

# SANDGATE VERMONT SELECTBOARD MINUTES - NOVEMBER 18, 2024

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

**ATTENDANCE:** Board members: Joe Nolan, John Phelps, Charlie Pike, Linda Schmidt. Also present: Elizabeth Daut, Jim Henderson, Sheila Kearns, Richard Zoppel. Minute taker: Sandy Reidy.

**CITIZEN CONCERNS:** Linda Schmidt says Richard Zoppel asked about repair of the **dry hydrant** near the pond at the intersection of West Sandgate and Tate Hill Roads. Linda contacted Jay Wilson, who is ordering parts this week for the repair.

**BETTER ROADS GRANT:** Jim Henderson says he has sent information to the Board on a grant to cover the cost of a **Road Erosion Inventory**, which is mandated by the State. The grant, plus a Town match of \$1,776, will cover the \$6,700 total cost of the survey. Joe Nolan signs the letter of intent, which Sandy Reidy will forward to the VTrans Municipal Assistance Program.

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION:** Jim says he has spoken with Jean Eisenhart, Chair of the Conservation Commission, about reviving the Commission's work and membership. Jean has suggested that Jim chair the Commission. She will contact the other members to discuss this. Sheila Kearns suggests, and Jim agrees, the Commission should hold regular meetings. Jim says he and others in Town are interested in helping the Archaeological Conservancy with stewardship at the Shays Settlement site. Joe questions the role of the Commission in helping the Archaeological Conservancy. Jim also wants to get more residents involved with the rivers and streams, and in combating invasive species. There is a discussion of whether or not the Commission should have a budget. Jim mentions Urban Forestry Grants as a source for trees for the Town, and Joe agrees this should be pursued. Jim will contact all members of the Conservation Commission to discuss how to move forward, and will then update the Selectboard.

**MUNICIPAL ENERGY RESILIENCE PROGRAM (MERP):** Sheila says a MERP grant has been awarded to the Town by the Buildings and General Services Department of the Vermont Agency of Administration. The amount is \$112,045 and will cover the complete scope of work applied for, including upgraded windows, insulation, lighting, heating, and other energy-related improvements for both Town Hall and the Town Garage. The cost of a Clerk of the Works, essentially a project manager to organize and oversee this work, is included in the grant amount. The Bennington County Regional Commission is interviewing candidates for this role. Richard says the Clerk of the Works will monitor how the grant money is spent, so the project does not run over budget. There is no Town financial match for this work. Sheila leaves the grant details for the Board to review and asks that the grant agreement be signed at the December 2nd Selectboard meeting.

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**OTHER BUSINESS:** John Phelps says there will be a **holiday party—with potluck dinner and a visit from Santa—at Town Hall on Saturday December 7 at 5:00.**

Linda says Sandy has been paying for **food for poll workers** at all elections since she became Town Clerk. The Board says she should be reimbursed for this cost. The poll workers for the November 5 election did not take payment for their work, so that line item will be used to pay for food for that day. John says Sandy should gather information on all the money she has spent personally on this food, and the Board will determine which budget line item pertains. Linda says the Board should consider a separate line item for this in the next budget.

Joe says the solution being used to wash floors in Town Hall is damaging the floors. He says Eleanor LaCross pointed out that a more urgent problem in Town Hall is **lack of space in the vault**. Sandy says also that the floor leading into the vault is coming up. New storage options for records are discussed, including additional shelving, a gun safe, use of the firehouse, and the question of digitization of records. Linda says Rupert has recently dealt with this problem; she will contact the town clerk there for advice.

Joe says a resident expressed concern about an inquiry into using the dog license list to help gather names for a potential **Town phone directory** being organized by the Sandgate Community Table. Elizabeth Daut says the phone directory is being discussed as a way to help people connect with neighbors, especially in the event of an emergency. Linda says we must be careful about using information gathered for Town business for this private effort. Elizabeth says the SCT is looking for a complete list of residents in order to ask people if they would like to be included in the directory; no one will be included without giving express personal permission.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:** The Treasurer distributes the report.

**SIGN ORDERS.**

**REVIEW OF NOVEMBER 4 MINUTES:** Joe motions to approve the minutes.  
Charlie Pike seconds. All in favor.

**ADJOURN:** Charlie motions to adjourn, Joe seconds. All in favor.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY DECEMBER 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.*

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