



Town of Thetford Vermont

3910 Vermont Route 113 • P.O. Box 126 • Thetford Center, VT 05075
802-785-2922 • thetfordvermont.us

Selectboard Retreat Minutes – Online Only – Monday, April 12th, 2021 7:00pm

Please note Section 6 of H.681, signed into law on March 30th, 2020, for the temporary suspension of designated physical meeting location requirements.

Selectboard members present (in Town Hall): Sharon Harkay (Chair), Mary Bryant, Li Shen (Vice-Chair), Steve Tofel
Selectboard members absent: Nick Clark
Others present: Bryan Gazda (Town Manager), Tracy Borst (Town Clerk/Treasurer), Martie Betts (Selectboard Assistant)
Total Zoom attendees: 27

Sharon Harkay called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.
Sharon explained that normally a Selectboard retreat is held in a restaurant or at someone's home, but that couldn't happen with COVID-19 restrictions.
Sharon explained the different lists in the packet; a compilation of community responses, a compilation of three Selectboard members' comments and ideas from Mary Bryant.

1. Public Comment

No public comment.

2. Deciding Priorities and Goals for 2021

Sharon read through ideas that were common between the lists.
Li Shen suggested picking out several things that must be done during this year, as the budget discussions will begin in November and with the current meeting schedule there may be only 13 meetings to get things done.
There was discussion about roads and infrastructure.
There was discussion about how the Selectboard communicates to the town.
There was discussion about creating the 90-day goals for the Town Manager and some of the items that need his attention, such as the wage matrix.
Li mentioned expanding the social media portion of the personnel policy to include private social media accounts. Li suggested a telecommuting policy and said the Selectboard needs to work on the tax stabilization policy that was approved by the residents. There are zoning and subdivision regulation updates and the flood hazard plan which will need to be approved.
There was discussion about the town garage, the transfer station and the Timothy Frost building. Steve Tofel said some of these projects may benefit with money that's coming from the Federal Government, especially since infrastructure has been mentioned as an area that will receive money.
There was discussion about senior and affordable housing.
There was discussion about the availability of water in some parts of town.



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Sharon said the Department of Public Works and Police Union needed to have their contracts finalized.

Bryan Gazda said things like policies can get done during the year, but some projects, like improving roads, are multi-year projects. Bryan suggested looking at projects that the Selectboard really wants to work on, as well as finishing up projects that are already in progress. Mary Bryant said she felt like they were facing a lot of items on the list and perhaps a shorter list should be created to help bring priorities into focus.

Tracy Borst suggested looking at the list to determine what is really a responsibility of a Town Manager and then they could spend their retreat time looking at the big picture items. She urged the Selectboard to take the time to fully transition to a town manager form of government. There is a detailed job description for the Town Manager that they could review.

Sharon said she has asked Bryan to look at the bulleted list of responsibilities for the Selectboard and Town Manager that she created after researching the topic and be ready to make comments.

Li Shen thought there should be an historic marker for the Peabody Library in Post Mills. The Library Federation could be contacted about the application process.

There was discussion about Route 132 and town-wide internet.

Sharon will compile a shorter list based on the conversation during the meeting and have it ready for the next Selectboard meeting. She will send it out to the Selectboard for their review in advance of that meeting.

3. Adjourn

Motion by Steve Tofel to adjourn the meeting at 8:36 pm. VOTE unanimous (4-0-0)