

Poultney Selectboard
Meeting In-Person and via Zoom
Monday, October 23, 2023 – 6:30 pm
Poultney Town Hall

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83935723883?pwd=QnEvcVVrSkN2OUpCMIFEM0lPTzBjdz09>

Meeting ID: 839 3572 3883 Passcode: 989910

Or Dial: +1 929 205 6099 US Meeting ID: 839 3572 3883 Passcode: 989910

Agenda

- 1) Call Meeting To Order / Pledge of Allegiance
- 2) Adoption of the Agenda
- 3) Approval of Minutes: 09-25-23
- 4) Road Report
- 5) Community Development
- 6) Town Manager's Report
 - Poultney Rescue Squad
 - PDRC Letter of Attestation
 - Municipal Planning Grant application for Merger Study
 - Municipal Energy Assessment Services Under the Municipal Energy Resilience Program
 - Rail Trail Bridge/flooding study
 - South Street Bridge / Comments to submit to State
 - Rail Trail – Racist and anti-Semitic vandalism
 - Status on town-owned property on Finel Hollow Road
 - Rutland County Sheriff Department continued coverage/Constable discussions
 - Barking dogs in town
- 7) Transact Any Other Lawful Selectboard Business
- 8) Rutland Regional Planning Commission
- 9) Public Comments (limit of 15 minutes)
- 10) Board Orders
- 11) Executive Session: Personnel matters and Contract matter
- 12) Adjourn

**Meeting Minutes
Poultney Selectboard**

**Monday, October 23, 2023 – 6:30 PM
Poultney Town Hall**

Jeff King called the meeting to order and led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Selectmen present included: Jeff King, Sheryl Porrier, Alan-Glen Burnell, Mark Teetor and Valerie Broughton. Others present included Paul A. Donaldson, Joel Roberts, Highway Foreman, Sarah Pelkey, Nic Stark, Mike McClean, Jonathan Andrews, Michelle McCarron, Carol Stierle, Carol Bunce, Mary Sue Reed, Dale Kerber, John McKenna, Debbie Hoisington, Kathy Stephenson, and Serena Diaz. Attending via Zoom members included Nic Stark, Alex Hilliard, Janice B. Edwards, Dale and Susan Hughes, iPhone (8), Thomas West, and K.D.

Adoption of the Agenda: Mark Teetor made a motion to adopt the Agenda. Sheryl Porrier seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor.

Approval of Minutes: Sheryl Porrier made a motion to approve the minutes of 09-25-23 with one clerical error to be fixed. Alan-Glen Burnell seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor.

Road Report: Joel Roberts reported the following:

- the new truck has been ordered and should be delivered mid-November.
- the contaminated soils from the diesel fuel spill on Finel Hollow Road has that had been stored on Taren Brothers property has been moved to a State facility. The costs to the town were limited to labor and truck uses to help haul off site and clean up the spill, including a load of sand to block seepage into the river.
- We have been prepping for winter as of October 1, 2023. The sanders are prepared.
- The crew will continue to do roadside brush cutting, as well as the contracted brush cutting.
- The crew made some modifications to Maslack Drive to make winter maintenance go more smoothly.
- The crew has knocked the high crown off the back roads to assist with snowplowing.
- Discussion re: continuation of 4 ten hour days throughout the year. Joel Roberts will circulate copies of VT Local Roads survey regarding the same.

Community Development: Sarah Pelkey reported the following:

- She is working on the VOREC impact Statement and survey through the end of October. There have been 150 responses, and she hopes for more.
- On October 12, 2023 she hosted VT Trails Council in Poultney, along with Catrion Maloney.
- She recently attended a VT Committee on Women at the invite of Alex Hilliard.
- The PDRC recently hosted a Community Gardening Event where volunteers cleaned flower beds at the Stonebridge, Main Street and Slate Quarry Park
- She stated that Dave Van Westervelt of Rustic Rooster's Property Services has volunteered to take down the flower beds on Main Street. He is new to town.

-Sheryl Porrier has organized, through the Rec. Dept., to have Terry Bergen give a class on adult self-defense.

Town Managers Report:

-Poultney Rescue Squad: Debbie Hoisington, Mike McClean, and Kathy Stephenson updated the board on the status of the PRS. They have hired another full time staff member. They now have 3 full time employees. And 8 part-time employees. They are aiming for 24 hour coverage for 7 days a week. They presented a proposed budget for the next fiscal year of \$126,840 which represents \$42 per capita, with the hope to increase that to \$44 per capita for the following fiscal year. Discussions followed.

-PDRC Letter of Attestation: Paul Donaldson advised the board that the PDRC received a one-time funding of \$25,000 from the State of Vermont. As part of that funding, the State of Vermont is asking the Selectboard to sign a Letter of Attestation that the town will not seek to reduce its current level of funding of \$5,000 to the PDRC. Sheryl Porrier made a motion to execute the letter. Mark Teetor seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor.

-Municipal Planning Grant application for Merger Study: Sarah Pelkey is putting together a grant application to fund the Merger Study. As part of that study, the Town and Village of Poultney will need to put together committees to lead that study. Mark Teetor made a motion to sign the Resolution for that application. Valarie Broughton seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor.

- Municipal Energy Assessment Services Under the Municipal Energy Resilience Program: Paul Donaldson stated that we received a grant to look at town facilities from an energy savings perspective. This will be done by contractors chosen by the State of Vermont.

-Rail Trail Bridge/flooding study: Our engineer has completed the Request For Proposal in connection with the grant to study flooding risks by the trestle bridge on the rail trail.

-South Street Bridge / Comments to submit to State: Discussion on the State's proposal. The board had no additional comments to send to the State.

-Rail Trail – Racist and anti-Semitic vandalism: Paul Donaldson stated that he was advised of racist/anti-Semitic vandalism on the rail trail on September 25. He advised that State on 9-25-23, and the subject matter was removed on 9-26-23 by the State of Vermont. The State did advise that the racist/anti-Semitic material had already been removed by an unknown person or persons. Paul Donaldson did read into the record the Declaration of Inclusion that the Selectboard had adopted in December, 2021. There was discussion about a letter Paul Donaldson received from the Vermont Human Rights Commission on October 20, 2023 whereby it was alleged that he, and the Town and Selectboard, by extension, had failed to act by removing the statements for several weeks. Paul Donaldson had spoken to the Executive Director of that office and corrected the record. Sheryl Porrier and Jeff King both expressed displeasure at the misinformation and accusations expressed in that letter. Discussion followed. John McKenna, Treasurer of the Rutland NAACP commented that while he was pleased that the Town and State had taken swift action to remove the hate material, racism is very much prevalent in Vermont,

and Rutland County. He urged the board to be forever vigilant in combating racism and anti-Semitism. Alex Hilliard attempted to share a picture of the images in question via Zoom. Thomas West urged Paul Donaldson to show the board members the photo on his cell phone. Paul Donaldson stated he would circulate the image if the board wanted to see it after the meeting.

-Status on town-owned property on Finel Hollow Road: Paul Donaldson reported that he has asked a realtor to opine as to the value of the property that Maureen LaBate wishes to own. He reminded the board that even if there was a meeting of the minds to sell/convey the property, it still needs to advertise such in the paper. It is a statutory process the board must adhere to.

-Rutland County Sheriff Department continued coverage/Constable discussions: Paul Donaldson stated that he wanted to correct the record from a recent meeting about police coverage. We will continue coverage with the RCSD. The deputy assigned previously has left the department and two sergeants will now take turns providing the coverage.

-Barking dogs in town: Paul Donaldson stated that he has been dealing with several complaints on barking dogs in town. His authority is limited to issuing tickets for dogs that bark continuously for more than 15 minutes. If the public wants the Ordinance to grant more authority, i.e. confiscation of dogs, the Ordinance needs to be changed. He has been working with the RCSD to issue such Municipal Citations.

Transact any Other Lawful Selectboard Business:

Sheryl Porrier questioned why the paving of Morse Hollow was less than what was quoted. The answer is that Pike Paving used less material than what was quoted.

Health Officer: None.

Rutland Regional Planning Commission: Sarah Pelkey attended the RRPC Board of Commissioners October 17, 2023 meeting, and the TAC September 28 meeting. They have been dealing with Land Use Mapping.

Public Comments on matters (limit of 10 minutes total)

-Johnathan Andrews stated he supported the 4 ten-hour day work week for the Highway Department.

-Carol Bunce inquired as to whether the Transfer Station would be open on 11-11-23 as it was Veteran's Day. While the town will observe the federal holiday on Friday, 11-10-23, the board needs to consider if the facility will remain open on that day. The consensus of the board was that Paul Donaldson will speak with Dan Williams to see if the crew wants to work that day and decide from there.

-Mary Sue Reed pointed out a number of things out-of-date on the website. Discussion followed. Jeff King expressed displeasure about the tone of Mary Sue Reeds comments.

Discussion followed. Jonathan Andrews offered to assist with the updating/streamlining of the Town website.

Executive Session: At 8:04PM, Alan-Glen Burnell made the following motion: “Pursuant to 1 VSA Section 313(a)(1), I make a motion that this board finds that premature general public knowledge would clearly place this board or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage if certain matters related to contracts were discussed. Mark Teetor seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor. Alan- Glen Burnell further made the following motion: “Pursuant to 1 VSA Section 313(a)(1)(A), I make a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss contract matters.” Mark Teetor seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor.

Alan-Glen Burnell also made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss Personnel Matters, as follows: “ Pursuant to ONE VSA Section 313(a)(3), I make a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss Personnel Matters”. Mark Teetor seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor. The board entered Executive Session.

At 9:04M, Mark Teetor made a motion to leave Executive Session. Alan-Glen Burnell seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor. No action taken.

Board Orders: Alan-Glen Burnell made a motion to pay board orders. Sheryl Porrier seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Adjournment: Valerie Broughton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mark Teetor seconded the motion. Motion carried.

s/Paul A. Donaldson