

**TOWN OF CRAFTSBURY**  
**REGULAR SELECT BOARD MEETING**  
**Tuesday, December 21, 2021**  
**7 PM at Craftsbury Town Hall**

**Present:** Jim Jones, Bruce Urie, Susan Houston, Michelle Warren, Farley Brown, Penelope Doherty, Vince O'Connell and Ryan Bjerke

**SELECT BOARD AGENDA:**

**Jim call meeting to order 7:02 PM**

- **Action - Adjustments/Changes to Agenda:**  
Susan said Melissa will come to the January 11th meeting instead, just switch out with Ryan's place with Melissa's tonight, then Farley afterwards.
  
- **Action - Approve of Minutes :**  
**Bruce made a motion to accept the December 7, 2021 minutes as printed, Susan seconded, motion, all ayed, minutes approved.**

**Bruce made a motion to accept the December 14, 2021 minutes as printed, Susan seconded, all ayed, minutes approved.**

- **Saplings Update - Melissa Jacobs:**  
Melissa postponed, will be at the January 11<sup>th</sup> meeting instead.

**Discussion – Generator Craftsbury Schools, Ryan Bierke:**

- Ryan discussed with the Select Board to possibly use grant funds, maybe even ARPA funds, for an emergency generator at the Academy. Ryan is getting quotes for a generator. The Academy already has a generator switch, will need wiring to it however. They are also comparing diesel and propane. The school is looking into one that can handle all functions of the school. The Water District currently does not have a generator though, so water would run out once the reserve is gone. Bruce said that last time he had spoken to Steve Smith, they were getting ready to move forward on it. The Library asked to partner with Craftsbury Schools on generator, maybe buying multiple generators. The Library would be an office center so people could still stay connected Susan said. Ryan wondered if Sterling College was considering a generator for their dining hall, maybe involve the new interim president in the discussion.

Vince suggested Craftsbury have a microgrid, run off solar, maybe collaboration. The solar would go to battery storage, then hooked up to an emergency building, recharge during the day. Although he's not sure if it's a transferrable tax credit, many states are

starting to offer it, such as New Jersey and Wisconsin. He believes it's a huge opportunity, can sell back power to the utility, proven technology. Ryan said they are also working on grants to update the schools HVAC system.

- **Craftsbury Village Master Plan Grant Update - Farley Brown:**

Farley said that the Village Master Plan Grant finally came through. This grant was for village parking and pedestrian safety. The majority of the \$22,000 will be toward hiring someone to do the legwork, working directly with businesses and residents. This will be a great opportunity to address parking and pedestrian safety issues. Susan will come in to the Town Hall tomorrow to electronically sign the grant.

Farley said this grant has to include a 10% match by the Town, was hoping to use the grant money appropriated for the Craftsbury Village Master Plan at the Town Meeting election, since they were not able to use it. Bruce looked over the article in the Town Report and agreed the \$3000 grant money since it is allocated for the Craftsbury Village Master Plan, it could be used. The Select Board agreed.

Farley said they are working with Alison Low about a smaller grant from VNRC, waiting to hear back though for more details.

Farley gave the Select Board a handout Craftsbury Hazard Mitigation Plan Update Input from the Craftsbury Planning Commission to review (see attached).

- **Discussion - ARPA Working Group and set a date for an initial meeting:**

Susan updated the Select Board of the people responding so far to the ARPA Working Group. All but one is very interested in the group, Rudy is not interested in chairing the committee however. She suggested the group meet in February, since January is so busy. Bruce thinks it should be separate from the Select Board meeting, would be too long. Penelope suggested a separate charter meeting.

Bruce suggested meeting with Annie Mclean first to see how to pull this group together. Susan will ask her either to join the Select Board's Jan. 11th or Jan. 18th meeting. They tentatively made a date for the new adhoc ARPA Working group to meet January 25th at 6:30 PM.

- **Action - Decision on Town/School Meeting - Australian or In Person:**

The Select board will postpone for now, waiting to hear back from school. They also are waiting for VLCT guidance, and concerned about possible surge of COVID after the holidays.

- **Executive Session - Discuss Salary for Interim Town Clerk & Treasurer:**

**Bruce made a motion to enter executive session at 8 PM, Susan seconded, all aye, motion carried.**

Executive session ended at 8:29 PM, no action taken.

- **Action** - Appoint Town Clerk & Treasurer with start date:  
Bruce made a motion to appoint Michelle Warren as the Interim Town Clerk and Treasurer, from January 1, 2022 through Town Meeting Day (March 1, 2022). Susan seconded; all aye; motion carried.

Michelle agreed to continue as the Select Board clerk until Town Meeting Day; Bruce will check with VLCT regarding rules.

- **Discussion** - Budget Preparation:  
They worked on the budget, will work on the payroll figures next week
- Other Business & Walk-ins that have business to come before the Select Board:

Margie Ramsdell thanked the Select Board for putting up the 35 mile per hour speed sign on Wylie Hill.

Bruce said, working with Steve Perkins and Steve Marckres, they applied for a Better Back Roads grant for about \$25,000, with State paying about \$20,000. It has to be completed by the end of 2023, Kinsey Pond area. Won't know until May or June.

Bruce said Philip Beaudry will meet with the Select Board Dec. 28<sup>th</sup> to talk about recycling.

- Decide Next Meeting Date & Adjourn:  
Meeting adjourned at 9:36 PM. Next Select Board meeting is scheduled 10 AM at Craftsbury Town Hall on Tuesday, December 28, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

*Bruce Ulin*  
*Select board co chair*

## **Craftsbury Village Master Plan:**

*Improving traffic, bike and pedestrian safety, commercial opportunities and the quality of life for Village residents and all Village users*

VT. Dept. of Housing and Community Development Municipal Planning Grant (\$22,000)  
received December 10, 2021

### Village Issues and the Master Plan:

The town has seen significant growth over the past decade, leading to growth and vitality in bustling Craftsbury Village. Village infrastructure, however, has not kept pace. There are traffic, bike/pedestrian, parking & other transportation problems that now must be addressed through a master planning process. The long term outcome of the Craftsbury Village Master Plan is a thriving and more welcoming Craftsbury Village including:

- adequate and safe parking for the Village's array of businesses and services
- safe pedestrian and bike circulation within and through the Village

### Public Participation:

A successful master plan is one that gets implemented. And, to be implemented, it needs broad community support. The Craftsbury Village Master Plan development process includes structured engagement with property owners, businesses, Village residents and users, and town officials regarding their views and remedies to address parking and the other challenges.

Readily available maps, data and information, such as jobs, traffic and other data and natural resource constraints will be provided to inform those conversations & help lead to community agreement on a suite of alternatives. The groundwork will be conducted by consultants whose planning & design expertise will help to illustrate and define safety features, parking, and other options, help set priorities and identify the steps needed, including funding sources, to move forward with implementation.

### Deliverables:

The project deliverables include meetings, public event(s), graphics and a report which together will inform the primary project deliverable - a Craftsbury Village Master Plan. It will be an agreed-to blueprint for addressing the challenges described above including a timetable (near,

mid, and long term), costs and funding sources. In addition, the Master Plan will be crucial to informing the next update to the town plan in 2024.

Timeline:

January - Request \$2,200 from the Good Neighbor Fund for the 10% match  
Planning Commission establish a working group to help with the nuts and bolts

February - Establish the Village Master Plan Steering Committee (residents, business owners, town employees, selectboard representative, planning commission representatives)

March - Put out a Request for Qualifications to start looking for a consultant

May - Start the project

## **Vermont Natural Resources Council**

**Small Grants for Smart Growth, launched in 2018, provide seed money for community-based initiatives related to smart growth.**

(\$1,500 - \$5,000)

What kinds of projects do Small Grants for Smart Growth support?

Projects might involve advocacy for better land use, by getting involved in the “nuts and bolts” work of municipal planning, regulations, or a permitting process. A project could also be a town or local group effort to promote downtown or village center revitalization and historic preservation; to develop a plan for better sidewalks or paths; to identify ways to support housing choice and affordability; or to plan on conserving land for agriculture or forestry. See below for a list of past awardees.

**Craftsbury Hazard Mitigation Plan Update  
Input from the Craftsbury Planning Commission (12/10/21)**

In an attempt to assist the Craftsbury Selectboard with the update of the Craftsbury Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Craftsbury Planning Commission has compiled the following information.

1. **Buildings in Hazardous Areas:** Bruce Melendy from NVDA will gather information regarding the building/structures in the floodplain area identified in the 1980s by FEMA.
2. **Natural Hazardous Areas:** The VT Department of Fish and Wildlife property next to the Little Hosmer boat launch has been designated as a Japanese Knotweed Demonstration Area. The Craftsbury Conservation Commission members have been documenting the occurrence of the invasive plant and implementing several control methods. This infestation at the demonstration site is a prime example of the hazards associated with invasive plants - the soils are unstable leading to potential washout. There might be infrastructure and private property impacts.
3. **Pandemic Information:** Brian Machesney sent out a request for information from Sterling College, Craftsbury Academy and the Craftsbury Community Care Center. This information included a response to the following questions:
  - The number of COVID cases the reported by the Craftsbury Community Care Center (no names, of course)
  - How many COVID-related deaths were recorded
  - The number of days 4cs Facilities were closed or operations were curtailed
  - Impacts on occupancy
  - Impacts on staffing
  - Steps the 4Cs have taken to meet these challenges, which could be integrated into Craftsbury's preparedness plans.

***From Sterling College: The number of COVID cases Sterling has reported (no names, of course):*** 5 in Vermont and 1 at our instructional site in Kentucky. These numbers include employees, residential students, and commuter students.

**Whether any COVID-related deaths were recorded:** none

**The number of days Sterling's facilities were closed or operations were curtailed:** Sterling was entirely remote between March 15, 2020 and August 9, 2020. Starting on August 9, 2020, the College successfully implemented a residential pod model for the academic year 20/21. Academic year 21/22, thus far, has returned to its pre-COVID structure of dining, instruction, and living with appropriate risk mediation practices in place like masking and social distancing.

**Impacts on enrollment:** No avoidable negative impacts. In academic year 20/21 we reserved an entire residence hall for isolation housing and because we housed every student in a single, we could not have enrolled more students if we had

wanted to unless they were commuters. This year we are at capacity for enrollment and all residence halls are being used.

**Impacts on staffing:** None, although the hiring market -- which is exacerbated by the availability of housing -- has made it difficult to fill some vacancies.

**Steps Sterling has taken to meet these challenges, which could be integrated into Craftsbury's preparedness plans.** Sterling has used a Commitment to Shared Responsibility to provide structure and guidelines to its community. These commitments have evolved as the situation has evolved. Here are Sterling's protocols for the Spring 2022 semester. Last year the pod structure was a good strategy for the College and COVID-funding allowed us to better prepare the campus with IT equipment and infrastructure to make remote options more accessible to students, faculty, and staff.

*From the Craftsbury Community Care Center* Kimberely Roberge has indicated an interest in participating in the Hazard Mitigation Plan Team. From an email - The Craftsbury Community Care Center would be happy to have a representative be a part of a community group taking a look at the need to improve Craftsbury residents' preparedness for future challenging situations.

*From the Craftsbury Academy (Harry Miller):* Last year 41 confirmed cases in OSSU. This year we are at 77. Currently, managing over thirty cases in the Ossu.

We were one of few schools in the state last year to go back to five day a week. Students were very happy about that. Masking has been mandatory and as you can imagine all students and staff were diligent, only a few rogue high schoolers tested the rules.

Staffing one of the hardest issues as mentioned earlier. Finding substitutes is almost impossible. Still we have managed very well.

4. Energy Security: The Craftsbury Energy Committee has organized a firewood program to ensure that community residents who are in need of wood can receive it. Over the past 16 months, or essentially two winters, committee members have delivered 35 cords of firewood to 19 different households, and have 3 cords in reserve for this upcoming winter.
5. Craftsbury Fire Department: On average the fire department responds to 70-90 calls per year. 70 percent are first responder calls, second would be car accidents, third is fire alarms and last is actual fires.
6. Food Security: Kris Coville will be providing information around the food assistance provided to Craftsbury residents through the Craftsbury Neighbor to Neighbor group.