

**Town of Ferrisburgh  
Selectboard Minutes  
December 19, 2023**

**Members present:** Clark Hinsdale, Chris Campbell, Red Muir, Jim Benoit

**Town officials present:** Pam Cousino, Town Clerk, Laurie Curler, Assistant Town Clerk, Joe Nelson, Tree Warden

**Visitors present:** Bessie Sessions, Ashley & Sean LaFlam, Senator Chris Bray, Senator Ruth Hardy, KC Ambrose, Zachary Gebo, Natalie (last name not given), Danelle Birong, Ben LaFlam, Steven Sickles, Representative Matt Birong, Jeanne Kelly, Ryan Sheehan, Julie Basol

**1. 6:30 p.m. Call regular meeting to order**

Clark Hinsdale called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

**2. Approve Minutes – Regular meeting December 5, 2023, Budget Meeting Minutes November 28, 2023**

Chris Campbell moved to accept the December 5, 2023 minutes as presented. Jim Benoit seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

Budget Meeting Minutes for November 28, 2023 – tabled for a future meeting

**3. Public Comment**

Joe Nelson, Tree Warden, gave an update for the Shade Tree Preservation Committee. He stated they are making progress and will provide another update in January. They plan to hold a public meeting in March.

**4. Selectboard New Business**

**a) VAST Trail Usage in Town Forest – Jack Poirier**

Jim Benoit moved to approve the VAST request to use trails in the town forest. Red Muir seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

**b) Update on Education Property Taxes and other issues – Ruth Hardy, Matt Birong, and Chris Bray**

Senators Ruth Hardy, Chris Bray, and Representative Matt Birong attended to answers questions regarding the letter from State Auditor Doug Hoffer announcing an expected double digit increase in property taxes. They explained that the letter is mandated by Vermont Statute. The Legislature uses the information to begin the budgeting process and the assumptions used to arrive at this number are not the same ones used by the Legislature.

Representative Diane Lanpher is in Montpelier working on the budget. She will attend a meeting in January.

**5. Selectboard Old Business**

**a) Approve Town wide reappraisal Request for Quote (RFP)**

The document was not ready.

**b) Brown Church Update - Red Muir**

Red Muir reported they are waiting on the Opinion of Value and expect to have a proposal from the Bensons at the next Building and Maintenance Committee meeting. A letter from Paul Hoffman was read where he requested some considerations be made if the church is to be sold.

**c) Union Meeting Hall update – Red Muir**

Red Muir reported there are two items in the warrants for the Fire Marshall contracts.

**d) Monkton Road Fence issue update**

An appeal regarding the dumping issue has been given to the Town Attorney.

**e) Vergennes Fire Contract update**

Clark Hinsdale reported that Vergennes has requested mediation for the fire contract and has proposed two mediation firms. Discussion was held and residents provided feedback on the issue, including a letter submitted from Kurt Plank. Clark Hinsdale provided the history and steps the Selectboard has taken to come to an agreement with Vergennes.

Jim Benoit moved to approve mediation with Vergennes for the fire contract. Red Muir seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

**6. Selectboard General Business**

None

**7. Other Business**

None

**8. Correspondence**

**a) Thank-You from Age Well for Town Funding**

A thank-you note was received from Age Well for the town's contribution.

**b) Thank-You from Friends of Vergennes Opera House for Town Funding**

A thank-you note was received from the Vergennes Opera House for the town's contribution.

**c) Thank-You from Boys & Girls Club for Town Funding**

A thank-you note was received from the Boys & Girls Club for the town's contribution.

**d) US Route 7 Safety Letter sent to the State of Vermont**

The letter to the State of Vermont regarding the safety issues on Route 7 was signed by the Selectboard and will be mailed on December 20, 2023.

**e) Letter from Paul Hoffman**

This was presented during the Brown Church update.

**9. Selectboard to Approve or Sign**

**a) Addison Northwest School District – Memorandum of Understanding- Relocation**

The document is still with the town attorney.

**b) Selectboard Warrant**

Red Muir moved to approve the warrants for \$200,601.02. Chris Campbell seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

**10. Adjourn**

Red Muir moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:46 p.m. Jim Benoit seconded the motion. All voted in favor. MOTION PASSED

Respectfully submitted,  
Carol Allen