



GEORGIA

VERMONT

Selectboard Special Meeting

Monday, January 29, 2024

Chris Letourneau Meeting Room and via Zoom

Minutes

Zoom Details:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6165843896?pwd=STduU2JzTmpiVmE1MXZSaWZWVadz09>

Meeting ID: 616 584 3896 | Passcode: 5243524

Dial by your Location: 1 929 205 6099 (New York)

1. CALL TO ORDER

- **Selectboard Present** – Devon Thomas Chair, Shannon Jenkins Vice-Chair, Jamie Comstock, Carl Rosenquist, Nicholas Martin
- **Staff Present** – Cheryl Letourneau, April Edwards, Doug Bergstrom
- **Public Present** – Terry Cleveland
- **Zoom Present** – Ken Minck, Karen Heinlein-Grenier
- At 6:03 p.m. - D. Thomas called the meeting to order.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. CHAIR UPDATE

4. ADDITIONS, DELETIONS, OR CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

5. BOARD BUSINESS (Public comment on agenda items limited to 5 minutes)

A. Approved revised budget

- D. Thomas said they have the final version of the town report.
- D. Bergstrom said there is a 9.13% increase in the bottom line. They had to make a change to the treasurer's salary line and the government social security line. N. Martin questioned if the numbers there matched the numbers on the shared drive. D. Bergstrom reported they are not exactly the same. He explained how it was built, then the numbers were put into NEMRC, then rebuilt in Excel for formatting for the town report. He thinks he has a better way to do it next year, but these numbers have been triple checked. D. Bergstrom reported a 9.13% increase in taxes and our expenses are down about \$400,000.
- Discussion was had on budget versions.

- 33 • S. Jenkins asked about the staff salary list on page 47 between Dunsmore and Andrew there
34 is a less than sign and it should be replaced with a comma.
- 35 • N. Martin questioned why they had Cheryl Letourneau listed two jobs when they did not do
36 that for anyone else. There will be an asterisk at the bottom stating it is for two jobs. He
37 requested it to be changed and to have it all on one line as it would look cleaner. D.
38 Bergstrom said he is making the changes as the meeting is going. C. Rosenquist said he
39 thinks it should be listed. N. Martin said no one else is doing it that way. It is decided to
40 have Cheryl Letourneau listed on one line.
- 41 • N. Martin asked if the front cover should have the spotlight section on it. He would prefer it
42 just to be a picture. J. Comstock thought they agreed to have the town emblem as the cover.
43 D. Thomas said he was fine with the cover. C. Rosenquist questioned if they were leaving it
44 the way it is. D. Thomas said he is fine with it but asked D. Bergstrom if they found the
45 original photo would that be too much to change. C. Letourneau reported this being last
46 minute as it is to go to the printer in the morning. J. Comstock said he is just asking about
47 changing the picture on the front page. N. Martin said this was given to him yesterday at
48 noon. J. Comstock said it looks like trash. T. Cleveland said there are many pictures of
49 Georgia on Facebook, even of the sunset. D. Thomas said they wanted the webpage. He
50 said that D. Bergstrom has put a lot of work into this, and it is an asset to the town. N.
51 Martin agrees. D. Bergstrom said he has image, but it is a screen grab and will need to have
52 a lot of resolution work done on it. D. Thomas asked if he had time to please do it, but
53 understands they are at zero hour.
- 54 • S. Jenkins asked about the warning and how they are listed.
- 55 • T. Cleveland reported that pages 24, 26, and 27 are duplicates. This will be fixed.
- 56 • K. Minck clarified the naming of the bridges. He also asked for the 2023 Conservation
57 numbers when you get there.
- 58 • D. Thomas asked if everyone reviewed the library budget and confirmed it on page 45. A.
59 Edwards said they overspent their grant money. Their \$800 overage is still there after her
60 pulling what money she could find to cover it. There is \$15,000 in a reserve account, but
61 she does not know if there are any restrictions on it. T. Cleveland asked if the library was
62 aware of this. A. Edwards confirmed it had been brought to their attention in previous
63 meetings. N. Martin reported not recalling that in a meeting. T. Cleveland asked if it
64 showed up in the report. N. Martin requested to have the information sent to the library. It
65 was reported.
- 66 • K. Minck asked to speak about the Conservation Commission report. He asked for the 2023
67 closing figures. C. Rosenquist reported Current year \$4,760, Transfer to reserve \$13,000
68 and transfer to general \$0. C. Letourneau reported on page 36 Conservation to general
69 \$46,951.98 and Conservation to reserve is \$122,154.00. K. Minck thinks the \$5000 was
70 swept into the general account and not the reserve account, and the \$4,000 and change he
71 does not see that entry at all going into the general account. He does not see the agreed
72 upon number for the Cell Tower. It is referred to on page 36. K. Minck says the
73 Conservation Reserve Fund should have had \$5,000 put into it and the General Fund should
74 have \$4,000 put into it. He wanted to confirm that the town report will have the proper
75 numbers in it. He says he thinks the numbers in the town report are incorrect. A. Edwards
76 and K. Minck discussed.

77 B. Approve Warning for Town Meeting

- 78 • C. Rosenquist asked Article #5 “Shall the town of Georgia vote on all public questions by
79 public ballot”, and how it sounds.
- 80 • J. Comstock questioned using ARPA money to buy a truck and if that had to be an article.
81 N. Martin said he thought they decided it would be. C. Letourneau reported that she was
82 told after to not include it because you said it was ARPA money. Discussion was had on
83 using ARPA, putting money back into the General, and the legality of how to purchase a
84 truck.
- 85 • C. Rosenquist questioned article #3 asking if the wording was the same as in previous years.
86 C. Letourneau confirmed.
- 87 • D. Thomas asked if the Georgia Industrial Development rep needs to be voted on the floor.
88 C. Letourneau confirmed. C. Rosenquist said a member will be making a recommendation
89 to the board.
- 90 • D. Thomas asked if #8 bridge bond looked the way they wanted it.
- 91 • C. Rosenquist moved to approve the warning as submitted by our town administrator, D.
92 Thomas seconded. All in favor, motion carried.
- 93 • D. Thomas said diversity exploration has been changed so that it is not a policy but a
94 declaration. He plans on submitting it to Harnish and Wakefield.
- 95 • S. Jenkins asked who will be answering questions on the bond vote. Will they be handed to
96 A. Edwards. N. Martin asked who goes to the bank and files for the bond. S. Jenkins asked
97 who will answer those questions. D. Bergstrom informed her that A. Edwards will not be
98 permitted to speak unless there is a motion for her to do so. C. Rosenquist said it is because
99 she is not a resident. C. Letourneau said the bond needs to be signed. D. Thomas asked if
100 the bond was part of the town meeting.
- 101 • D. Thomas asked if there were any questions on the bond.
- 102 • C. Rosenquist made a motion to approve the resolution to replace the Mill River Road
103 bridge, N. Martin seconded. C. Letourneau asked it to be changed to say Rugg Brook
104 Bridge. K. Minck clarified that it is specifically Bridge number 28.
- 105 • C. Rosenquist amended his motion to add a parenthetical to say bridge 28, N. Martin
106 seconded. All in favor of the amendment, amendment carried.
- 107 • All in favor of the original motion, motion carried.
- 108 • C. Letourneau informed the board that article 8 will be its own piece of paper. There will be
109 three different color ballots, one white for the presidential, one for the town, and one for the
110 bond.
- 111 • C. Rosenquist made a motion to approve the bond vote ballot as presented, S. Jenkins
112 seconded. All in favor, motion carried.
- 113 • A. Edwards added the \$5,000 transfer in 2024 in January which will not make much of a
114 difference. Or do we spend a lot of time rebuilding this town report. D. Bergstrom said
115 they will have to go back and redo the budget. D. Thomas asked K. Minck what he thought
116 of this. K. Minck asked if they were going to put \$18,000 instead of \$13,000 into the
117 reserve fund for 2024. A. Edwards asked the board if they wanted to make the transfer in
118 2024 or not. N. Martin said he was all for making it easy on the staff if it is done the right
119 way. S. Jenkins asked if the town report will properly show it. A. Edwards said it will not.
120 It will not show the transfer. K. Minck said the problem with doing that is their budget is
121 not a real budget. K. Minck was concerned that the budget has been on a twenty-year
122 decline and now this year it is going to show a \$0. S. Jenkins was concerned about not
123 having it in the town report because that is used as a jumping off point when referencing for

future years. That is her only concern. C. Letourneau said they could put an asterisk to say the transfer was to be made. D. Thomas said he thinks they should do what would allow them to get the town report out in time.

- A. Edwards reported if the \$5,000 transfer was omitted, then it needed to be done in January. That should cover everyone. C. Rosenquist asked K. Minck if that met his satisfaction. K. Minck agreed.
- C. Rosenquist moved to make a note in the minutes of this meeting that there was an omission of a \$5,000 transfer to the Conservation Commission reserve fund, and it will be done in January, D. Thomas seconded. All in favor, motion carried.

C. Approve Town Report

- D. Thomas made a motion to approve the 2024 budget as presented, S. Jenkins seconded. D. Thomas reported a 9.13% increase from the prior year's tax rate. All in favor, motion carried.
- D. Thomas made a motion to approve the 2023 town report for presentation to the community which will include necessary changes, S. Jenkins seconded. D. Bergstrom said all that was left was the cover and duplicate pages. All in favor, motion carried.

6. ADJOURN

- At 7:40 p.m. - D. Thomas made a motion to conclude this meeting. C. Rosenquist asked if they voted to approve the warning. D. Bergstrom said they approved the warning before the budget. D. Thomas confirmed. C. Rosenquist seconded, all in favor, motion carried.