

Sandgate Vermont Selectboard Meeting - April 6, 2026

Call to Order: 6 pm

Attendance: Joe Nolan, Linda Schmidt, Rob Viglas, John Phelps, Jessica Pendleton. Also in attendance: Margaret Phelps, Jim Henderson, Rich Zoppel, Callie Fishburn from BCRC, Tom Yandow, Jessica Lewis. Minute Taker: Jessica Lewis

BCRC/MERP Updates: Tom Yandow would like to add Blue Flame to the RFP for the **Town Garage boiler project** so the hired mechanical contractor knows who to work with. John has recommended 3 mechanical contractors that are local, Tom suggests soliciting via Front Porch Forum or the Banner for contractor options. Jessica will start a new account on Front Porch Forum to solicit possible contractors. Tom indicates that on the Novus reports it states point-of-use hot water, but Tom and Jay have decided to go with a 40 gallon tank heated with propane for hot water. Tom expects the project to be complete by the end of August.

Tom has spoken with the contractor for the **Town Hall window replacement** to review the contract, and he has agreed to the contract, Joe now has the contract to sign and the project will move forward. RK Miles says windows are 6-8 weeks out, but project should still be on track to be completed by July.

In regards to the **Town Hall lighting update**, Electrician Randy Novotny suggests the windows in the office area could be fixed by replacing bulbs instead of replacing the entire fixtures to transition from fluorescent to LED. Jay has indicated the lights are not bright enough in the garage and we may add lighting there for better lighting. In Jay's office the lights will be replaced from 3 fluorescent to 2 LED with a dimmer. **Heat in the vault:** vault can be upgraded to a real thermostat on the wall that can be set. The work could be completed in May or June.

Town Garage door updates were started in fall - Tom will ask Jay to reach out to have the garage doors sealed on the bottom.

If money is leftover, they will replace the 4 windows at the Town Garage. The air compressor could also be replaced with a more energy-efficient compressor. Mini-splits in the Town Hall were considered however it was agreed that windows and insulation would be more valuable than having an air conditioning option.

Tom states all projects would likely be wrapped up by September.

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Callie from BCRC clarifies whether the whole garage doors would be replaced or just the bottom, and states that if a larger change is planned there may need to be a grant amendment. She states the garage door seal would not require a grant amendment, however adding the air compressor may indicate a need for an amendment request. She states there could be push back regarding replacing the mini-split indicated in the grant with something like the air compressor as an additional measure. Tom states we will do the Town Garage windows with any surplus first, and if there are still extra funds at that time it may be more amenable to add something like the air compressor. Callie reiterates that it is the goal of the State to complete as many of the projects in the original scope of the grant as possible. At this point it's unclear if a grant amendment will be necessary for Sandgate, this will be considered as the projects move forward.

The State has asked for documentation of progress made so far by April 15th. Callie will work with Jay to put together a brief narrative report along with the schedule made by Tom.

Conservation Committee Grant: Jim Henderson was advised to apply for a watershed grant through the Town Conservation Committee and as a result will require Town documents to proceed. The grant was received for 5k to plant trees along the Green River and its tributaries. Jim will need support from the Town in the form of a W-9, Certificate of Insurance, and a completed risk assessment form. Jessica will help to procure the W-9 and Certificate of Insurance and send to Jim. A new bank account will be established for the Conservation Committee in order to manage the gil 6, 2026 grant funds directly.

Citizen Concerns: Rich Zoppel states a box truck delivery was sent to his house via Google Maps directed over Tate Hill Road and was in bad shape as a result. Various board members share stories of this being a problem all across Vermont. In some places signage is implemented to direct drivers, though their efficacy is in question. Joe suggests having Jay look into putting a few signs in Sandgate as an effort to fairly warn these truck drivers.

Jim Henderson comments on the concerns around **Mike Merrow's West Road property**. The report from the engineers from Bennington County has come in that states the water run-off cannot be attributed to the Town and it is the same or better than it has been in the past. The Board will send a copy of the letter via Certified Mail to notify Mike Merrow.

Road Report: Letter of intent for the Vermont Grant & Aid VTrans grant was sent out and Jay will sign it by May 1.

Green-Up Day: Julie Robertson and Linda met last week and also spoke with Jay and Skipper. It was agreed that communication will be increased in terms clarifying what is allowed to be

brought in for Green-Up Day disposal. Linda and Julie will begin contacting those who volunteered for cleaning up sections of road to confirm involvement.

Water at Town Hall: Linda spoke to someone at the DOH who directed us to the Clean Water State Revolving Fund as it may help offset costs of testing and adding water filtration. We will wait to hear back from her before moving further.

Professional Audit: Three firms were contacted and the deadline for response has passed. 1 of 3 declined, 1 did not respond, and the 3rd firm, Sullivan & Powers from Montpelier recommended a consultation as opposed to a full audit. One of the partners would come here to work at Town Hall and also work out of the office in Montpelier. Cost range would be 5-8k, with our current budget set at 8k. The Board is in agreement that this consultation is necessary and should be done, and we will contact Sullivan & Powers to go forward.

Tech updates: Mike Oltedal should be coming this week to review computer security and functioning. Jay has raised the question of implementing a camera at the Town Garage, and the Board is in agreement. Mike can consult on this as well.

Jessica will be purchasing **2 Town laptops** this week, one for the Clerk and one for the Listers. We will ask Mike if the computers can be networked to allow for an additional layer of security.

Climate Catalyst Grant has \$800 left that needs to be spent by the end of June. Jay suggests a generator to allow the Town Garage doors to be opened in the event of a power outage. We will investigate the cost of the appropriate-sized generator.

Highway and Selectboard Orders Signed

Review of Meeting Minutes: Mark Neff is going to come on as an auditor beginning with the March audit. **Correction: At this time, Mark Neff is considering becoming an auditor and no official appointment has been made.**

Rob motions to pass the Minutes; Joe seconds; all in favor.

Motion to adjourn: John motions to adjourn; Jessica seconds; all in favor.

Meeting adjourned 7:13pm

Next Meeting April 20 6pm in Town Hall

Respectfully submitted by Jessica Lewis