

Town of Fairfield Selectboard Minutes

January 27, 2025

In Attendance: Gavin Ryan, Ron Bocash, Brian Dubie and David Persons

Roads: Maurice Jettie

Town Clerk: Linda Hodet

Town Administrator: Cathy Ainsworth

Secretary: Melissa Manson

Visitors: Gunnar Nurme, VT Forest Parks & Rec, Hannah Redmon, Trust for Public Land, Dave Erickson, Cold Hollow to Canada

Brian made a motion to approve the 2025 Budget, with Article 5 to read: Shall the voters approve the 2025 general fund expenditures of \$1,919,685 of which \$1,214,445 shall be raised by taxes and \$705,240 by non-tax revenues? (Previous year total expenditures were \$1,828,000 of which \$1,179,044 were to be raised by taxes and \$648,956 by non-tax revenues). Ron seconded. All in favor.

David made a motion to approve the Town Meeting Warning. Ron seconded. All in favor.

1. Moe gave an update on roads. Discussion regarding the new truck and the discount for early payment on the chassis. Moe says the trade in quote remains the same.

Ron made a motion to transfer money from the equipment CD to make the down payment on the truck in the amount of \$152,274 in order to secure the discount. David seconded. All in favor.

2. Moe says they are working on fixing the Ford truck. No loaner available for us to use. Will be at least a month until the transmission is replaced.

Brian made a motion to approve the minutes of 1.13.25. Ron seconded. All in favor.

3. Cathy reports the audit is going smoothly. Cathy updated the payroll system so this pay period will reflect the 25% employee contribution childcare tax credit. Discussion about the new dog ordinance and the Animal Control Officer position. David is spending too much uncompensated time on this effort and it's time to hire someone. David will continue to fulfill this role until a replacement is found, but he will be compensated at the advertised rate of \$18/hour plus related mileage.

Brian made a motion to advertise the position on FPF and the website. Ron seconded. All in favor.

4. Cathy met with Ron about grant writing.
5. Brian offers to look over the Town's land holdings with a realtor in preparation for selling them off and getting them back on the grand list. SB agrees.

Brian made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss a legal matter. David seconded. All in favor.

These minutes exist in draft form until approved by the Selectboard.

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Brian made a motion to exit Executive Session. David seconded. All in favor. Discussion only.

Ron made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss a personnel issue. David seconded. All in favor.

Ron made a motion to exit Executive Session. Brian seconded. All in favor.

Upon exiting executive session, Ron made a motion to add grant writing to the Town Administrator's job duties and will be paid an additional 3.25 hours per week at her current rate for this. Brian seconded. All in favor.

6. Lost Nation Project Discussion with Gunnar Nurme, Land Acquisition Coordinator, Vermont Forests, Parks and Recreation (Agency of Natural Resources) and Hannah Redmon, Land Protection Project Manager, Trust for Public Land and Dave Erickson, Conservation Director, Cold Hollow to Canada. Gunnar, Hannah and Dave described the project which would establish a conservation easement over a block of forest that spans a portion of Fletcher, Bakersfield, and Fairfield. About 200 acres of the 1,410 are in Fairfield. This land is currently used as sugar woods and it would continue to be used as such. The Selectboard discussed current use. The easement would preserve the forest to not be developed in the future while reinforcing public access to this land for hunting, etc. The team said that any current use structures in Fairfield would remain in current use unless the municipality initiates a reappraisal. They are looking for support from the Towns for fundraising efforts and clarified that municipal support would not include a financial support requirement.

Brian made a motion to authorize the Vice Chair to sign the letter of support on behalf of the Town. David seconded. All in favor.

7. SB approved the letter for the town report as submitted.

8. Gavin signed overweight permits.

Brian made a motion to approve the warrants. David seconded. All in favor.

Brian made a motion to adjourn. Ron seconded. All in favor.