

TOWN OF PEACHAM  
Selectboard Meeting  
Wednesday, November 16, 2022 at 7:00pm  
Location: **Peacham Library Community Room**

Attendance: Peter Craig, Selectboard Chair, Richard Browne, Selectboard, Alfred Dedam, Selectboard, Thomas Galinat, Town Clerk, Jacob Thomas, Allison Webster, Karin Lewis, Laurie Kozar, Jeff Lane, Patrice McDonagh, Rod Reis, Mel Reis, Dave Stauffer, Ron Craig

Minutes:

1. Call to order by Peter Craig at 7:00pm
2. Additions to the agenda
  - a. Gym Update-Richard Browne
    - i. Richard Browne stated that the town hall will have no heat for two days to replace the boiler. He stated the propane line and vent from the boiler will be relocated. Browne continued that the gym door and frames will also be replaced.
  - b. Village Signs-Mel Reis
    - i. Mel asked if Steve Engle's proposal will be considered for new signs in the village. The board stated they will add his proposal as a separate article on the Warning for Town Meeting.
  - c. ARPA
    - i. Browne spoke on his correspondence with the various projects. He received an updated proposal from the Fire District and the Library.
3. Highway Department update
  - a. Peter Craig said the road crew is working through their first winter storm they are out plowing and sanding.
4. Town Clerk/Treasurer update
  - a. Thomas Galinat said the election was successful.
  - b. He presented a budget status report and a comparative budget status report with key questions for the board to decide for the next meeting. He said he will be meeting with department heads to get the rest of the budget for the next meeting. Galinat stated it is likely the Town will be over budget this year. He will bring options to the board at the next meeting to try to mitigate next year's increases. He noted the hard decision of the board to choose between using reserves or increasing the tax rate. Browne asked if the expense of the new boiler could be from the capital building fund, Galinat said that is an example of how to utilize reserves to handle the shortfall.
  - c. Galinat presented a letter to the board before the meeting, and asked to read it regarding the differences in the roles of the Selectboard Clerk and Town Clerk. The board asked him to include the letter in the minutes. Browne stated that one of the issues was around the minutes. He clarified that the minutes are the Board's minutes and not the Selectboard Clerk's minutes. Questions regarding minutes should be directed to the Board.

- d. Galinat stated the digitized land records have not been completed yet. The funds for that project may fall in 2023 but they will not affect the tax rate as they are from the restoration land records fund.
5. Approve minutes
  - a. November 2, 2022
    - i. **Alfred Dedam moved to approve the minutes as presented, Richard Browne seconded, all in favor, so moved.**
6. Review and approve bills
  - a. **Richard Browne moved to approve the bills as presented, Alfred Dedam seconded, all in favor, so moved.**
7. Review correspondence
  - a. Winter preparedness-Allison Webster requested that the Town publicize the public service announcement. Galinat stated he would publish on the website and on Facebook.
  - b. Hybrid meetings-Allison Webster requested hybrid meetings again. The board agreed to hold hybrid meetings again. Jacob Thomas requested that hybrid meetings be held in perpetuity.
  - c. Municipal Energy Resilience Program-Allison Webster spoke that the Town has an opportunity to apply for up to \$500,000 for energy efficiency and ADA compliance.
8. Adjourn
  - a. Richard Browne moved to adjourn, seconded by Alfred Dedam, all in favor, so moved. Meeting adjourned at 7:39pm.

Documents provided to the Selectboard and documents discussed at this meeting are available by request to the Town Office.

# TOWN OF PEACHAM

*Magnificent Scenery, Fine Social Atmosphere,  
Collaborative Community*

Office of the Town Clerk and Treasurer  
PO Box 244  
Peacham, Vermont 05862

November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Peacham Selectboard,

I'm writing in regards to my various roles for the Town of Peacham. First and foremost, I've been elected by the residents to the positions of Town Clerk and Treasurer. Most recently I was appointed by the Selectboard, to the position of Selectboard Clerk. These roles have a natural overlap which makes the positions logical to have the same person do both rolls. Other than a short hiatus from 2014-2022, this was the historical norm. The nature of all Selectboards draws conflict. It would appear that this conflict creates a poor working environment in my elected offices that are otherwise disassociated.

For this reason, I will be taking the next steps towards resolving the confusion between the various roles. I will be stepping back from the role of Selectboard Clerk. I will continue to take minutes and work with the board until a replacement can be found. I feel that separating the duties of the elected Board and the elected Clerk/Treasurer will maintain a clear boundary between the very different roles (There is a natural conflict that can occur in any Selectboard meeting that can be associated with the Selectboard Clerk, that natural conflict can then be transferred to the Town Clerk when it is the same individual).

As Town Clerk, for the last 8 years, I believe the office has performed at an exceptional level. Two weeks ago an attorney stated he had never seen a vault so well organized. As Treasurer, the tracking of Town funds is also well done. We just received the audit report from Sullivan and Powers who reviewed our practices for VMERS, the report was one page, and stated "complete and accurate". I will continue to perform these elected roles to the best of my ability. Both of these roles have little involvement with the natural conflicts that can arise during Selectboard meetings.

Thank you for your understanding. This is a formal request that this letter be added to the minutes.

Sincerely,

Thomas Galinat