

## Town of Mendon

### Selectboard

February 12, 2024

Members of Selectboard present: Val Taylor, Seth Bridge

Town Officers and employees present: Sara Tully, Town Administrator & Health Officer, Steve Ellerin, Zoning Administrator

Visitors present: Fred Bagley, David and Lisa Brooks, Dick Howe, Megan Smith, Greg Poelker-McKee, Rutland Regional Planning Commission

V. Taylor called to order at 5:34 PM.

The pledge of allegiance.

#### Agenda:

Motion by V. Taylor to approve the agenda with adding Town Meeting Articles and tabling the approval of 1/22/24 and 2/6/24 minutes. Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The motion passed.

#### Administrative Matters

*Selectmen's Orders* were reviewed.

Motion by V. Taylor to approve orders for 1/31/24 for \$63,906.99 and 2/7/24 for \$5,682.12 and payroll for 1/9/24 for \$18,260.71. Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The motion passed.

#### Announcements:

Town Meeting March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 6 PM at the VTRANS Building 61 Valley View, Mendon VT, polls open at the Town Office March 5<sup>th</sup> 8 AM to 7 PM

Public Comment: Justin Lindholm provided comment to the Selectboard that it is very difficult to perform duties as a member of the Mendon Planning Commission if they are unable to meet in person to review maps and applications. Justin stated he has received several death threats in his life and that it is not only a threat to one location just where you are working. It can happen anywhere, your home or at a grocery store. Fred Bagley, Mendon Planning Commission, added that the Zoning Administrator prepares materials for the Planning Commission Meetings and requires access to the Town Office at his convenience and not limited to restricted hours. Steve Ellerin expressed it has been very cumbersome to perform his job as Zoning Administrator without access to the files in the office and requested an exception from the Selectboard that he be able to have access to the building without the presence of law enforcement. Lisa Brooks, former Selectboard member, supported the decision of the Selectboard regarding the issues with security and people being threatened. The safety procedures are there to keep everyone safe. She added that the town is responsible if anything happens and the town has pursued legal advice

and was told there was not much that can be done because of how the threat was reported. That does not mean that the threat didn't happen and that its not credible. No one in this discussion is a mental health provider and can verify what was said was not a threat. V. Taylor responded with appreciation of everyone's comments, and she shares their concerns. She stated this is the first time Mendon has been faced with an issue as specific as this. The Selectboard is doing their best to navigate the safety of everyone. V. Taylor expressed that she could not approve an exemption for Steve to have access to the building for safety reasons. S. Bridge also responded that he has different ideas to move forward one way or another. This is a priority, and we must have a solution, the town can't keep the Rutland County Sheriff sitting there at the office all day long. If it's our employees' choice if they feel safe, they should be able to be there. He questioned why the Road Crew didn't have security when they are out on the roads. Fred Bagley posed a question on behalf of Teri Corsones, Planning Commission Chair, inquiring whether meetings of the Planning Commission need to be warned during hours that the Sheriff is scheduled, or can she make arrangements on her own for protection? V. Taylor confirmed the Sherrif can be scheduled for in person meetings. Sara Tully clarified that all town functions are operating fully, and the town is not shut down. She agreed that it is cumbersome for some positions, but employees and staff are still performing their jobs.

### Business

*Rutland Regional Planning Commission* Greg Poelker-McKee attended the meeting to provide information on the Rutland Regional Plan for 2026. The Rutland Regional Plan is a collaborative guide to shape a healthy, equitable, and resilient region.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RutlandRegionPlan2026>

*Road Commissioner Appointment* B. Ellis has retired effective 1/31/24. Chris Baird was hired in November 2023 to fill this role. Motion by V. Taylor to appoint Chris Baird, Road Commissioner with a term ending 3/31/25. Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The motion passed.

*VT Rural Fire Protection Task Force* Rich Carlson, Eastridge Acres Homeowners Association, is applying for funds from the Rural Fire Protection Task Force and is requesting Selectboard support of the application. The Eastridge Acres Homeowners Association

*RCLL Facility Use Agreement* The Rutland County Little League has requested to utilize the Mendon Recreation Area for games and practices. Last year, the Selectboard waived the facility use fee and requested a porta potty be provided through the baseball program.

*Town Meeting Preparation* The Town Meeting presentations were discussed.

*Town Reports* A recap of the Town Reports were discussed.

*Goals and Objectives 2023-2024 Review* S. Tully provided a detailed update regarding the status of all projects.

*Town Meeting Articles* The articles for Town Meeting were discussed.

V. Taylor moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:31 PM. Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The motion passed.

Date Approved \_\_\_\_\_

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Val Taylor

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Sara Tully - Clerk of the Board

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Seth Bridge