

Town of Mendon

Selectboard

September 23, 2024

Members of Selectboard present: Val Taylor, Megan Smith, Seth Bridge

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

Rutland County Sheriff Deputy Rider is present.

Visitors present: Brian and Carol Gates, Justin Lindholm, Logan Solomon, RRPC

V. Taylor called to order at 5:30 PM at the Town Office.

Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda:

Motion by V. Taylor to approve the agenda adding a Letter of support for the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union Digital Equity Grant application. Motion seconded by M. Smith. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Administrative Matters

Selectmen's Orders were reviewed.

Motion by V. Taylor to approve the minutes for 9/9/24. Motion seconded by M. Smith. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Motion by V. Taylor to approve orders for \$61,262.66. Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Motion by V. Taylor to approve payroll for \$11,995.14. Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Announcements:

Announcements Town Fair for municipal officials October 2, 2024 in Killington. Please register by Wed 9/25.

Public Comment: B. Gates requested appointment to the Planning Commission and Energy Committee to fill vacancies. B. Gates asked where is the Office of Selectboard and why the letters to him were not signed by the Selectboard. He wanted to know who wrote the letters. Mr. Gates complained about the investigation and response to the complaint he issued that the Selectboard violated the Open Meeting Law. C. Gates participating in the meeting remotely

asked the Selectboard on September 9, 2024 how many members of the Planning Commission were there? V. Taylor responded that she does not attend the Planning Commission Meetings. C. Gates asked who is the Office of Selectboard and who is sending correspondents from the Office of Selectboard?

Business

Open Meeting Law Complaint Public Notice The Selectboard presented the following response.

Dated: September 19, 2024

Noticed Response from the Office of Selectboard to Open Meeting Law Complaints received 9/10/24 and 9/12/24:

On September 10, 2024, the Town of Mendon Selectboard received a letter with hearsay allegations from Mrs. Carol Gates that members of the public could hear the Selectboard discussions in Executive Session and that they violated the Open Meeting Law on September 9, 2024. Mrs. Gates was not present at the Town Office during the meeting, she participated remotely. A second letter of complaint submitted by both Mr. & Mrs. Gates was received on September 12, 2024, that included additional claims of violation of 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3). Mr. Gates was present at the Town Office during the Selectboard Meeting.

The Mendon Selectboard meeting was scheduled for September 9, 2024, at 5:30 pm. The agenda warned the "Selectboard will enter executive session to discuss employee evaluations per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3)." A motion was made by V. Taylor to Enter Executive Session at 5:51 PM with the Selectboard and S. Tully present to discuss employee evaluations per 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3). Motion seconded by S. Bridge. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion. All members of the public present were asked to leave the conference room as well as those with remote access to the meeting. The Chair declared the Board out of Executive Session at 6:27 PM. Minutes of an executive session need not be taken, but if they are, shall not be made public subject to 1 V.S.A. §312(b).

The Selectboard discussed the employee evaluations of three hourly employees, two of which are appointed officials. All discussions in Executive Session were done in compliance with 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(3). No further details about these evaluations will be disclosed to the public by the Selectboard.

The Selectboard considers the claims submitted to be outlandishly false and were made by individuals that were not privy to the discussion being had in Executive Session and in accordance with law.

No violation of the Open Meeting Law has occurred, and no cure is necessary.

Appropriation Request Procedure for Town Meeting 2025 S. Tully recapped the history of the procedure to request appropriation funding from the Town. In recent years, the Selectboard waived the petition requirement signed by 5% of the voters for organizations that have been funded in the previous year and the current request has not increased. M. Smith expressed support to require the petition to demonstrate voter support. Motion by V. Taylor to require a petition signed by 5% of the voters for appropriation requests to get on the ballot for Town Meeting 2025. Motion seconded by M. Smith. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

Deisel and Propane Contract Prices The Selectboard discussed contract prices for propane and diesel fuel. The Town currently uses Irving. Prices are trending downward. The Selectboard made no decision and will continue to monitor prices.

Letter of support for the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union Digital Equity Grant Application Motion by V. Taylor to submit a letter of support for the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union Digital Equity Grant application. Motion seconded by S, Bridge. The Selectboard unanimously approved the motion.

V. Taylor moved to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 5:58 PM until the Board can reconvene to discuss the Rutland Regional Plan 2026. Motion seconded by M. Smith. The motion passed unanimously.

V. Taylor reconvened the meeting at 6:05 PM at the Town Office.

Rutland Regional Plan 2026 – Phase 2 Public Engagement L. Solomon, RRPC presented the results from the Phase I public outreach for the Rutland Regional Plan 2026. The RRPC is currently enacting Phase 2 of public outreach for the plan. More information and to take the phase 2 survey can be found at www.rutlandrpc.org.

V. Taylor moved to adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 6:12 PM. Motion seconded by M. Smith. The motion passed unanimously.

Date Approved _____

Val Taylor

Sara Tully - Clerk of the Board

Seth Bridge

Megan Smith