

Sandgate Vermont Selectboard Meeting – May 4, 2026

Call to Order: 6:06 pm

Attendance: Joe Nolan, Linda Schmidt, Jessica Pendleton, Rob Viglas, John Phelps.

Also in attendance: Julie Robertson, Jim Henderson, Jessica Lewis. Minute Taker: Jessica Lewis

Citizen Concerns: Jessica L. received an email from Carol Pable detailing her concerns with a water issue coming off of Brian Audy's property. The Board discussed the problem and determined there aren't any Town zoning-related concerns, therefore this remains a civil issue and advises Ms. Pable to contact a lawyer if working things out with Mr. Audy directly is not possible. Jessica will contact her Tuesday to relay this information.

Rob states that his neighbors are concerned with what is happening on West Road with Mike Merrow planning to build several Airbnb dwellings on his property. Concerns are stated regarding an influx in traffic among other potential issues.

Green-Up Day Recap: Julie states it was a pretty successful effort. Some folks in town have expressed willingness to have a second Green-Up effort in autumn. Julie suggests possibly implementing more strongly worded signage to have up year-round to try to deter littering. The possibility of introducing an ordinance is also considered, and overall, Julie would like to see the Town taking a firmer stance against litterers.

Linda describes the process of creating an ordinance, and John shows support and also inquires how this could be enforced. Jim suggests speaking to VLCT about how an ordinance like this would be enforced.

Everyone expresses gratitude for the cookout at the Town Garage, and many compliments are offered for the good turnout and great food.

Jim Henderson relays that on Friday 150 trees were planted on the Green River.

The **Watershed Grant for trees and shrubs** is still in process. Jim requests that once the grant is in place and the funds are in hand it would be helpful to have a separate bank account in place for the Conservation Commission to use to receive and dispense these funds.

MERP Updates with Tom Yandow: Tom sent out two original proposals to contractors. He contacted John Phelps to solicit more contractors, and out of those additional 5 suggestions some were unavailable or unwilling to travel, and no bids were received. One bid was received from Roy Plumbing and Heating who saw the Town's posting on Front Porch Forum. The quote has been received for \$39,900. There will need to be coordination between Roy and Blue Flame on the project. The Board will need to decide between going with a Rheem boiler or a Burnham boiler.

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Joe inquires as to whether we are 100% set on a propane boiler. He states that it could be possible to update the existing oil boiler and install an on-demand water heater as an overall better solution. Tom states the State is trying to move municipalities toward non-oil/coal sources of fuel. Jessica P. asks if there is an estimate on usage for the LP boiler. Rob and Joe both express concern around wastefulness in keeping a large hot water tank hot around the clock and whether that is necessary for us. Tom states that this money is coming directly out of a grant, and reiterates that generally propane costs less than oil and the Town can shop around for the best prices on fuel. Rob points out that while the money may be coming from the grant up front, the maintenance of this hot water tank over time will cost the Town money and possibly be wasteful of fuel unnecessarily. The Selectboard agrees unanimously that more investigation needs to be done before deciding how to proceed on this project. Tom states that it's important to move forward as soon as possible as the funds need to be spent by December. Joe asks whether there can be an estimate procured on annual cost for maintaining the suggested type of gas hot water tank. The Board would like to separate the two projects to proceed with the boiler as one project and the hot water as another. Tom will ask Roy to give a quote on the boiler as a separate project. John states a service manager he works with suggests Burnham over Rheem.

Randy Novotny submitted two quotes for the electrical updates at Town Hall and the Town Garage, with the lights at Town Garage going over the original ceiling on the quote laid out by the Town. Because the quote is over \$3500, the Board will do their due diligence to seek more quotes and depending on the results may still end up going with Randy. The bid of \$1800 to replace the lighting at Town Hall is approved by the Board.

Audit update: Next Thursday May 14 the professional auditor is coming to begin the auditing/consulting process.

Mark Neff came in last Thursday to work with Peter and Valerie. The Board is hopeful he will want to come on officially as an auditor, and Rob will ask him.

Drinking water at Town Hall: The test kit has been received. The Board discusses whether to test at the well or out of the plumbing. Joe suggests taking a sample from the pressure tank before it enters the copper wires. Once we have the results, we can determine what would be needed for filtration and go to FW Webb to get a quote for a custom system.

Road Report: Joe spoke to Skipper today and he states a lot of gravel had been brought to Hamilton Hollow. Rupert Rd was graded today, and they will use equipment to smooth it down further.

Other Business: Mike Oltedal was at the Town Garage today and they discussed the plan for **cameras at the Garage**, and Mike offered a quote of \$2525. The quote will be sent to Jay to review.

Jay is going to look into the **cost of a generator for the Town Garage** using the small remaining grant funds available.

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The **next BCSWA meeting is Wednesday**. Jessica P. cannot attend, so Linda will attend and forward the minutes.

Local Emergency Management Plan form is due June.

Elizabeth Daut has requested a key to have access to Town Hall to run her community yoga classes. The Board agrees to this, and Jessica L. will coordinate getting her a key prior to classes starting May 20th.

Review April 6 and April 20 Minutes: John motions to pass both, Jessica P. seconds; All in favor

Orders signed

Linda motions to adjourn, Joe seconds; All in favor.

Meeting adjourned: 7:23 pm

Next meeting May 18 at 6 pm in Town Hall

Respectfully submitted by Jessica Lewis

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