

**Stowe Selectboard, Liquor Commission & Water/Sewer Commission Meeting  
Wednesday May 24, 2023**

Present:

Selectboard Members: William Adams, Lisa Hagerty, Nick Donza, Jo Sabel Courtney

In Person attendees: Jed Lipsky, Matthew Lillis, Bobby Murph, Donald Jones

There were 15 participants on Zoom.

**Call to Order**

Chair Lisa Hagerty called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

**Approve the Agenda**

It was requested by staff that item B-4 “Capital Plan Amendment – Municipal Website” be moved to item B-1. The remainder of the items will be renamed accordingly (B-2 Exposed Exhibit, B-3 Moscow Village Flags, B-4 Stowe Mountain Resort Update)

On a motion by Ms. Jo Sabel Courtney, seconded by Mr. Billy Adams, the Board approved the Agenda with the changes noted above.

**Consent Agenda**

1. 5/10/23 Selectboard Minutes
2. Special Selectboard Meeting to set FY’24 Tax Rate
3. Dispatching Contract
4. Lamoille FiberNet Grant Letter of Support
5. Liquor Consent Item

On a motion by Mr. Adams, seconded by Mr. Donza, the Board approved the Consent Agenda as presented.

**Capital Plan Amendment – Municipal Website**

As part of the FY’24 budget, \$25,000 was allocated in the General Fund Capital Fund to consolidate and redesign all Town websites into one unified web presence. Jonathan Thereault, Director of IT, was present to discuss how when putting together the RFP to pull in all the components from the different Town websites, it has become clear that the cost of website development of this caliber far exceeds the funds that have been allocated. Estimates received have placed the potential cost of the project anywhere from \$50,000 to \$75,000. Staff is requesting that the Selectboard increase the capital funding for the redesign and unification of the Town online presence. Mr. Donza asked what the anticipated life span of this website was, and Mr. Thereault indicated it is hard to say with certainty but if the Town is engaged in updating content, it should last 5-10 years before it would need a refresh.

On a motion by Mr. Adams, seconded by Mr. Donza, the Board increased the capital funding for the redesign and unification of the Town’s websites to \$70,000.

**Exposed Exhibit**

Alexandra Sherrill, Assistant Curator of The Current, presented to the Board their proposed plans for the 2023 season of the annual Exposed Exhibit. She noted that this year, they are taking a minimal approach with three pieces which will be located on or in front of the Helen Day Art Center Building, and one located at the corner of Main Street and Park Street. Public Works has evaluated the proposed sculptures and is comfortable with the installation plans.

On a motion by Ms. Courtney, seconded by Mr. Adams, the Board approved the Exposed Exhibit subject to working out the detail installations with the Stowe Public Works Director.

### **Moscow Village American Flags**

Kate Stevens, a resident of the Moscow Village area, has requested to speak with the Selectboard regarding her request to limit the time the American Flags are displayed on telephone poles in Moscow. Currently American Flags are flown from poles on Main Street and Moscow Village from approximately Memorial Day to Veterans Day. She explained that her request is because she feels it would look more respectful to have them flying only for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, that it would not interfere with seasonal foliage views, and that having the flags up for an extended period of time may make some visitors think the Town has forgotten to take them down. Mary Black, also a resident of Moscow Village, submitted a letter stating that while she felt Kate's concerns were coming from a place of respect for the flag, she felt that having the flags on display from Memorial Day to Veterans Day gave Moscow a sense of place and community. Mr. Adams asked if there was concern that the flags were not in good condition at the end of the season, and it was noted that if anyone found a flag that needed replacement, they can contact the Town Offices and they will be replaced. Town Manager Charles Safford also noted that Stowe Electric hangs up the flags in Moscow for the Town and would probably not want to be putting them up and taking them down for different holidays. Members of the Board discussed the ongoing work to address Moscow Village Streetscapes and that they could keep the discussion regarding flags in mind when holding further discussions.

There was no action taken at this time.

### **Stowe Mountain Resort Update**

Bobby Murphy, Stowe Mountain Resort General Manager, and Matthew Lillis, Director of Operations, presented to the Selectboard a season recap of the 2022-2023 ski season. Mr. Murphy noted that he would be leaving Stowe shortly to go to another location in the Vail Resorts portfolio, but that a transition plan was in place, with an internal replacement to be announced within a month or so. Mr. Murphy spoke about challenging weather early in the season, issues with chairlifts, the installation of the new 6 person high speed lift, and strong visitation numbers in line with previous years. The main focus of the discussion was on the new paid parking strategy implemented this season, and the impacts on traffic and driving behaviors. It was noted that in addition to adding a paid parking component for Friday, Saturday and Sunday during the season, they also increased funding for the Green Mountain Transit busing system so that they could have more busses with higher capacity and encouraged ridership. There was also a free parking lot with a shuttle. Incentives such as dropping bus guests off at the lifts and allowing guests who utilized the free parking lots to ski to their cars made an impact, with ridership on the bus increased 48% over the previous year. It was also noted that in the paid parking lots, those who carpoled were given a parking discount, and that accounted for a much higher percentage of vehicles than they had anticipated. Approximately 43% of those utilizing the paid parking lots received the carpooling discount. Mr. Lillis reported that they feel this took nearly 12,000 cars off of Mountain Road over the season. He also reported that their data indicated there were fewer days with congestion on the Mountain Road. He discussed the season parking permits, noting that they sold out in minutes this year, and next year they would utilize a lottery system which would give better idea of demand. Otherwise, plans are to keep the parking program for 2023-2024 very similar to what was done this season. Mr. Adams noted that he would like to see the revenues from the paid parking being utilized to improve bus ridership, shelters for riders waiting for the bus, etc. Mr. Lillis noted that currently the revenues are being used to pay for increased busing and that they are also in talks with GMT to install a shelter on Mountain Road as an example to the community of what that could look like.

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Mr. Murphy and Mr. Lillis thanked the community, visitors and staff for making the parking program a success. The Board thanked Mr. Murphy for his contributions to Stowe Mountain Resort and the Stowe community as a whole and wished him well in his new ventures.

There was no action taken at this time.

#### **Manager's Report**

Mr. Safford provided the Board with the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter Local Option Tax, which came in at \$493,775. He noted that there seems to be some leveling-off of the post-pandemic jump in receipts, but that this number is on target with what was budgeted.

Mr. Safford also reported that on the May 15<sup>th</sup> tax day receipts, the Town received the highest number of receipts for quarter one with \$29M.

Mr. Adams noted that the Development Review Board Warning for upcoming meeting had several outdoor music permits being considered on Mountain Road and questioned if this was a trend moving forward, and if so what tools the Selectboard may put in place for the DRB to assess those requests. -

On a motion by Ms. Courtney, seconded by Mr. Adams, the Board went into Executive Session at 7:09pm to discuss personnel.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 7:45pm.

On a motion by Mr. Adams, seconded by Ms. Courtney, the Board appointed Don Jones to fill a vacant At-Large seat on the Arts & Culture Council and appointed Julianne Nickerson to fill a vacant seat designated for Spruce Peak Performing Arts on the Arts & Culture Council.

There being no further business, Chair Hagerty adjourned the meeting at 7:50pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Abigail Bourgeois.

\*Note: The video recording of the meeting is available on the town's website [www.townofstowe.org](http://www.townofstowe.org)