

# SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES - MARCH 18, 2024

**CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.**

**ATTENDANCE:** Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Linda Schmidt, Karen Tendrup. Also present: Bill Budde, Jim Henderson, Janet Hurley, Sheila Kearns. Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

**TOWN HALL AS AN EMERGENCY SHELTER:** Janet Hurley answers the Board's questions about using the Municipal Technical Assistance Program (MTAP) to equip Town Hall as a shelter, including addressing the lack of potable water. Janet explains that the \$25K set aside by the state Agency of Administration for this project will not be a Town expense and might not all be needed, depending on what is found when the current well and wastewater situation is assessed by an engineer. If that assessment determines that *more* funds are needed, the BCRC will help the Town find funding. Joe Nolan asks if the first step will be retesting the existing well water, and Janet confirms. With this information, Joe signs the Statement of Work pertaining to this project. Linda Schmidt will be the point of contact for the BCRC with the Board. Sheila Kearns asks about the fund-release process for MTAP projects; Janet explains that any contractors hired will bill the Agency of Administration directly.

**SUBMISSION OF REVISED ZONING BYLAWS TO THE BOARD:** On behalf of the Planning Commission and Zoning Board, Sheila presents revised bylaws to the Selectboard, along with a timeline for public hearings, public comment, revision, and adoption. The revised bylaws must be adopted by February 2025. Janet, who helped write the revisions, offers to attend the future public meeting on the revised bylaws and answer questions.

**250TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE STATE:** Bill Budde presents information on planning being done by the Vermont 250th Anniversary Commission for celebrations in 2025. Towns are determining how to collaborate, including on re-enactments, floats, and distribution of information at events such as Bennington Battle Day. Volunteers are needed. Karen Tendrup suggests including the Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and 4-H in the request for help. Bill asks that the Board sign a resolution that Sandgate will participate in the celebration and also asks for a liaison for the celebration in Sandgate.

**ANIMAL-FEED STORAGE ORDINANCE:** Linda presents a revised draft of a new ordinance to the Board. John Phelps asks that language be added explaining who will enforce the ordinance. Karen says the Town Health Officer and Town Constable will enforce. Linda will add that language and bring the finished draft to the Board at the next meeting.

**GROGAN PROPERTY:** Karen presents to the Board written confirmation of the Department of Environmental Conservation's investigation of the Town's complaint against the property, regarding potential burying of garbage, and vehicles leaking gasoline and other fluids into the waterway. The DEC found no violations. The written report will be on file at Town Hall and available upon request.

**CITIZENS CONCERNS:** Jim Henderson says **payment from FEMA** for recent projects in Sandgate is still pending, both to the Town for its initial outlay on the work, and to the BCRC for Jim's administrative time. Joe says Jay Wilson has submitted all required documentation to FEMA and has been pursuing this with the agency but so far reimbursement has not arrived. Sheila suggests contacting our Senators and Representatives, as FEMA is a federal agency. Jim proposes that he and Jay contact Ben Rose at Vermont Emergency Management one last time to escalate with FEMA, before the Town contacts our Senators and Representatives. Jim will copy the Selectboard on his query to VEM.

Jim thanks Sheila and congratulates her on doing an excellent job as **moderator at Town Meeting** on March 4.

**ROAD REPORT:** Joe reports that the Road Crew has been busy hauling gravel and doing tree work. They are preparing for this summer's work on the culvert near Erthein on West Sandgate Road. That can be started once Washington County finishes work on two bridges on Camden Valley Road. Joe says the Road Crew is looking at buying the tandem truck the Town has been renting from Washington County. Sandgate is second in line to have a chance to purchase the truck at a reduced price. Joe says mud season has not been bad so far. Jim says the roads are better than ever.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** Linda says the Town's revised **Local Emergency Management Plan** is due May 1st. She will bring the current version to the next Board meeting for any changes. Linda asks Sheila about the State Climate Action Office's **Greenhouse Gas Emission Survey**, which Sheila filled out on behalf of the Town. Sheila specified the weatherization of municipal buildings as the highest priority; the Board has no items to add. Linda asks Sandy Reidy if we are ready to schedule **tech renovations at Town Hall**; Sandy has created the needed account with the hardware supplier and will schedule the work soon. Linda attended the recent meeting of the **Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance** and reports that (1) the annual cost to the Town from the Alliance

will remain basically the same this year, (2) the **hazardous waste facility** in Bennington will increase its open days from 13 to 21 this year and will open on May 20, (3) another **Fix-It Fair** will be scheduled for November. Sandy states that once Eleanor consults the Town's tax lawyer, she will schedule several **tax sales** for next spring. John asks if any **office furniture** should be replaced in the Town Office; Sandy doesn't think it is needed. After the discussion at the last meeting on the **classification of Campbell Road**, Karen checked with the state and was told the state would not reclassify a road: that is a Town function. Joe has spoken with Jay, who will plow to the end of Campbell Road going forward.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** The Treasurer presents the report to the Board.

**SIGN ORDERS:** The Board signs the orders.

**REVIEW OF MARCH 6 MINUTES:** John makes a motion to approve the minutes; Karen seconds; all in favor.

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

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ON MONDAY, APRIL 1 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.*