



SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 6, 2024

Members: Judy Bickford, Don McDowell, Christopher Palermo, Laura Streets, Richard Craig

Absent:

ADMINISTRATION and STAFF: Carrie Johnson, Interim Town Manager; Judi Alberi, Executive Assistant; Shap Smith, Moderator; Tina Sweet, Finance Director; Sara Haskins, Town Clerk/Treasurer

PARTICIPANTS/GUESTS: Ruth Brown, Nina Church, Tony Cote, Nancy Banks, Julia Compagna, Tom Stames, Tom Cloutier, Janet Paine, Julie Pickett, Bob Bortree, Mason Kemerer, Seth Costa, Tom Snipp, Ron Stancliff, Peter Bourne, Nate Beyer, Martin Green, Alison Calderara, Becky Gonyea, Amy Touchette, Damien Brink, Tracy Patnoe, Julia Skonicki, Kathy Demars, Lucy Lerich, Heather Hobart, Nicole Fournier Grisgraber, Imelda Turner, Stephanie Drus-Sheldon, Tasha Green, Theresa Snow

**participating via Zoom*

9:00AM - CALL COMMUNITY MEETING TO ORDER

1. Moderator, Shap Smith, will review the rules of procedure

Shap Smith called the meeting to order at 9AM. The Pledge of Allegiance was lead by Boy Scout Troup #876 and the National Anthem was sung by Peoples Academy Middle School Chorus. Shap introduced the panel consisting of Selectboard members, Interim Town Manager, Carrie Johnson and Finance Director, Tina Sweet. Shap went on to thank the Morrisville Soccer Club Eurotrip for serving pie and the folks that made today possible with the room and equipment.

Shap made folks aware of the rules of procedure for the meeting and thanked folks for attending.

9:05AM - NEW BUSINESS

1. 9:06AM - Discuss Budget summary and Town Financials

9:36AM - Questions from citizens

Finance Director, Tina Sweet presented the budget changes being proposed for FY 24/25.

General Government:

Insurance: Property, workers' comp and unemployment insurance increased \$25,000. Salaries and Benefits: Increased salary for a Town Manager instead of a Town Administrator of \$24,440. Health insurance increased an average of 12.7% across all departments. Board of Civil Authority: Increased \$4,306 due to increased elections this year. Communications/Computers: Increased office supplies and copier expenses to reflect more current usage and pricing, Software Programs increased \$9,205 due to new Kofax accounts payable software implementation. Will decrease in future years. Other Purchased Services for minute taking increased \$1,500 based on more meetings in the future needing this service. NEMRC (New England Municipal Resource Center) software/maintenance increased \$1,400.

Things that decreased: Network Systems, e-mail licenses, website, internet, and cell phones. Auditing: Auditors decreased by \$3,750 due to no single audit expected. Maintain Government Buildings: Mowing Town Properties increased \$20,000 because we are contracting to do these services instead of doing them inhouse, Library Maintenance increased \$7,500 due to service contracts and repairs needed – previously this expense was combined with the Tegu building. Heating Oil and Streetlight expenses were decreased by \$4,889. Miscellaneous: County Tax increased by 9.5%. Appropriations – Budgeted: Library increased by 9.5%. Uncompensated Absences: Increased by \$12,000 in anticipation of paying employees that are retiring this year.

Police:

Crime Investigation: Increased \$4,000 for hiring an Animal Control Officer. Communications/Technology: Increased \$6,000 for the purchase of one radio. Dispatch costs increased \$8,175. Maintain Vehicles/Equipment: Gas increased \$6,898.

Fire:

Personal Protective Clothing: Increased \$15,000 due to not purchasing very much this year. Communications/Technology: Increased \$13,000 for the purchase of three radios. Dispatch costs increased by \$8,175. Maintain Vehicles/Equipment: Repair and Maintenance Services increased \$25,000 due to the age of our equipment.

EMS:

Personnel: Increase in costs due to reconfiguration of staff. Now 5 full-time positions and 5 part-time positions-instead of 4 full-time and 6 part-time. This should reduce overtime. Replacement Equipment: Increased \$29,675 for the purchase of 10 radios. Building Repair/Maintenance Services: Increased \$14,200 for kitchen improvements and resealing and repairing areas of the parking lot. Maintain Vehicles & Equipment: Machinery & Equipment Replacement increased \$40,000 for the purchase of a new monitor/defibrillator. Payments for the new ambulance increased \$75,000.

Highway:

Trucks & Equipment: Fuel decreased \$15,700 due to estimating less usage. Grader blades decreased \$10,500 due to purchasing more efficient carbide blades. Repairs and Maintenance Services decreased \$30,000 due to purchasing seven-year warranties for all new equipment. Summer Maintenance: Line Painting decreased by \$12,000 due to parking lot stripping done last year. Hot Mix increased \$10,000 due to paving not being done and the cost increases. Chipping/ tree trimming decreased by 100% as we are not planning to do chipping this year. Capital Infrastructure Improvements decreased \$50,000. We now have a Bridge/Infrastructure fund to use for bigger projects. Sidewalk Construction: Decreased \$50,000. We may utilize other funds for this item. Operating/Maintaining Buildings: Decrease due to recategorizing Duhamel Pit operations in its own category. Duhamel Pit: Pit maintenance increased \$5,000. Crushing decreased \$10,000. Sand decreased \$7,500. Gravel decreased \$7,500.

Revenue:

Licenses & Permits: Recording decreased \$5,000. Zoning permits decreased \$40,000. EMS: Fees increased \$34,800. Fees to cover Elmore increased \$4,500. Paramedic Intercept Fees increased \$5,000. Recreation: Summer program fees increased \$4,700. Other Financing Sources: Unallocated Fund Balance usage increased \$160,000.

Questions:

Most questions from the audience were regarding the sidewalks, tax rate, community gardens, oxbow conditions and the future of Oxbow due to the flooding. Oxbow Park has been a great community resource for kids and sports. There was support for the library and the arts in the community. We heard from citizens supporting the efforts by the various boards and the hope for a local option tax for a source of revenue.

2. 10:06AM - Presentation by Social Service Agencies

Many agencies were present and did brief presentations to the citizens describing what they provide for the community and how their tax dollars are needed.

Capstone Community Action - Alison Calderara

Clarina Howard Nichols Center - Becky Gonyea

Justice for Dogs - Amy Touchette

Lamoille Health Partners Community Center - Damien Brink

Lamoille County Special Investigation Unit - Tracy Patnoe

Lamoille Family Center - Julia Skonicki
Lamoille Home Health & Hospice - Kathy Demars
Lamoille Housing Partnership - Lucy Lerich
Lamoille Restorative Center - Heather Hobart
Meals on Wheels - Nicole Fournier Grisgraber
Morristown Centennial Library - Julie Pickett
Morristown Conservation Commission - Ron Stancliff
Northern Central Vermont Recovery Center - Imelda Turner
River Arts - Stephanie Drus-Sheldon
Rural Community Transportation - Tasha Green
Salvation Farms - Theresa Snow

3. 10:56AM - Petition Protocol update

Annual Meeting Candidates 2024

Morristown now votes all town officials by Australian Ballot. Candidates must submit a consent of candidate form and a nominating petition containing **30** signatures of Morristown registered voters. The deadline for submitting petitions is **5:00 PM on Monday, January 29, 2024.**

Town Open Positions

- Selectboard Member for a three (3) year term ending 2027
- Selectboard Member for a two (2) year term ending 2026
- Lister for a three (3) year term ending 2027
- Trustee of Public Funds for a three (3) year term ending 2027
- Library Trustee for a five (5) year term ending 2029

School Open Positions

- School Director for a three (3) year term ending 2027- Morristown Resident
- School Director for a three (3) year term ending 2027- Morristown or Elmore Resident

Petitions for Annual Meeting 2024

The Morristown Selectboard has adopted a **Social Service Agency Appropriation Policy**. Those social service agencies that have not had an appropriation request approved at the most recent annual town meeting, or that are requesting a larger appropriation than that approved at the most recent annual town meeting, must submit a petition for an article requesting an appropriation in accordance with 17 V.S.A. § 2642. The deadline for submitting petitions for the 2024 Annual Town Meeting is 4:00 PM on Thursday, January 18, 2024.

The petition must contain signatures of 5% of the Morristown voter checklist which is approximately 210 signatures.

Blank petitions and more information can be found on our new website: <https://www.morristownvt.gov/elections>

Questions contact: shaskins@morristownvt.gov or (802) 888-6370.

4. 10:57AM -Introduction of the new Town of Morristown Website

The Town has moved to a .gov website and email address for all Morristown employees. There is a notification system that will allow citizens to get notified of any and all news alerts and

events but you must enable the notifications that you want to receive. Visit www.morristownvt.gov and take a look at the new website. Call or email administration for help.

Town Clerk's office held a raffle during the meeting for dog tag #1. At the conclusion of town business, the raffle winner was drawn and dog tag #1 goes to Hershey Palermo.

10:57AM - OTHER BUSINESS

none

11:00AM - ADJOURN

Shap Smith adjourned the meeting at 11:10AM

Please note all minutes are in Draft form and are subject to approval at the next Selectboard meeting.