to create draft minutes. Karen objects to two people working on the minutes. Joe explains that Sandy is required to attend the Board meetings in her capacity as Town Treasurer, Town Clerk, and Town Secretary and that her pay covers that time. Linda has volunteered to draft minutes to help Sandy and does not want to be compensated. Joe makes a motion to accept the minutes; Charlie seconds; all in favor.

SIGN ORDERS.

ADJOURN: Karen moves to adjourn the meeting, and Charlie seconds; all in favor.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY JUNE 19, 2023, AT 6:00
IN THE SANDGATE TOWN HALL.**

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – JUNE 19, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Ashley Coones, Jim Henderson, Julie Robertson & minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

SPEED-STUDY UPDATE: Jim Henderson presents the data he has gathered in studies on Sandgate, West Sandgate, and Rupert Roads. The Rupert Road study, the most recent, shows a pattern similar to that of the other roads, with the great majority of drivers within 10 mph of the speed limit. With this tolerance in place, only 5% of drivers would be in violation. Jim says he has been asked to do a further study in Beartown, and there was discussion between the Board, Jim, and Ashley Coones about whether the posted limit there is 25 mph or 35 mph. Jim will check the speed-limit signs in Beartown. Ashley asks what the speed limit is on Woodcock Road. Sandy Reidy says neither Woodcock Road nor Southeast Corners Road is posted. Joe Nolan will ask Jay Wilson to look at his records on speed-limit signs in Town and will ask Patrick Wilson for advice. Sandy says the state is responsible for posting road signs.

ROAD REPORT: Joe says the road crew will work on **Beebe Hill** for the next several days, as it was determined the deadline for the grant covering the work there is July 1, not the end of this year. The work includes installation of several culverts, plus cleaning and lining of ditches. The Arlington road crew has offered to help with equipment and manpower, and the Sandgate road crew will return the favor when Arlington needs help.

CITIZEN CONCERNS: Julie Robertson says neighbors of the **West Side Cemetery** are bothered by people accessing the cemetery. She asks if a single-car access road can be laid next to Lucille Krasinski's property, primarily for the cemetery's lawn crew. Joe will ask the road crew to look into this. Julie says the cemetery commission would like to open the cemetery again for burials.

OTHER BUSINESS: Linda Schmidt says Sheila Kearns asked about the **Municipal Technical Assistance Program** (MTAP, which helps municipalities apply for grants), after she was contacted by the BCRC. Jim has mentioned this program to the Board before but does not think it is a good fit for Sandgate, as it focuses on housing and water and sewer systems. Linda attended the June 28 meeting of the

Bennington County Solid Waste Association. The association's budget was reviewed and an update given on the new **hazardous waste facility in Bennington**, which is expected to open June 26, pending state permits.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Sandy presents the report. She had a computer malfunction last week and is dealing with data retrieval.

REVIEW JUNE 5, 2023, MINUTES. Minutes approved with no changes.

SIGN ORDERS.

ADJOURN: Charlie Pike makes a motion to adjourn; Linda seconds.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY JULY 3, 2023, AT 6:00 IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – JULY 10, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt. Also present: Elizabeth Daut, Valerie dePeyster, Sheila Kearns, Melissa Mattison. Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

CITIZENS CONCERNS: Melissa Mattison reiterates her concerns about the **Grogan property** on Chunks Brook Road and asks about progress on the issue. Sandy Reidy says Karen Tendrup was called there because of a report of oil leaking from the property into the brook. Melissa says the game warden has visited three times, after which there is supposed to be a fine issued. She says bears come to the property and garbage has been dragged across her property; she says all the neighbors are affected and that there are still multiple vehicles on the property. Joe Nolan says the Selectboard will ask Suzy dePeyster and Erin McDermott to attend the next Board meeting to decide how animal-related fines should be issued. Sheila Kearns explains the history of court rulings, liens, and vehicle-removal on the property, dating from 2020 and earlier; Joe says the Selectboard will contact Merrill Bent regarding past and future liens. Elizabeth Daut suggests fecal samples be taken to look for hazardous pathogens on site. Sandy will research what the Town paid for removal of vehicles from the property in 2021.

Sheila reiterates the Planning Commission's recommendation that the Town draft a **junk ordinance** to address these issues in the future. Joe says it would be helpful to see Arlington's junk ordinance. Linda Schmidt will bring that and the junk ordinances of two other nearby towns to the next Selectboard meeting.

Valerie dePeyster asks about a decision on the Town's purchase of a portion of the **Sheres property next to Town Hall**. There is a discussion of the possibility of buried fuel tanks on the property, the testing that would be required to ensure there is no contamination, who should incur that cost, and the pros and cons of the Town owning the property. John Phelps asks if a metal detector could be used for a preliminary search for tanks. Valerie asks that the Board appoint someone to research the tanks. Linda makes a motion to do so; Charlie Pike says he does not think the Town needs the property and votes against the motion. After further discussion, all Board members present agree the Town should not buy the property.

OTHER BUSINESS: Linda asks Sandy about her damaged laptop and Sandy confirms she was able to retrieve her data. Linda suggests the Town find a technician to review the entire **computer setup in Town Hall**, to make sure equipment is sufficient and functioning well and to reduce the chance of data loss in future. Sheila has provided the names of two local tech consultants, and Linda offers to contact them regarding cost. Joe makes a motion to allow for tech advice; Charlie seconds; all in favor.

Linda asks about the Town's **disaster recovery** plans. Sandy and Sheila confirm that the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan is out of date. Sheila points out that up-to-date plans are a requirement for optimal federal and state funding in the event of a disaster. Linda will contact Jim Henderson for advice on updating the Town's plans. Joe says **Lincoln Lane** flooded in this week's storm; the bridge must be replaced but is dependent on the repair of the bridge on Camden Valley Road. John mentions that the state of Vermont rents bridges.

Linda says the opening of the new **hazardous waste facility in Bennington** has been postponed from June 26 to July 31.

Joe says the road crew looked at the possibility of building an **access road beside West Side Cemetery** (a question from Julie Robertson at the 6/19/23 meeting), and it was determined a road cannot be built there.

Charlie asks when Randy Novotny will install the **Town generator**. Joe says the road crew is coordinating with Randy.

Joe distributes an agreement from the state, to be signed by the Board members, certifying that the Town follows **state guidelines regarding road work**. The Board members sign.

Sheila shared information with the Board on the **Municipal Energy Resilience Program (MERP)**, in which up to five town buildings can be evaluated for energy efficiency. Sheila offers to submit the application and handle the assessment process for the first stage of evaluation, and the Board agrees.

Elizabeth Daut asks if there is a group **email address for the Selectboard**, in case citizens want to contact the entire Board. Joe says the Board members' phone numbers are posted on the Town website. Sheila points out that group emails that

include three or more Board members constitute a meeting of the Board and are not advised.

John will not attend the July 17 Selectboard meeting.

REVIEW JUNE 19, 2023, MINUTES. All approve, and Joe signs the minutes.

SIGN ORDERS.

ADJOURN: At 7:15, Charlie makes a motion to adjourn; Linda seconds.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY JULY 17, 2023, AT 6:00 IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – JULY 17, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Elizabeth Daut, Suzy dePeyster, Vonda Grogan, Melissa Mattison, Erin McDermott, Mike Perra, Rich Trafoya, Dara Zink (BCRC). Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

EMERGENCY-MANAGEMENT PLANNING: Dara Zink of the BCRC explains that there are two emergency-management documents the Town must keep up to date. The **Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP)**, to be updated annually) and the **Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP)**, to be updated every five years). Up-to-date plans are required to secure optimal federal and state reimbursement in the event of a disaster. Sandgate is due to update both. Dara is sending a template for the LEMP to Linda Schmidt, who will share with the Board. The LEMP is primarily a list of emergency contacts and other basic information. The HMP, a more comprehensive document, is usually written with the help of the BCRC or other provider; grants are available to help with this cost. Dara will provide the Board with more information on the HMP, to be reviewed at the next Board meeting.

CITIZENS CONCERNS: Melissa Mattison asks for an update on the **Grogan property**. In her role as Town Health Officer, Karen Tendrup has contacted two officials with the state department of health concerning the garbage, car, and bear issues. She has also spoken with the two game wardens, who have visited the property twice. Karen was called anonymously about a bear sighting, with garbage strewn on neighbors' property; she drove there and found no evidence. Melissa says this is wrong and that she took pictures of the bear and the garbage and cleaned up garbage on her property. Rich Trafoya asks where citizens can post pictures of these incidents. Karen will provide her email, and photos should be sent to her. Erin McDermott confirms that she has kept all photos that have been sent to her, as Small Animal Control Officer. Karen has also contacted the Department of Environmental Conservation, concerning waste management and the question of garbage being buried. Karen will complete and submit the forms provided by the DEC for filing a complaint. Erin says she just got off the phone with Heath Grogan. Erin has visited the property many times. She asked him if garbage is being buried, and Heath said no. Melissa and Rich say they have video of garbage being buried. Rich thinks it is being buried on property that belongs to him, which Heath has also denied. Joe Nolan asks who can now enforce ordinances as needed. Karen reiterates that she will fill out the necessary DEC forms. Karen and the game wardens will return to the property as soon as the wardens return from vacation. Karen says that a few months ago, Melissa said she was told that Karen had signed off on Heath receiving help to pay back taxes. Karen checked with her contact (Ingrid Nixon), who said she has never spoken with Melissa. Melissa says she spoke with someone at the Vermont

Housing Assistance Program. Karen received a call from Jerry MacMurray about oil leaking on the Grogan property. Rich says Heath pulled a large oil tank out of his house and that it is leaking. Erin says that when she and Karen visited, they took pictures of some type of smaller container that held oil. Rich reiterates that there is a larger oil tank in the yard. Karen walked the property and did not see anything like this in the water. Melissa is glad Karen has obtained the necessary complaint form from the DEC. Joe suggests that the Board visit the site with the DEC inspector, but Karen explains that the inspector must visit alone, then report back to Karen. Erin says she feels awful in her position right now. She says Heath has told her that the property is all he has; Erin responded that this is true for his neighbors as well and asked him why he thinks what he is doing is all right. Erin says she is on the verge of quitting. Rich says Erin has made a difference. Erin reads a letter, dated April 4, 2023, from Vermont State Trooper #429, of the Shaftsbury barracks, stating that he has been called repeatedly by neighbors to the Grogan property, regarding wandering animals. The trooper explains that this is a civil, not a criminal, matter, per the state attorney's office. He asks if the Town can enforce the issue. Erin says the letter goes on to confirm that there is nothing she can do to address the wandering ducks. Melissa says the question again is how the Town will enforce its large animal ordinance. Erin says that Heath does not care about fines. Joe asks the Health Officer to come up with a solution: for example, after the third fine, the animals could be confiscated. Melissa says that issues of enforcement should be brought from Suzy and Erin to the Selectboard for a decision. [At this point, several people started talking over each other.] Suzy says that Heath has been informed of the ordinance. Rich says he has called the State Police repeatedly, and they eventually suggested he build a fence. Melissa says there is a bear path through her property, where garbage has been dragged. Karen says she has not seen bears. Linda asks for clarification on whether confiscation of the large animals is a realistic possibility. Karen says they must be seen by her on a neighbor's property. Vonda Grogan joins the meeting. Erin says Heath told her that the cows and goats will be removed tomorrow; Vonda confirms that 10 or 12 goats and the two cows will be removed. Melissa says she is more concerned about the pigs. Vonda says neighbors should have compassion for neighbors and that Heath is very sick. Melissa says neighbors have tried to talk with Heath. Erin says this is not the place for that type of personal discussion, and Joe agrees, saying this issue has persisted for years. [There is a disagreement between Vonda and Erin; people talk over each other. Joe tries to calm the group.] Joe says that some animals are leaving; that is an improvement, and more animals need to leave. Melissa reiterates her concern about inadequate containment of the pigs. Vonda says they have been fenced. Suzy says she has had no calls on the pigs since she and Erin spoke with Heath about fencing. Joe asks about the bears, and Vonda says someone has come to the property with dogs to address the bears. She says she has cleaned up after bears dragging food off the property, that there is no food on the property now that could attract bears, and that she paid for all the garbage to be hauled away. Karen asks if it was buried, and Vonda says no. [People talking over each other.] Rich says his wife has taken pictures from her window of Heath hauling garbage onto what Rich thinks is his property.

[People talking over each other.] Joe asks how the Board will move forward. Erin asks Vonda what Heath planned for the house, once the back taxes were paid. Vonda says they plan to fix it up and sell it. Vonda says some pigs have been removed and more will be but that their breeding pigs must be kept for income. [People talking over each other.] Charlie Pike makes a motion to adjourn the meeting. Joe says everyone must take a turn to speak. Mike Perra asks if he can raise his concern, and Joe pauses the Grogan discussion.

Mike asks if the Town has an alternative plan to improve **access to the West Sandgate Cemetery** from West Sandgate Road (instead of from his property), since it was determined that an access road is not feasible. Access now lies through Mike's septic leach field. He asks if stairs could be built, and if a pullout could be reinstated across the road. Mike offers to work with the Board and the cemetery commission to come up with a plan, and Joe acknowledges. Joe will suggest to the road crew that excess material from other jobs be put across from the cemetery, within the Town right-of-way, to re-create the pullout. Mike thanks the Board and leaves.

Discussion of the **Grogan property** continues. Karen says she was called on Friday about the garbage issue. She reminds Vonda that garbage cannot be buried. Rich says the property is a lot cleaner than it was and that he and his wife have tried to reach out to Heath in the past and have been rejected. Karen says again that the unregistered vehicles must be removed. She asks again about the possible fuel oil tank. Vonda says there is an empty tank; Rich says he stands corrected. Rich and Melissa say they can't open windows or sit outside in warm weather because of the smell coming from the Grogan property. Vonda says she is working to remedy. Linda says the Board now needs to summarize where things stand with each of the main issues (animals, cars, garbage) and state what the Town can do and how each issue will be escalated. Joe says we need to state what the consequences will be for each problem. Karen confirms that she is investigating consequences. Melissa asks that water-quality samples be included in any investigation, and Karen says they will. Suzy suggests Charlie be appointed to visit the property and assess progress before the next Board meeting. [Several conversations happening at once.] Sandy confirms that Karen has been at Town Hall working on this issue. Melissa offers to provide more pictures. Karen, Melissa, and Vonda discuss the number of vehicles on the property. Suzy asks if the Board is considering adopting a **junk ordinance**. [People talking over each other.] Linda has copies of the junk ordinances of four towns, including Arlington's, and will leave them for the other Board members to review.

Suzy asks if the road crew can uproot **poisonous parsnip** whenever possible.

OTHER BUSINESS: Sandy asks for a motion to adopt the FY22/23 **property tax rates**. Karen makes a motion; Linda seconds; all in favor.

The Total Tax Rates are:

<u>Homestead Tax Rate</u>		
Municipal	\$0.7797	
School	\$1.3587	
Local	<u>\$0.0028</u>	
	\$2.1413	per thousand
	1.9952	FY22/23 Rate
<u>Non-residential Tax Rate</u>		
Municipal	\$0.7797	
School	\$1.4230	
Local	<u>\$0.0028</u>	
	\$2.2056	per thousand
		FY22/23
	2.0721	Rate

Linda says she spoke with two nearby tech consultants who can do an assessment of the **health of the computer setup in Town Hall** and will bring information about them to the next meeting so the Board can discuss. Linda asks Sandy if, in the short term, what needs to be backed up is being backed up, and Sandy confirms.

TREASURER'S REPORT. Treasurer presents the report.

SIGN ORDERS.

REVIEW JULY 10, 2023, MINUTES. The minutes are approved.

ADJOURN: Charlie makes a motion; Karen seconds. Meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY AUGUST 7, 2023, AT 6:00 IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – AUGUST 7, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup (by phone). Also present: Elizabeth Daut, Lisa Garten (VT Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation), Vonda Grogan, Jim Henderson, Sheila Kearns, Sally Manikian (Conservation Fund), Melissa Mattison, Ken Osbourne (VT Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation), Brian Peat, Jay Wilson, Skipper Wilson, Jeanne Zoppel, Richard Zoppel; Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

EGG MOUNTAIN PROPERTY: Sally Manikian of the Conservation Fund, which owns 2,540 acres on and around Egg Mountain, says the Fund would like to sell this parcel to the VT Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation, to be turned into a state forest. This property surrounds the 89 acres owned by the Archaeological Conservancy. Ken Osbourne says the Fund approached the Department of Forests about this purchase, which would be made with funds from the federal Forest Legacy Program, and the two parties are coming to the Town now to ask for its support of the sale. Joe Nolan asks about the effect on property taxes. Ken says the state would pay property tax (the Town-assessed value of the land, multiplied by the municipal tax rate) through the PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) program and that the property tax paid would be the same as that paid by a private owner; he presents a letter to the Board explaining the tax amount. Linda Schmidt asks how public access would be handled. Ken says the state allows dispersed public access—for hunting, fishing, trapping, walking, snowshoeing—to all its properties. Joe asks if there would be a designated area for access, given that the surrounding land is privately owned. Sally says the main access would be through Salem, NY, at the end of Beattie Hollow Road, where there is a landing already. Melissa Mattison asks if this plan includes the Conservation Fund's property on Chunks Brook; Sally says it does not. Ken says that if the sale goes through, the state would initiate a public planning process to address access, trails, and resource management. Sheila Kearns asks for detail on the PILOT program; she believes the tax paid by the state can fluctuate. Ken says the statute governing the PILOT program can be re-evaluated every five years by the state legislature. Jeanne Zoppel asks if the tax payment would include school tax; Ken says it would not and that the shortfall in school tax would be borne not by Sandgate taxpayers alone but would be spread among all taxpayers in the state. Jim Henderson asks how future archaeological findings, beyond the 89-acre current site, would be handled by the state. He also says there is no public hunting land in Sandgate now and that personally he would be happy to have access to state forestland. Lisa Gartner says any ground-disturbing activity undertaken by the state is automatically reviewed for archaeological and historical impact. Skipper Wilson and Jim ask if there would be a forest-management plan, including logging, as part of the sale; Lisa says there would. Joe says this is not the same as the land being in current use. The property is not currently enrolled in current use and has not been harvested recently; if it were logged in future, that work would be put up for bid. Jim asks if

August 7, 2023

permission from the Town for this purchase is required; Ken says it is his department's policy to request approval from the Town, and the governor will not approve such a sale without approval from the Town. Joe says there are many people who make their living from Vermont's working landscapes, who hate to see land taken out of production. Richard Zoppel stresses the need for clarification of the effect on school tax. Jim asks if this sale could proceed if Rupert does not approve the sale of an adjacent 300+ acres north of the Sandgate property; Sally and Ken say it would proceed. There will be a walk-through of the property with a representative of the Archaeological Conservancy on Friday August 11, meeting at 9:00 at the end of Beattie Hollow Road. Joe says that in order to make a decision, the Town needs clarification on the tax ramifications. Sally and Ken say they will provide details to the Town. Sally says a support letter for the sale is requested by the end of the month. She will call into the August 21 Selectboard meeting.

GROGAN UPDATE: Karen Tendrup says she has filed the relevant complaint forms with the Vermont Department of Environmental Enforcement and has included a request for soil samples. She expects a response in the next couple of weeks. She says that as health officer she cannot enforce animal issues. Melissa thanks Karen for her earlier email confirming what's been done. Linda asks if the complaint forms Karen has filed cover the issues of garbage and unregistered cars, and Karen says yes. Suzy dePeyster sent a written note to the board confirming that no large-animal problems on the Grogan property have been reported to her since the last Selectboard meeting.

EMERGENCY-MANAGEMENT PLANNING: Linda has updated the **LEMP** (Local Emergency Management Plan) and has several questions; Joe answers them. Linda will finish the form and submit it to the BCRC. Jim mentions items that should be updated in the **HMP** (Hazard Mitigation Plan), a more extensive document that will be written with the help of a third party. Jim offers to find a sample RFP (Request for Proposal); Linda will review and bring a draft to the next Selectboard meeting. Linda asks Jim to confirm that the Town already has a grant to defray the cost of this third-party writing, and he does. Jim says the Town has not filed the document certifying Sandgate's **adoption of state road and bridge standards**. The Board signs this document, and Sandy will forward it to the BCRC. Jim says adoption of **river corridor protection** is also crucial. All four of the boldface items above are required for the Town to receive maximum reimbursement from the state and federal governments in the event of a disaster. Jim directs the Board to the website www.floodready.vermont.gov.

WEST SIDE CEMETERY ACCESS: Joe will work with the road crew to come up with a solution.

ERIN MCDERMOTT has called and canceled her appearance at the meeting.

LISTERS' ERRORS AND OMISSIONS: Jeanne explains errors that include two camps to be added to Madava's listing, and the addition of land to the Sheres listing. The Board approves the corrections.

SPEED SIGN ON RUPERT ROAD: Sandy Reidy says Larry Golub asked that speed signs be posted on the part of Rupert Road near the Rupert town line. Linda says Ashley Coones also asked about a speed sign on Woodcock Road in a previous meeting. Joe will talk with the road crew.

CITIZEN CONCERNS: Brian Peat says the **culvert at the bottom of Moffitt Hollow Road** is washing out and needs repair. The road crew will look at the problem.

OTHER BUSINESS: Linda says (1) RCS Consulting has offered to come to the 8/21 Selectboard meeting to explain what their **tech review at Town Hall** (for efficiency, data security, etc.) would include, (2) Janet Hurley of the BCRC also wants to attend the 8/21 meeting to explain the **Municipal Technical Assistance Plan (MTAP)**, and (3) the new **hazardous-waste facility** opened in Bennington on 7/31 and is a success so far. Jim presents data on his **speed study on the northern stretch of Sandgate Road** and found a higher level of violation (14%, with a 10-mph tolerance) than he has in any of his other Sandgate studies. Richard reminds everyone to let the Zoning Board know if they see new building going on around Town; the Zoning Board will check with the homeowner to make sure **permits** have been obtained. John Phelps asks about **runoff in the Notch** that followed a recent rainfall; Skipper says there is a spring beneath the road, and he and Jay are keeping an eye on the road surface.

SIGN ORDERS.

REVIEW JULY 17, 2023, MINUTES. Joe makes a motion to approve; Charlie seconds; all in favor.

ADJOURN: Charlie makes a motion; John seconds. Meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY AUGUST 21, 2023, AT 6:00 IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – AUGUST 21, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Suzy dePeyster (Large Animal Control Officer), Jim Henderson, Janet Hurley (BCRC), Sheila Kearns, Sally Manikian (Conservation Fund), Ken Osbourne (VT Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation). Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (MTAP): Janet Hurley explains this program, which helps rural towns identify and secure funding for community-development projects. She has reviewed the Sandgate Town Plan and shares with the Board a list of potential projects (including creation of a natural-resource inventory, implementation of a village-center designation, increased transit services, an architectural survey of historic structures, cemetery restoration, and distribution of stormwater best-practice information to the public). She encourages further brainstorming to select the project that is most beneficial to the Town. Deadline for the project is January 2025. Once a project is selected, BCRC staff will help arrange funding and potentially manage the project itself, at no charge to the Town. Linda Schmidt makes a motion to participate in MTAP; Joe Nolan seconds; all in favor. Joe says the Board will discuss ideas and get back to Janet; he says there is a need for cemetery restoration. Janet suggests involving the Planning Commission in the discussion. Sheila Kearns agrees and adds that help will be needed from others in the community.

EMERGENCY-MANAGEMENT PLANNING: Linda confirms further information needed to complete the **Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP)**; she will make final updates and send the finished forms to Sandy Reidy for Joe's signature. Linda is working on a request-for-proposal for the **Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP)**; she confirms additional information with the Board and will have the RFP ready for the next meeting. The writing of the HMP will then be put out to bid. The Town has a grant for this of \$7,612.50 (75% of the total cost) and will pay the other 25%.

EGG MOUNTAIN PROPERTY: Joe says the Board has discussed the state's plan to purchase 2,500 acres from the Conservation Fund and turn it into state forest. He says the main concern is tax revenue. Ken Osbourne says the property tax paid on state land initially would be what it is now (municipal tax rate multiplied by assessed value). This amount is potentially adjusted every three to five years by the state. Joe asks if the amount ever drops as a result of the state-wide readjustment. Sheila says any future reappraisal by the Town of its land values would not affect the state's payment. She asks for a detailed analysis of the effect on

education taxes. Ken says that in other instances the effect on individual taxpayers has been fractions of a cent (because any shortfall in education tax is spread among taxpayers throughout the state). Charlie Pike asks what the state will pay for the property; Ken says it has yet to be appraised, but the state will pay full market value through a federal grant. No appraisal will be done until the purchase has the endorsement of the Board. Linda asks about the timing of the Board's decision. Ken says the grant deadline for the state's purchase is September 13, but the Board's decision can follow. Joe asks the Fund's reason for selling, and Sally Manikian explains that the Fund generally holds property only until a worthy purchaser can buy and conserve it. Linda asks what public use would be allowed by the state. Ken says the land would be open to pedestrian public access (for hiking, hunting, trapping, skiing, snowshoeing). Motorized access would be allowed only on established roads and only by full-size vehicles (cars, trucks), not ATVs. A long-range management plan would be developed (and opened to public comment) if the property is purchased by the state. Charlie asks what would happen if the Board does not endorse the purchase. Ken and Sally say they are hopeful the arrangement will work, but they must respect the Town's decision. John Phelps points out there is access now only from Salem, NY, and asks what would happen if emergency vehicles need access; Joe mentions costs incurred by the Town when rescue squads from other towns serve Sandgate. Ken will investigate and respond. The need to protect the archaeological site is also discussed. Linda suggests that public comment be obtained *before* the Board decides whether to endorse the purchase. Joe says it would be a good discussion for Town Meeting or a special community meeting. Jim Henderson agrees a dedicated town meeting is needed and will give the Fund and the state time to gather the details on taxes and public access that the Board needs. The Board will work with the Fund to post and organize this meeting, potentially to be held October 14. Sheila suggests including Rupert in the meeting, as 200+ acres in Rupert are adjacent to the Sandgate property and would be part of the purchase.

GROGAN UPDATE: Suzy dePeyster inspected recent damage to neighboring property, done by rooting pigs. She says the cows are still on the Grogan property, apparently because the truck sent to collect them was inadequate. Volunteers from the farming community will bring a better trailer to collect the cows and possibly goats and take them to the Cambridge auction. Karen Tendrup again contacted the Department of Environmental Enforcement but has not received a response. She will send additional pictures she has received recently to the DEE. John asks if the pigs on the property are properly fenced. Suzy says they are fenced and that they have not gotten out as often as they did formerly, but all agree the situation with the pigs must be monitored.

CITIZEN CONCERNS: Linda says **Rick Paligo**, who has a camp off Chunks Brook Road, asked her if the Town can do anything to repair a bridge on his access road that was damaged by cars from Grogan’s property washing against it. The Board confirms that, since the problem is on a private road, it is a private matter that cannot be addressed by the Town. Joe says **Nancy Tschorn** asked him how repairs to the bridge on Lincoln Lane will affect her water supply and if there is money available to defray any repair cost. Karen says she will inquire about this as Town Health Officer. Joe says citizens have raised concerns about **road gravel** causing flat tires.

SIGN ORDERS.

TREASURER’S REPORT. The report is given to the Board.

AUGUST 7, 2023, MINUTES will be reviewed at the next meeting.

ADJOURN: Charlie makes a motion; Joe seconds. Meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 5 AT 6:00 IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 5, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Anne Hammerle (Cemetery Commission), Ron Hausthor (E-Enable). Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

TECHNICAL/COMPUTER ASSESSMENT AT TOWN HALL: Linda Schmidt states the need for a health check on the computer setup at Town Hall, to prevent data loss and other problems. Ron Hausthor, from E-Enable in Bennington, explains that he performs tech assessments and provides support for town halls in Arlington, Wingate, Readsboro, and elsewhere. Joe Nolan asks if this support is provided on a regular basis or only when needed. Ron says it is provided when needed, particularly when a change in software or hardware is planned. In Sandgate, Ron would do an initial assessment at the rate of \$140 per hour; he expects two hours would be sufficient. Karen Tendrup asks Sandy Reidy if she thinks the Town needs this done. Sandy says NEMRC has commented on the age of the Town's hardware. Joe says it is worth spending some money, in light of recent computer problems, to have an assessment done. Linda says a second provider, RCS Consulting, is also putting together an assessment and proposal. The Board will review that at the next meeting, then decide how to proceed.

CEMETERY COMMISSION QUESTIONS: Anne Hammerle presents a list to the Board of work needed on the Town cemeteries and asks if there is money available (possibly with the help of the BCRC's Municipal Technical Assistance Program) to help with this work. The Cemetery Commission's budget is discussed, as is the possibility of volunteer help. Karen says students' required community service is a possible resource. Sandy will look into restoration of headstones: who decides on it, who is allowed to do it, and by what method. Anne asks about better access to the West Side Cemetery. Joe and the road crew think a pullout nearby is possible.

EMERGENCY-MANAGEMENT PLANNING: Linda says paperwork for the **Local Emergency Management Plan** (LEMP) is finished; Joe signs, and this can now be registered with the BCRC. She has completed the Request for Proposal for the **Hazard Mitigation Plan** (HMP) and will create an account with the Vermont Business Registry, where the RFP will be posted for bidding.

FIRE-WARDEN RENEWAL: The form reappointing Lynn Fielding as fire warden must be signed by Lynn and the Board. Joe will contact Lynn.

POTENTIAL SALE OF EGG MOUNTAIN PROPERTY TO STATE OF VERMONT: Charlie Pike asks where this stands. Part of the property is in Rupert, and Linda will talk with the Rupert selectboard about the possibility of a joint, dedicated town meeting to be held in October.

GROGAN UPDATE: Joe says some animals have been trucked off the property. Both Suzy dePeyster and Karen visited in the past few days and saw no cows or goats. Karen talked with Dale Brooks (802-747-8152), Administrative Services Coordinator at the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation, who has assigned Environmental Enforcement Officer Patrick Lowkes of the DEE to investigate the Town's registered complaint. Patrick's focus is garbage disposal. Karen was told that the DEE cannot address bear problems; those are the purview of the game warden. She tells the Board that as Health Officer, she was obliged to tell the Grogan's last year about Covid assistance money available to them.

CITIZEN CONCERNS: Joe says Nancy Tschorn is concerned her water supply will be disrupted by the **culvert replacement on Lincoln Lane**. Linda has spoken with Jim Henderson about this, and Jim says that he and Josh Carvajal planned the culvert replacement with Nancy's water system in mind. The plan is not to interfere with it. Karen will look into this in her capacity as Health Officer.

Karen suggests the Town throw a **Halloween party**, possibly a hayride or trunk-or-treat at Town Hall.

John Phelps and Charlie ask about the **cleaning of Town Hall**, including washing the outside of the windows and buffing of floors. John asks if this could be community service for students. Joe suggests this work be done right before Town Meeting.

ROAD REPORT. The road crew has been working on Snow Road. Karen says potholes in Beartown have been spray-painted red.

SIGN ORDERS.

AUGUST 7 & 21, 2023 MINUTES: Karen makes a motion; Linda seconds. Minutes are approved.

ADJOURN: Joe makes a motion; Charlie seconds. Meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY SEPTEMBER 18 AT 6:00 IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.
A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

September 9, 2023

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 18, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:10 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt. Also present: Tom Clark, Rob Clary, Sue Clary (from Salem, NY), Tim Fagan, Shelley Finn, Jim Henderson, Sally Manikian, Melissa Mattison, Edward Mitchell, Rob Steuer (RCS Communications), Richard Zoppel. Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

TECHNICAL/COMPUTER ASSESSMENT AT TOWN HALL: Rob Steuer, of RCS Communications, presented his proposal for securing, updating, and backing up tech/computer services at Town Hall. The Board is soliciting a proposal from a second vendor, to be pursued in October. The two proposals will be compared and a decision made on how to move forward.

POTENTIAL SALE OF EGG MOUNTAIN PROPERTY TO STATE OF VERMONT: Sally Manikian of the Conservation Fund introduces herself again and asks how the conversation---to include the state of Vermont and the towns of Sandgate, Rupert, and Salem---should move forward. Melissa Mattison says the Fund's maps of the property and the Town's maps do not match regarding a parcel bought at tax sale by the Mattisons. Sally and Melissa say that title must be discussed further. Sue Clary asks about the main access to the Egg Mountain property, which is through Salem, NY, and says the town of Salem should be included in discussions going forward. Joe Nolan says he is not in favor of the sale. Linda Schmidt says she attended the Rupert selectboard meeting on September 12 to discuss the previously proposed Sandgate/Rupert informational meeting and that the Rupert selectboard wants to participate. Jim Henderson says he spoke with Tom Wilson, who also said Rupert is interested and offered to host the meeting at the Rupert firehouse. Jim asks Joe for clarification on his comment about not favoring the sale; Joe says he was speaking personally and not for the Board. Tom Clark speaks about the history of the property. Sally asks what the goal is for the coming meeting and suggests making it simply informational. Richard Zoppel asks if the state could potentially re-sell the property later; Sally says it is rare for the state to sell such properties. She proposes that the Fund host the meeting, and Joe agrees. Sheila Kearns stresses the need for a clear agenda. Sue asks for data on how traffic on Beattie Hollow Road will change. Joe asks about EMS response and which town would be responsible; local mutual-aid arrangements are discussed. Jim says the forest service is about to acquire a large tract of land in Murray Hollow: Arlington's October 10 selectboard meeting (7:00) will address this. Sally and Joe will coordinate with Rupert and Salem to set an October 14 Egg Mountain meeting.

EMERGENCY-MANAGEMENT PLANNING: Sandy Reidy and Joe and confirm that the **Local Emergency Management Plan** (LEMP) has been signed and filed with the BCRC. Linda has created an account with the Vermont Business Registry to publicize a request-for-proposal for the Town's **Hazard Mitigation Plan** (HMP) and will post the RFP this week.

GROGAN UPDATE: Sandy presents Suzy dePeyster's Large Animal Control report, which says Tim Fagan reported on September 13 that piglets and goats were loose. Melissa says state regulations specify that an animal loose for 96 hours is considered feral; she says these pigs have never been contained and are those that damaged the Trafoya property recently. Joe says enforcement falls on the Animal Control Officer. Melissa asks why there has been no enforcement. John Phelps asks if the pigs are fenced; Suzy has said there is a gate. Melissa says in the past two years no secure fencing has been added or effective repairs made. She reminds the Board that animal-related fines have been imposed on the Grogans in the past. Melissa and Tim are very frustrated at the lack of control and lack of repercussions in this situation. Melissa says Karen, as Health Officer, overstepped her role when she---without consulting the Board---told the Grogans about the availability of tax assistance. Linda asks if the Grogans' taxes have been paid for this year; Sandy says they have not. Linda asks if Sandy has heard recently from VHAP, the organization that granted the money used to pay the back taxes: Sandy is going to call VHAP again to ask about the status of the situation. Melissa asks when animal regulations will be enforced. Joe says the Board needs to direct the Animal Control Officer to levy fines. Linda asks if the cows and goats are gone; Melissa says the cows and some of the goats are gone, but that there are now more pigs. Melissa says Karen should not serve as Health Officer anymore and wants her to have no more involvement in the Grogan situation. There is general discussion about how a vacancy would be filled. Jim offers to speak with his water-quality contacts at the Department of Environmental Conservation about the cars in the river. Charlie Pike makes a motion to accept Jim's help; Linda seconds; all in favor. Jim asks about the progress of current DEC complaints. Linda says Karen's last update was that the DEC assigned Environmental Enforcement Officer Patrick Lowkes to address the garbage issue.

FOUR-WHEELERS: Melissa says she spoke about four-wheelers with the game warden, who says the Town does not have authority to permit the use of these vehicles in restricted areas.

ROAD REPORT. Jim asks if an extension will be requested for work on **Rupert Road**; work will probably be extended into the spring. Jim has been doing an inventory of **culverts** throughout Town. Linda asks if an extension is needed for the work on **Lincoln Lane**; Jim points out that no work can be done in the stream after October 15. Joe says Jay Wilson

has asked for a vote on restoring **Tate Hill Road** to Class 3: Joe makes a motion; Linda seconds; all in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS: John asks about the **Halloween party** suggested at the last meeting and asks where money for that comes from and if it comes from Act 60. Sandy says the money is in the general fund, not the school fund.

SIGN ORDERS.

SEPTEMBER 5, 2023, MINUTES: Minutes are approved.

ADJOURN: Charlie makes a motion to adjourn; Joe seconds; all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:45.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY OCTOBER 2 AT 6:00 IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – OCTOBER 2, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Tom Clark, Jim Henderson, Melissa Mattison, Margaret Phelps, Richard Zoppel. Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

POTENTIAL SALE OF EGG MOUNTAIN PROPERTY TO STATE OF VERMONT: Jim Henderson says the BCRC would like to hold a meeting of its commissioners at Sandgate Town Hall on Thursday November 16 at 5:30 to discuss the sale. The Selectboards of Sandgate and Rupert, along with representatives from Salem, will be invited. Representatives from the Conservation Fund and the state of Vermont will attend. This meeting is in lieu of the October 14 meeting that was proposed at earlier Selectboard meetings. Jim will coordinate with all parties involved.

[Later in the meeting] Tom Clark returns to the subject of Egg Mountain to say he can't envision people wanting to hike the property and that he does not agree with the practice of the state buying land. Melissa Mattison asks about tax revenue. All agree this must be addressed at the November 16 meeting. Richard Zoppel has questions about potential re-sale and development. Melissa points out the discrepancy regarding property the Mattisons own. Joe Nolan says the meeting will give everyone involved the chance to ask questions.

GROGAN UPDATE: Joe reads aloud Suzy dePeyster's October 2 report that she observed no pigs loose on that date. Melissa and Jim both say they have seen pigs loose in the past few days. Melissa says the game warden told her a charge has been filed. Karen Tendrup says there has been no update from Patrick Lowkes, the Environmental Enforcement Officer assigned by the DEC to address the garbage issue. Joe says Kathleen James, state representative, has contacted the Selectboard multiple times but cannot help beyond what the Board is already pursuing with various agencies. Jim talked with Noah Gilbert-Fuller of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Water Quality Division, who asked Jim to send photographs, which Jim has done. Linda Schmidt asks if there is a formal complaint process with the Agency of Agriculture, and Melissa says she has filed a complaint. Jim was told by Josh Carvajal, River Management Engineer with the DEC, that Vincent Chiorgno, Salvage Yard Program Coordinator with the Waste Management Division of the DEC, visited the site recently. Karen will call her contact at the DEC again tomorrow for an update. Melissa asks when large-animal fines will be imposed: Suzy has requested

October 2, 2023

pictures, because when she has visited, she has not seen loose animals. Pictures have been provided to her several times. Melissa says the piglets are gone. John Phelps asks if there are certain times of day when the animals are out; Melissa says they are out at various times. She says past fence repairs have all failed. Tom Clark says a wooden enclosure is needed to contain pigs. Joe says Suzy must impose fines, and the Board will pursue with her. Jim says proposed revisions to the Town's zoning bylaws include river-corridor protections. If these are adopted, the property will be in clear violation; all drainage goes into Chunks Brook. Richard says the new bylaws are scheduled to be adopted in early 2024. Melissa says the Grogan issues were brought before the District Environmental Court in 2019, but the judgment was never pursued. Joe will ask Noah to visit the site with him; Jim will ask Vincent to join.

BENNINGTON COUNTY SOLID WASTE ALLIANCE: Linda attended the September 13 BCSWA quarterly meeting and reports that the new hazardous-waste collection facility in Bennington is getting steady use and functioning well. The BCSWA is considering future projects involving recycling of plastic bags, a "repair fair" in February (where people who need small repairs can connect with people who know how to make them), and used-book collection (Margaret Phelps points out the amount of money spent on schoolbooks).

MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: The program allows BCRC staff to help the Town with one project designated by the Board. At past meetings, the Board has considered **cemetery improvements** as the MTAP project for Sandgate. Richard points out the need for strict adherence to proper guidelines in handling gravestones. Linda says that must be stressed in the project plan. Linda makes a motion to move forward with cemeteries as the MTAP project; Joe seconds; all in favor. Linda will contact the Cemetery Commission and connect them with Janet Hurley of the BCRC.

ROAD REPORT. Joe says the road crew has been working on **Chunks Brooks Road**. Their next priority is to **grade roads before winter** and to finish the work on Chunks Brook Road. Jim asks about work on **Lincoln Lane**. Joe says that is also on the agenda for this year. Melissa asks why the road crew has hired a trailer for **moving equipment** when the intent was to use Jay's trailer. Joe says the decision is the road crew's and that they've been doing a great job. John says Melissa is right that the intent was to use Jay's trailer. Joe will ask why a trailer was hired.

OTHER BUSINESS: Karen says the Board knew she intended to tell the **Grogans** to ask at Town Hall about tax relief in 2021/2022. Sandy says no one asked her about this. Joe says Karen did not tell the Board. Melissa says Karen has referred to a contact at VHAP; Karen says she contacted VHAP to find out what the Grogans had been given. Karen says she and Karen Dzailo told the Board that they told the Grogans they had the right to ask Town Hall and VHAP about tax relief. Melissa says the advice was given while Karen was still completing a course to become health officer; Karen says that, regardless, she was health officer during that period. Jim asks what connection there was between her job as health officer and tax-relief advice. Karen says the Board was informed; Joe says it was not. [People talking over each other.] Melissa says the advice was outside Karen's role and should have been brought before the Board beforehand. Joe says we have no choice now but to focus on fixing the current situation. Linda asks where VHAP money stands for this year.

On September 23, Linda posted a request-for-proposal for the Town's **Hazard Mitigation Plan** on the Vermont Business Registry. The deadline for bids is October 25. An updated plan is required for the Town to receive the highest amount of relief from state and federal governments in the event of a disaster.

SIGN ORDERS.

SEPTEMBER 18, 2023, MINUTES: John makes a motion to approve; Joe seconds; all in favor.

ADJOURN: Charlie Pike makes a motion to adjourn; Joe seconds; all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:58.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY OCTOBER 16 AT 6:00
IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.**

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.
A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – OCTOBER 16, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Ann Hammerle, Colleen Hinkler, Janet Hurley (Bennington County Regional Commission), Glenn Hynick, Margaret Phelps. Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: Janet Hurley of the BCRC discusses moving forward on cemetery improvements as the focus of this program. The project needs approval by the Vermont Agency of Administration, and she will work on that, and on the project itself, with the Sandgate Cemetery Commission. Janet, Ann Hammerle, and Julie Robertson will meet on October 17 at 1:00 to begin planning. Julie then thanks the Selectboard and road crew for culvert repairs.

POTENTIAL SALE OF EGG MOUNTAIN PROPERTY TO STATE OF VERMONT: Colleen Hinkler and Glenn Hynick ask where this stands. Joe Nolan says there will be a meeting on **Thursday November 16 at 5:30 in Sandgate Town Hall** to discuss. The meeting will be hosted by the BCRC and will include representatives of the Conservation Fund (the seller), the Archaeological Conservancy (owner of the Shays site), the state of Vermont, the Sandgate and Rupert Selectboards, the town of Salem, and any other interested parties.

[Later in the meeting] Linda Schmidt has compiled a list of questions raised by the Selectboard and others who have attended recent Selectboard meetings, and she will send this list to the BCRC, to be included in their agenda for the November 16 meeting. The list includes questions on tax revenue, site access (including for emergency vehicles), allowed usage, liability, potential re-sale/development, protection of the archaeological site, and the state's future management plan. John Phelps asks if the Town must approve the sale for it to go forward. Linda says that at the first Selectboard meeting where the sale was discussed, representatives from the Conservation Fund and the state said they prefer to have Town approval, and that the governor, who must approve such sales to the state, will not approve without Town support. This point must also be clarified at the November 16 meeting.

GROGAN UPDATE: Since the last meeting, Joe contacted the Agency of Agriculture to arrange a site visit, and he received a phone message from Wendy Houston of the Agency, who has visited the site at the request of Noah Gilbert-Fuller, also of the Agency. Sandy Reidy says Ingrid Nixon of the Vermont Housing Assistance Program told her that Kevin O’Toole, the lawyer who handled the 2022 Grogan tax sale, approved the VHAP grant that covered back taxes. Karen Tendrup recently asked Susan Senning, a lawyer at the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, about Karen’s role, as health officer, in telling the Grogans where they could inquire about tax relief. Karen presented the emailed response she received from Senning to the Board. It states, “As long as you weren’t holding yourself out to be speaking for the Board or making a decision that is supposed to be made by the Board, then you are allowed to help folks. As I said, many voters would expect this from their selectboard members.” Karen adds that the Board does not vote on where townspeople get money to pay their taxes. Linda asks if there has been any response from Patrick Lowkes, the Environmental Enforcement Officer appointed by the Department of Environmental Conservation to address the garbage issue; Karen has checked with the DEC, and they have given her no new information.

CITIZEN CONCERNS: Karen says Bill Barney and other Beartown residents are concerned about the **condition of Sandgate Road** near them. Joe says the road crew will start grading Town-wide once they finish the **Lincoln Lane culvert**. John asks about Nancy Tschorn’s water cistern. Linda has learned from Jim Henderson that the new culvert was designed to avoid Nancy’s water source.

OTHER BUSINESS: John asks if the road crew is still interested in purchasing a different **bucket for the excavator**. Joe says this has been tabled for now because the road crew has been so busy with projects. John asks about the status of the **generator for Town Hall**: Joe says the road crew will do the excavation for the propane tank after their current projects are complete. John asks if the Board should consider **solar power for Town Hall**. Linda will ask Sheila Kearns if she has learned anything on the energy assessment of Town Hall through the Municipal Energy Resilience Program, which was discussed at the July 10, 2023, Selectboard meeting.

TREASURER’S REPORT: The report is presented to the Board. Sandy says she made a payment to the school district today. Joe asks if anyone has found out why the Cemetery Commission’s budget was cut a few years ago. Sandy says this was done at the request of the Commission.

SIGN ORDERS.

REVIEW OF OCTOBER 2, 2023, MINUTES: Karen makes a motion to approve; Charlie seconds; all in favor.

ADJOURN: Linda makes a motion to adjourn; Charlie seconds; all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:31.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY NOVEMBER 6 AT 6:00 IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – NOVEMBER 6, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Ashley Coones, John Koller (treasurer, Arlington Rescue Squad), Margaret Phelps, Jeanne Zoppel. Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

LISTERS' ERRORS AND OMISSIONS: Jeanne Zoppel explains the following adjustments: Lilli Clark, who bought a house that burned, was over-assessed, so her assessment will be reduced. Kirby Sprague's camp on Madava property has been dismantled and so will not be taxed. The Bennett Ridge Hunt Club property has reverted to Mettowee's ownership, and tax has already been charged to Mettowee. Joe Nolan makes a motion to accept the changes; Karen Tendrup seconds; all in favor.

ARLINGTON RESCUE SQUAD APPROPRIATION: John Koller presents a list of the Rescue Squad's annual costs. Due to loss of staff, increased labor costs, inflation, and the state's discontinuance of 911 dispatch funding, the Squad is asking for a higher appropriation for 2024: \$25 instead of \$18 per capita for all towns served. Sandgate's appropriation would change from \$7,500 to \$9,700. This would bring Sandgate's per capita cost to the level of Sunderland's and Shaftsbury's. There have been 29 rescue calls from Sandgate this year. John invites anyone interested—including potential volunteers, who are needed—to join the Squad's regular meetings. A new ambulance is also needed; there will be a separate fundraising drive for that. Joe asks what would happen if the increased appropriation is not approved by the Town. John says the Squad has a limited amount of surplus money to serve all towns; when that runs out, calls would be diverted to other rescue squads.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN: Linda Schmidt says the BCRC submitted a bid to write Sandgate's HMP (which must be updated regularly for the Town to receive maximum funding from state and federal governments in the event of a disaster). The BCRC will charge \$10,033 to write the plan. Sandgate has a \$7,612.50 FEMA grant to cover this cost; the Town will pay the remaining \$2,420.50. Joe signs the bid, and Linda will contact the BCRC to learn the next steps.

LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN: Linda recently took a FEMA class necessary for the completion of this form (also a pre-requisite for full government disaster funding). She and Joe sign the final form, and Linda will submit it to the BCRC. Joe asks if Linda (rather than Joe) should be the Town's Emergency Management Director. Karen offers to help. That question is tabled for now.

TECH ASSESSMENT AT TOWN HALL: Linda says a second tech consultant, from E-Enable, Inc., in Bennington, visited Town Hall recently to do a preliminary assessment of hardware, software, and information security, and has submitted a proposal. Three bids constitute best practice for work of this kind, and Linda is contacting a third potential bidder, recommended by the Rupert Town Hall staff. She will then bring all three proposals to the Board for review.

GROGAN UPDATE: Karen asks that the 10/16 Selectboard meeting minutes be revised to reflect the fact that she has contacted the Department of Environmental Conservation to ask for an update on the complaint she filed over the summer, but the DEC has provided no new information.

CITIZEN CONCERNS: Karen says Ashley Coones [who had been called away from the meeting by this point] had a concern with a Town employee who turned her away at Town Hall 15 minutes before closing.

POTENTIAL SALE OF EGG MOUNTAIN PROPERTY TO STATE OF VERMONT: Charlie Pike says the BCRC will host a meeting on **Thursday November 16 at 5:30 in Sandgate Town Hall** to discuss.

BUDGET DISCUSSION: Sandy Reidy says it is time for the Board to plan the 2024 budget, and she presents the Town's current expenditures. Joe says fuel costs will likely increase next year. Charlie says the same for salt costs, and Sandy mentions payroll taxes. Linda asks if the equipment-maintenance budget needs to increase to cover the new excavator. Sandy says Jay Wilson will look at road-related line items. Sandy says the Town Auditors have suggested the loan for the backhoe be paid in full now, to save interest costs. John Phelps asks if the rusted file cabinet and desk in Town Hall should be replaced. Joe mentions having the floors in Town Hall refinished before Town Meeting. Sandy says the Board has until January to plan the budget.

ROAD REPORT: Joe says the grader needs a new solenoid and will be repaired this week.

OTHER BUSINESS: On 10/26, Linda attended a **long-term power-outage discussion** at Arlington Town Hall, hosted by Dara Zink of the BCRC and Taiga Christie of Vermont Emergency Management. Several officials from Arlington, Shaftsbury, and Sunderland attended, and the group discussed the specific effects of (and responses to) a long-term outage. Dara and Taiga offered to do the same kind of exercise with any interested towns on an individual basis. Linda took notes on the discussion and will summarize for the Board at the next meeting.

SIGN ORDERS.

REVIEW OF OCTOBER 16, 2023, MINUTES: Joe makes a motion to approve the minutes with the change listed above under “Grogan Update”; Karen seconds; all in favor. Linda will make the change and re-submit the minutes to Katie for posting.

ADJOURN: Charlie makes a motion to adjourn; John seconds; all in favor.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY NOVEMBER 20 AT 6:00
IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.**

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – NOVEMBER 20, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Elizabeth Daut, Jim Henderson, Margaret Phelps, Dara Zink (Bennington County Regional Commission). Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN: Dara Zink kicks off the rewriting of Sandgate’s Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is required every five years. The current one-year time frame is relatively short. The Board suggests the following people to serve on the planning team: Joe Nolan, Lynn Fielding, Sheila Kearns, Linda Schmidt, Jay Wilson, Karen Tendrup, Jim Henderson. Dara says as many residents must be reached as possible. The Board and audience collaborate on a list of people and organizations that live in or serve Sandgate, including Arlington Fire and Rescue, the Sandgate road crew, Sandgate Planning Commission, Carthusian monastery, Fidium, Consolidated Communications, Rick Dahm, Sandgate Church, and Josh Carvajal. Dara says they will be contacted by the BCRC as part of the planning process. Joe Nolan says that as Board Chair he is serving by default as the Town’s Emergency Management Director but has no special qualification. Jim Henderson asks Dara for a description of job responsibilities for the EMD and says he might consider it once he understands what is involved. Linda Schmidt asks if there is any need for a deputy EMD and says she would be interested in that.

EMERGENCY PLANNING: Linda says the Long-Term Power Outage exercise hosted by the BCRC she attended recently brought up two thoughts. First, she asks if Dara can present the same emergency-planning issues to the entire Selectboard at some point, so more people can participate in a Sandgate-focused discussion. Dara says she will speak on this to the Board when Sandgate’s Local Emergency Management Plan is up for renewal in spring 2024. Second, Linda says the power-outage exercise pointed out the importance of a strong informal network of neighbors helping neighbors. Elizabeth Daut says she recently saw an announcement for small grants available through the Vermont Community Foundation aimed at helping small communities build resilience to emergencies.

She suggests this grant could be used to create events aimed at sustaining a network of Sandgate's women, which could encourage community awareness, a network of neighbors helping neighbors, more volunteering, and more participation in the Town in general. Jim concurs that with new people moving to Sandgate, and others moving or passing away, some of this social network has been lost. Elizabeth volunteers to write the grant proposal, which is due December 1. Linda makes a motion to apply for the grant; Karen Tendrup seconds and asks for further information; John Phelps abstains; rest in favor.

GROGAN UPDATE: Karen has repeatedly attempted to contact the DEC about the formal complaint and is not getting a response. She asks Jim if he can help get a response. Joe and Karen say they have heard of no new problems at the property. Jim visited after a recent rainstorm and saw no livestock out and says the property looked better than it has in a year.

EGG MOUNTAIN UPDATE: Joe suggests that the potential sale to the state be put on the ballot in Sandgate. Linda says that, given the fact that the property will be sold to a buyer of some kind one way or another, the Town should consider the pros and cons of the state purchase relative to the pros and cons of other types of buyers. Jim agrees and points out that a private buyer could theoretically divide the property into camp lots and that Sandgate residents certainly would not have the access for hunting, hiking, etc., that the state would allow. Linda says the Egg Mountain property is almost 10% of the total area of Sandgate. Jim says a vote is not worthwhile because it could turn into a contentious issue, and the state can proceed with the sale regardless. Joe says residents should have a say. Charlie Pike asks how many people at the meeting on November 16 were from Sandgate; Jim estimates half the audience. Joe says a vote next year is worthwhile and could at least give the state an indication of the Town's attitude. Margaret Phelps is concerned about the effect on school tax and says we need a clearer explanation of that. She also says school field trips to the archaeological site would be impractical. Jim says a private buyer would certainly put the property into the use-value program, and Sandgate's taxes would instantly be impacted. He says Sandgate has the highest per-capita rate of property in use-value in Bennington County. Joe says land in use-value is at least in production and that state land is not productive. Jim says land usage is something that must be emphasized in planning with the state. Joe says access to the property (currently through Salem, NY) is also a problem. He does not want to see this much land in the possession of the state. He makes a motion to put the matter on the ballot; Charlie seconds; all not in favor. Karen against, Linda also against, and John says the Town doesn't have enough

information to put the issue on the ballot productively. Sandy Reidy suggests a petition and also suggests calculating the current-use rate for the property. John says he's hesitant to do anything at this point, and Joe agrees we should pause. The Board decides to hold off on the ballot question.

FEMA PROJECTS ON TOWN ROADS: Jim says the road crew has completed all FEMA projects for this year and the Town is ready to submit paperwork for reimbursement. Sandy says she and Jay Wilson are preparing the paperwork and will submit it to FEMA. Jim says the road crew has projects lined up for next year and that they also need to figure out the condition of the Notch.

CITIZEN CONCERNS: None raised.

PROPOSED BUDGET PLANNING: Sandy says the Board should discuss this on another date, since the meeting is running long, and all agree.

TREASURERS REPORT: Joe makes a motion to approve; Linda seconds; all in favor.

SIGN ORDERS.

REVIEW OF OCTOBER 16 AND NOVEMBER 6 MINUTES: Joe makes a motion to approve; Karen seconds; all in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS: John asks the status of the **tech assessment at Town Hall**. Linda says a third potential consultant, Mike Oltedal, who was recommended by the Rupert town clerk, visited Sandgate Town Hall on November 16 and will submit a proposal. Linda will bring the proposals of all three potential vendors to the next Selectboard meeting so the Board can review.

ADJOURN: Linda makes a motion to adjourn; Charlie seconds; all in favor.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY DECEMBER 4 AT 6:00
AT THE SANDGATE TOWN HALL.**

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – DECEMBER 4, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Sheila Kearns, Margaret Phelps, Richard Zoppel. Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

DRY-HYDRANT TESTING: Joe Nolan says it is time to have dry hydrants tested. Suzy DePeyster is concerned that certain hydrants in Town are not working. Richard Zoppel says he has been asked by the Arlington Fire Chief before about the design of the dry hydrant near the Zoppels' house, but he was assured by the designing engineer that it is installed properly. Joe says Arlington Fire and Rescue will now charge for testing; previously the cost of testing was included in the \$28,000 appropriation Sandgate pays to Arlington. Joe says the hydrants must be tested, so the fee must be paid. Linda Schmidt asks what the charge will be, and Sheila Kearns asks what the testing schedule will be. Joe will contact Mike King, the Arlington Fire Chief, to get the cost and to schedule. Margaret Phelps says one dry hydrant near the Green River has no cap on it. There is a discussion of which budget line item the testing fee would fall under. Sheila says we need a breakdown from Arlington Fire and Rescue of what its appropriation includes.

TECH ASSISTANCE AT TOWN HALL: Linda says the choice of vendors has been narrowed from three to two. She says that in the first year of a support agreement, the expense will be roughly \$3,000, largely due to hardware and setup costs that would not be incurred annually; the annual cost is expected to drop after that. The choice of vendor rests on how much network maintenance would be handled by Town Hall staff and how much would be handled by a vendor. Linda has one more question to ask one vendor before the next Selectboard meeting. Sandy Reidy will also contact NEMRC to get a quote on moving that service to the Cloud; Sheila says the NEMRC cost will be determinative.

GROGAN UPDATE: Karen Tendrup has repeatedly contacted the DEC about the formal complaint and is not getting a response. She has received no new complaints.

BUDGET PLANNING: Sandy says the Board should hold a separate meeting to discuss this. The Board decides to meet on Monday December 11 at 5:30 at Town Hall. Sheila asks if numbers will be shared in another public meeting *before* Town Meeting. Sandy explains that the budget will be presented in Town Meeting; she says that in the past, the Selectboard has formulated numbers in a separate meeting, then presented them to the public through the Town Report and at Town Meeting. Richard agrees with Sandy that this is how budget planning worked when he was on the Board.

CITIZEN CONCERNS: Sheila says the Planning Commission plans to hold a public hearing on the **revised Town Zoning Bylaws** on January 17. The meeting will be warned. If no major revisions result from that meeting, the Bylaws will be brought to the Selectboard at its February 5 meeting.

ROAD REPORT: Joe says the sand barrel at Town Hall has been filled, and the Highway Department bought plastic to cover the sand pile at the Town Garage. They have plowed two or three times and were cleaning ditches in the Notch this week. Joe let Jay Wilson know there may be a grant available to determine work needed on the Notch; Jay prefers that the Road Crew investigate on its own.

SIGN ORDERS. Joe points out a \$600 charge to replace locks on the Town Garage. He says someone tried to break into the Garage over the summer. He is discussing security cameras with Jay. Sheila suggests a separate network for cameras, to prevent hacking.

OTHER BUSINESS: Margaret encourages everyone to come to the **Christmas party** on Sunday December 10 from 2 to 4 at Town Hall. Linda mentions the meeting planned for Wednesday December 13 at 6:30 at Town Hall to begin rewriting the Town's **Hazard Mitigation Plan**. Linda asks about the **Municipal Energy Resilience Program**, which Sheila applied for on the Town's behalf and which includes energy assessments of Town Hall and the Town Garage. Sheila says the application process is moving forward.

REVIEW OF NOVEMBER 20 MINUTES: Karen makes a motion to approve the minutes; Linda seconds; all in favor.

ADJOURN: Charlie Pike makes a motion to adjourn; Karen seconds; all in favor.

THE NEXT MEETINGS WILL BE ON MONDAY DECEMBER 11 AT 5:30 (for 2023-24 budget planning) AND MONDAY DECEMBER 18 AT 6:00 IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – DECEMBER 11, 2023

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Sandy Reidy, Jay Wilson, Skipper Wilson.

PLANNING FOR THE 2024–25 BUDGET: The Board and Treasurer prepare the budget to be presented at Town Meeting.

SIGN ORDERS. The Board members sign appropriation orders.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY DECEMBER 18 AT 6:00 IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES – DECEMBER 18, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE: Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Jim Henderson, Joseph Gajewski, Margaret Phelps. Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

QUESTION CONCERNING GRANT: Jim Henderson asks Sandy Reidy about an email she received about the Town being delinquent in reporting progress on work being done through an unidentified grant. Sandy says the email is unclear about which grant and project are involved, and her phone calls with the sender have been inconclusive; she is investigating further.

CITIZEN CONCERNS: Sandy says Eric Weissleder called Town Hall because he got a flat tire from the white stone being used on Town roads. Karen Tendrup has also had a flat. Joe Nolan will talk with the Road Crew. Charlie Pike asks about people taking more than the allowed 5-gallon pail of sand from the Town Garage: he recently saw someone in a white truck loading sand into the bed. Joe says this person might have had permission; he will talk with the Road Crew.

GROGAN UPDATE: Karen has repeatedly contacted the DEC about the formal complaint and is not getting a response. She says no one answers the phone or the door at the Grogan house. She has received no new complaints.

ROAD REPORT: There will be a Christmas party on Friday December 21 at noon at the Town Garage. Joe encourages everyone to attend.

OTHER BUSINESS: Joe says the Arlington Fire Chief has not returned calls about **testing dry hydrants** in Town. Joe says gravel around the hydrants must be cleared before the hydrants can be tested. The Road Crew will clear the gravel and will also dig a trench for installation of the **generator at Town Hall**.

Linda Schmidt says the Town's proposal for **cemetery restoration** as the subject of the **Municipal Technical Assistance Program (MTAP)** has been rejected by the Vermont Agency of Administration. Janet Hurley of the BCRC has been in touch with Julie Robertson and is confident other help can be found for the cemeteries. Linda says that meanwhile the Selectboard can nominate a different project for the MTAP program; the deadline for MTAP is March 31, 2025. Linda says she got final questions answered by the three candidates to provide **tech assistance at Town Hall**, and she makes a motion to hire Mike Oltedal to provide this assistance to Sandgate. Charlie asks Sandy if she agrees, and Sandy says she does. Joe seconds the motion; all in favor. Mike is the tech consultant for the Rupert Town Hall and has been highly recommended by Rupert. Linda says the Bennington County Solid Waste Administration has scheduled **Fix-It Fun: a free community repair event**, on Saturday February 17 from 11 to 4 at the Bennington Free Library, where volunteer fixers can come together with people who need small repairs. Anyone interested in being a volunteer fixer or helping with the event can get more information by calling 802/442-9051. Sandy has spoken with **NEMRC** about switching the Town's service to the cloud: the charge will be \$700 for setup, plus \$13 per month thereafter. This switch will eliminate the need for manual backup of NEMRC data in Town Hall.

TREASURER'S REPORT. The report is distributed.

REVIEW OF DECEMBER 4 AND DECEMBER 11 MINUTES: Joe makes a motion to approve the minutes; Charlie seconds; all in favor.

SIGN ORDERS.

ADJOURN: Charlie makes a motion to adjourn; Linda seconds; all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:34.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON TUESDAY JANUARY 2 AT 6:00
IN SANDGATE TOWN HALL.**

Respectfully submitted by Sandra Reidy and Linda Schmidt.

A complete recording is available by request at Sandgate Town Hall.

December 18, 2023