

**TOWN OF SPRINGFIELD
SELECTBOARD HALL – 96 MAIN STREET – THIRD FLOOR
REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING
MONDAY, October 9, 2023**

APPROVED MINUTES

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL

Chair, Kristi Morris, called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm. Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and Roll Call was taken.

Selectboard Members: Chair Kristi Morris, Vice Chair Michael Martin, Walter Martone, and Crissy Webster were present in-person. Everett Hammond was absent.

Administration: Town Manager Jeff Mobus and Town Clerk Barbara Courchesne were present in-person.

School Board Liaison: Steve Karaffa was not in attendance

B. MINUTES

1. Regular Selectboard Meeting – September 25, 2023

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to approve the minutes of the Regular Selectboard Meeting of September 25, 2023, as printed, and distributed with revisions.

Seconded by: Walter Martone

Michael Martin inquired about the time listed on page 14 under item 9, “Further discussion ensued to clarify that the Public Hearings for the budget meetings of January 8th and 22nd would be starting at 6:00 pm and the regular meetings would start at 7:00 pm.”, noting that he had written the times down differently. Further discussion ensued regarding the start times for public hearings being at 6:00 pm and the start times for regular meetings being 7:00 pm. The Board decided not to make any changes to this section as they could adjust the times of the January meetings at a later date if they needed to.

Walter Martone requested correction on page 14 Item 10, “Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that he and the Public Works staff recommend the Town ~~except~~ accept the lower bid from Lewco, LLC for \$23,499.”.

Vote: 3-0, approved, 1 abstained, recognizing Crissy Webster abstained due to her absence at the September 25, 2023 and Everett Hammond as being absent.

C. ANY REQUESTED ADDITIONS TO THIS AGENDA

Town Manager Jeff Mobus requested to add “Act on Updating Systemic vacancy policy” to the agenda as Item #10. This item was not included in the meeting packet and was added without objection from the Board.

D. NEW BUSINESS

ITEM #1 Appoint Budget Advisory Committee members

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “appoint Budget Advisory Committee members” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that at the September 25, 2023, Board meeting, the Board appointed 5 citizens to the Budget Advisory Committee. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he has received one additional application from Larry "Tre" Ayer. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that he was informed by Jim Fog that he is willing to serve but he has not provided his questionnaire yet.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that Larry “Tre” Ayer has served at least the last two Budget Advisory Committee budget reviews with admirable service. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that Larry “Tre” Ayer maintains residency under student status under Vermont law.

MOTION: Walter Martone moved to appoint Larry “Tre” Ayer to the Budget Advisory Committee.

Seconded by: Crissy Webster

Michael Martin inquired if the questionnaire from Jim Fog was necessary as he verbally expressed that he was willing to serve again. Further discussion ensued

that they could appoint him contingent on submitting his questionnaire and that waiving requirements for one it can get a little tricky. Additional discussion ensued that they still had one more meeting that he could be appointed at.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Everett Hammond as being absent.

ITEM #2 Accept resignation from Library Board of Trustees

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Accept resignation from Library Board of Trustees” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he received a letter of resignation from Myrt Graham from the Library Board of Trustees for family and health reasons. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that Myrt Graham has been a valuable member of the Board and was very involved in the library’s new strategic plan that was presented to the Board on September 25, 2023.

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to accept the resignation from Myrt Graham with regrets.

Seconded by: Crissy Webster

Michael Martin inquired if we had a policy or practice to formally acknowledge resignations after they were accepted and to send a note of thanks for their service. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that he sent Myrt Graham an email to thank him for his service. Further discussion ensued that if it’s a more personal reason they do get acknowledged.

Walter Martone inquired if Myrt Graham was appointed or elected. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that he was elected.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Everett Hammond as being absent.

ITEM #3 Accept resignation from Development Review Board

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Accept resignation from Development Review Board” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that Pete Fuller has resigned from the

Development Review Board. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that this item was incorrectly labeled as Item 4 in the meeting packet.

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to accept the letter of resignation from the Development Review Board from Peter Fuller with regrets.

Seconded by: Crissy Webster

Michael Martin inquired if we still had an alternate member on the Development Review Board. Town Manager Jeff Mobus confirmed noting that the alternate member would likely be formally appointed as a full member after their interest is determined.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Everett Hammond as being absent.

ITEM #4 Act on Toonerville Trail request – Turkey Trot, November 23, 2023

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Act on Toonerville Trail request – Turkey Trot, November 23, 2023” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that the Town has received permit application from Sileissner, chaired by Sean Meissner, to use the Toonerville Trail for the annual Turkey Trot to be held on November 23, 2023, from 8am and 11am. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that this event has been happening for many years. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that it was originally sponsored by Edgar May and Mr. Meissner took over the event last year with no issues.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus recommended approving Mr. Meissner's request with conditions on amending the Certificate of Insurance (COI) to Town of Springfield from Toonerville Trail and also providing a COI to Springfield Regional Development Corporation, as the trailhead is on their property.

MOTION: Crissy Webster moved to accept the application and permit the Toonerville Trail request for the turkey trot from Sean Meissner on November 3 at 8 am to 11 am contingent on the correction to the certificate of insurance.

Seconded by: Michael Martin

Michael Martin inquired if there was a fee for the event and if there was a beneficiary of this event. Sean Meissner via Zoom responded that this is a benefit for the Meals on Wheels of Greater Springfield Area and the Springfield High School Cross Country team. Sean Meissner added that they will also take food donations for the food pantry as well.

Further discussion ensued regarding correcting the certificate of insurance from the Toonerville Trail to the Town of Springfield.

Sean Meissner announced that the fee is \$20 for early registration and then \$25 the day of the event.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Everett Hammond as being absent.

ITEM #5 Receive and discuss Strategic Plan 2023

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Receive and discuss Strategic Plan 2023” item included in the packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that in early summer, the Board held a couple of workshops to discuss the plan. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that much of the plan will look familiar, with simple updates. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that there are a number of significant changes. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that throughout the plan, he attempted to make the plan more overarching and less like a checklist and the timelines have been updated.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he also met with Chuck Wise to ensure that the Board's Strategic Plan and the Town Plan complement and support one another. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the section on Valley Street is quite different due to flood zone limitations on many of those properties, it likely won't be possible to significantly expand the downtown in that direction. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that the Valley Street area still needs to be addressed, as it remains an important access to our downtown.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he added a focus on the Freedom Park neighborhood, and he believes that the various departments of the Town can work together to affect a positive change in that neighborhood. Town

Manager Jeff Mobus added that he moved the focus on outdoor recreation to address the entire Town, and not focus on Muckross. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that with innovation, he moved the focus to supporting innovation in general, noting that previously this section discussed autonomous automobiles.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he added sections on Stormwater and Cemeteries, noting these have been long-term challenges that have too often gone unaddressed as they require long-term solutions. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he is presenting this updated plan so that it will also serve as a guide as we go through the budget process.

Chair Kristi Morris noted that on page four under B1 Planning and Zoning paragraph four is dated 2022 still. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that he believed that was one of the real specific items that he was going to pull out but missed it. Further discussion ensued that it should be left in but to have the date changed.

Michael Martin commented that he read through this plan this weekend and he felt the Town Manager did an excellent job encapsulating the emphasis that we'd like to make in all these areas.

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to acknowledge receipt of the plan and adopt it as the Strategic Plan moving forward as amended.

Seconded by: Walter Martone

Town Manager Jeff Mobus commented that he would like to know if the Board felt this should be reviewed annually or every other year. Further discussion ensued that it would be best to review this annually and make changes as needed prior to the budget process.

Michael Martin commented on page 1 item A1 it has a target completion year of 2026 and there are about five different projects listed. Michael Martin inquired if it was the Town Manager's intent that all of the projects be completed by 2026. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that he was mostly talking about the two projects in process now that are being scoped, the Clinton Street Road Diet and Northern Gateway project.

Michael Martin commented on page three A5-2 determinations about community center, and it talks about discussions regarding the possible future uses of the community center for 2024. Michael Martin continued that it sounds like this needs to be a committee or some professional analysis. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that in talking with Chris Merrill, they have talked about getting a group of invested citizens together to help guide them not only on the building, but also the programming down there.

Chair Kristi Morris commented that we've had three different options suggested and at some point, we're going need to have conversation as to what we are going to do and inquired if the Town Manager was thinking of the committee for that. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that he believes a committee makes sense though his original idea for the committee was that if we decided to keep the community center, they would help determine how it should be used. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he believes the Selectboard is more of a proper venue for deciding the bigger question of whether or not we keep that property. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that it would be the Board's ability to decide to have the citizens involved with the decision about keeping that property or not.

Michael Martin continued that these questions were not necessarily amendments just questions as to how the plan would be implemented.

Michael Martin inquired about page 4 B1-3 taking Required Agricultural Practices (RAPs) seriously and what that meant. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that this is a new thing and the Planning and Zoning Administrator Chuck Wise requested that item be in there and it was part of tying the Strategic Plan in with the Town Plan. Carrie Kellow Planning and Zoning Assistant added that the Required Agricultural Practices, essentially says that farms if they qualify as a farm under the State, for having a certain amount of acreage, so many animals, or where they make a certain amount of money from an agricultural product, they don't have to get permits through the Town but they have to notify the Town that they're building structures and they still have to get permits through the State. Carrie Kellow Planning and Zoning Assistant added that they (qualifying farms) have a little more leeway of not having to also go through the local process. Further discussion ensued regarding RAPs and the fact that we

have very little regulatory authority and zoning for agricultural practices. Additional discussion ensued that this legislation makes them have to prove to us that they are a State recognized farm.

Michael Martin commented that on page 8 we talk about our school systems and how important they are for our community, and he wanted to point out that there are good reasons why economic development will benefit the school and also that a good school system helps to drive economic development. Michael Martin continued that he hopes that we can work very hard with the school system to get some buy in on that.

Michael Martin discussed on page 10 D1 asset management planning he believe the master plan for capital infrastructure is a wonderful idea. Michael Martin added that he thinks we should have every asset in the community analyzed and have a list of what needs to be done and when it needs to be done. Michael Martin continued that this master plan should also be maintained annually.

Walter Martone thanked the Town Manager for putting this together, noting this was meant to be a living document. Walter Martone added that on page 1 A1-5 we did a lot of work on that already with a landscape architect and he inquired if that was not enough. Town Manager Jeff Mobus clarified that the previous evaluations were architectural evaluations, and they are not the same as an engineered project.

Walter Martone discussed that on A2 he understands why the Town Manager did it and feels it is appropriate. Walter Martone inquired if when talking about buying out owners or razing structures are possible options being able to use those properties as parking areas. Further discussion ensued that it would depend on the funding source and if flood hazard mitigation money is used the properties would have to remain green space. Additional discussion ensued regarding 34-36 Valley Street that was recently accepted into the Flood Hazard Mitigation Program because of the flood zone limitations for that property and this was done under the same program as 43 Park Street and it has to remain green space after the structures are razed and mitigation to the property is done. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that a couple of the properties upstream would be very helpful for stormwater control to have a detention pond somewhere along that stretch to slow down the rush during a gully washer and

that would really help protect our downtown. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he would check with the Flood Hazard mitigation program first to make sure that a detention pond was an acceptable green space use since we wouldn't be building any structures.

Further discussion ensued that Valley Street still has opportunities to do things that would be beneficial to the downtown area even though we can't extend downtown onto it.

Walter Martone inquired on page 3 A4-1 what it meant by also their efforts between Main Street and Park Street. Town Manager Jeff Mobus responded that there are a number of properties that are owned by the same group between Main Street and Park Street, and we want to make sure we maintain a good relationship with them as well. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that he believes this is also working on building that corridor and extending that as a part of downtown.

Walter Martone commented on A5-2 make final determination it suggests examples for possible uses as a for profit restaurant or entertainment venue and he suggested they also include cultural and retail.

Walter Martone commented on page 4 B1-5 they needed to include vacant building and blight ordinances because they both have that provision in it assuming it is approved at this meeting. Further discussion ensued regarding Municipal Planning Grants.

Walter Martone commented on page 5 B2-4 that he didn't realize that the opportunity zone ends in 2028. Further discussion ensued that we may need to accelerate some of these projects, or this opportunity zone might be able to be extended.

Walter Martone commented on B3 they may also want to include the Union Park Neighborhood Association because they're already very active. Further discussion ensued that there are retail opportunities on Union Street and Park Street.

Walter Martone commented on page 6 he was not sure that we wanted to commit at this point to creating a full-blown marketing committee, he believed

that we should work together with these local economic development partners and perhaps do a committee later on if needed and we should say that we're working together with our local economic development partners.

Further discussion ensued that the Selectboard establishes formal committees to advise them and take certain actions and the Town Manager can chose to form an advisory group to work with him on marketing.

Walter Martone commented on page 7 in the sentence that says, Muckross State Park is an enormous and under exploited asset..." he requested that the word exploited be changed to underutilized.

Walter Martone commented that on page 9 there was a formatting error with the last numbers on the page.

Walter Martone commented on page 10 under D1 Asset Management Plan in the first paragraph second line it lists sidewalks and retaining walls and he wondered if it should also include parks and open spaces. Further discussion ensued that parks and open spaces were included more in the outdoor recreation space, and it would also be included in the asset management plan.

Walter Martone commented that on D1-3 the Town Manager made a good point regarding if there's a detour of less than a certain number of miles, should we be maintaining these things. Walter Martone added that that same thought they may also want to include roads that only have access to one property. Further discussion ensued that this concept was due to dairy farms and it's expensive to maintain them. Additional discussion ensued that the Public Works would likely support this but would receive less support from private property owners that would be affected, and roads are included in that.

Walter Martone commented on page 12 D5-2 and D5-3 Cemetery Commissions should have been Cemetery Commissioners.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus told the Board he would make these edits and provide a clean copy for the next meeting.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Everett Hammond as being absent.

Chair Kristi Morris thanked the Town Manager for his efforts on this.

ITEM #6 Discuss Selectboard budget policy

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Discuss Selectboard budget policy” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he included this item not only as it is required by the Charter, but also because it is very helpful in providing guidance to the department heads as they develop their budgets for FY25. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the following items should be considered:

The updated Strategic Plan.

In the FY24 budget, the Town budgeted for 13 patrol officers after budgeting for 11 in FY23. The full complement is 15 patrol officers. While the Town is able to provide 24/7 coverage, including on-call coverage, a return to 15 officers is recommended.

When setting the FY24 tax rate, the Selectboard used \$120,000 of remaining FY21 surplus funds to reduce the tax rate, leaving an available balance of \$80,000 that could be used for FY25.

Last year, the Town approved a bond issue for the second of three phases of the water project. Recently, in discussion with staff and our engineers, it was determined that the Town should wait one year before proceeding with the third phase.

While the Water Fund has over \$12,000,000 in long term debt, the Operating Fund has roughly \$800,000 in long term debt. This means that there is borrowing capacity to address major capital items. Possible items include Riverside Park (both infrastructure and facilities), new or renovated facilities for the Community Center and the Public Works garage, bridges, culverts, and roads.

Last year, health insurance premiums increased 12%. We've been told to expect them to increase another 12% to 13% this coming year, beginning January 1, 2024.

Other operating items to consider include the settlement of all four union contracts. On average, the annual cost of living increase is 4% for the next 2

years. Also, the cost of durable equipment and the delivery times have increased dramatically, this has put stress on each of our reserve funds to keep up with our capital replacement plans.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that last year when we did this item, they had an idea of what kind of target he should be looking for with our department heads. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that since he has been Manager consistently with townwide votes 67% or 70% approval on a budget is approving that level of services and he asked the department heads to budget for the same level of services. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that being said inflation, as we all know, was 8% last year and we kept our increase at 4.97%. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that inflation has come down but there's still some ground to makeup. Town Manager Jeff Mobus believed the target should be under 4% total but asked for input from the Board.

Michael Martin discussed that they discussed capping a budget on a fixed dollar amount versus a service amount and they had a long discussion about that last year, and he believed they all agreed that we did not want to cut services and that we want to maintain the same level of service, if possible.

MOTION: Michael Martin moved that we maintain our level of services and to try to establish a budget that doesn't exceed the 4% increase.

Seconded by: Walter Martone

Further discussion ensued that 5% and 3% had been suggested last year, and it would not be realistic to maintain our level of services at 3%. Additional discussion ensued that this was an overall goal and not an absolute target.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed the possibilities of deferring maintenance and another phrase for that being strategic disinvestment, noting that if there are assets that don't need to be fixed right away, they would be a lower priority because there are workarounds.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Everett Hammond as being absent.

Further discussion ensued that the Budget Advisory Committee could start meeting with the department heads in advance before the budgets are put

together after their organizational meeting and the department heads must return their budgets to the Town Manager by October 24, 2023.

Additional Discussion ensued regarding the surplus funds of FY21 where we budgeted for 15 police officers and only had 8, in FY22 we adjusted the budget accordingly for the number of positions in the Police Department. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he has been using surplus savings for one-time expenses. Town Manager Jeff Mobus provided an example that he plans on using vacancy savings that are occurring this year because we're still down 3 positions from the police department to help pay for the console. Town Manager Jeff Mobus noted that if there were unallocated funds, he would use it to reduce the tax rate to give people back their money.

ITEM #7 Possible action on Amended Blight Ordinance

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Possible action on Amended Blight Ordinance” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that the Public Hearing and 2nd Review of the amended Blight Ordinance was held immediately before this meeting.

This item was on the agenda should the Board opt to act on the ordinance

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to approve the amended Blight ordinance 2023-0002 as presented.

Seconded by: Crissy Webster

Chair Kristi Morris noted that they had the second of two public hearings on this ordinance earlier this evening.

Walter Martone noted that unless a petition is filed in accordance with State law this ordinance would become effective in 60 days and the petition must be submitted to the Town Clerk within 44 days.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Everett Hammond as being absent.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus took the opportunity to recognize our Town Clerk Barbara Courchesne. Chair Kristi Morris read the letter of recognition from the Vermont Municipal Clerk Treasurers Association (VMCTA):

September 15, 2023

Dear Springfield Selectboard,

It is with great pleasure that I write to tell you that your Town Clerk/ Town Treasurer received an award from the VMCTA at our Annual Awards Banquet in September.

Barbara Courchesne completed the requirements for Certified Vermont Treasurer and received her certificate, which I hope will be hung proudly in the office.

The Association's Certification Program was established in 1988 to:

- to first of all increased proficiency of Vermont municipal clerks and treasurers
- strengthen the quality of local government.
- afforded clerks and treasurers the recognition of their abilities to conduct the affairs of local government.
- provide a vehicle whereby clerks can attain the status of certified Lockhart and drivers can obtain the status of certified.

VMCTA's Advanced Certification was introduced nine years ago as a means to give Vermont Clerks and Treasurers the opportunity to continue with education in their profession and to receive recognition for their efforts. The certification program includes components of years of service; related municipal experience in the community; involvement in the VMCTA, country clerks' associations and local government; attendance at professional workshops and seminars at the state and regional levels; and taking advantage of other educational opportunities.

I hope you will join VMCTA in congratulating Barbara Courchesne on this well-deserved recognition.

Sincerely, sincerely,

Diane Judge, MMC, CBC CBT, president of the VMCTA

Michael Martin commented that it's truly a blessing to the Town of Springfield that we have somebody like Barbara Courchesne, who has been professional,

conscientious, and above reproach. Michael Martin continued that in every instance where he has had an opportunity to work with her, he has been pleased with the professionalism and love the service that he has received as a Selectboard member, and he believes that she provides the same service to everyone who walks through the door. Michael Martin added that he is thankful that she is beyond reproach when reading the news and we see some town clerks have gotten into trouble for some malfeasance. Michael Martin further added that this award is proof that we've got one of the best town clerks in the State of Vermont.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus commented that the Board knows the treasurer is a critical component of the checks and balances of the financial operation of the Town. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that the finance department prepares all the documents, but finance cannot expend any funds, only the town treasurer can expend funds. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that she performs her duty very diligently. Town Manager Jeff Mobus thanked Barbara Courchesne.

ITEM #8 Possible action on Repeal of Taxi Ordinance

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented that “Possible action on Repeal of Taxi Ordinance” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that the Public Hearing and 2nd Review of repealing the Taxi Ordinance was held immediately before this meeting.

This item was on the agenda should the Board opt to act on the ordinance

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to approve the repeal of Taxi ordinance 2023-0003 as presented.

Seconded by: Walter Martone

Chair Kristi Morris noted that they had the second of two public hearings on this ordinance earlier this evening and as with the Blight Ordinance there is a 44-day requirement to submit a petition to rescind and a 60-day waiting period before this goes into effect.

Walter Martone noted that Barbara Courchesne researched and provided the numbering for ordinances to keep our numbering consistent.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Everett Hammond as being absent.

ITEM #9 Possible action on Repeal of Rental Registry Ordinance

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Possible action on Repeal of Rental Registry Ordinance” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that the Public Hearing and 2nd Review of repealing the Rental Registry Ordinance was held immediately before this meeting.

This item was on the agenda should the Board opt to act on the ordinance.

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to approve the repeal of ordinance number 2023-0004 as amended repealing the rental registry ordinance.

Seconded by: Crissy Webster

Chair Kristi Morris noted that they had the second of two public hearings on this ordinance earlier this evening and as with the Blight Ordinance and the repeal of the Taxi ordinance there is a 44-day requirement to submit a petition to rescind and a 60-day waiting period before this goes into effect.

Michael Martin commented that they hear all the time that legislative bodies including ours are always adding barriers to people in development and infringing on their freedoms and here's a good example of our diligence in ensuring that we reduce the burden on some of our residents through the fact that we eliminated this registry and the fee associated with it.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Everett Hammond as being absent.

ITEM #10 Act on Updating Systemic vacancy policy

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Act on Updating Systemic vacancy policy” item was not included in the meeting packet and was added to the agenda at the time of the meeting. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that last year, the Federal Government added two requirements necessary to

obtain a commercial driver's license CDL. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that anyone wishing to obtain a CDL now has to successfully complete driver training from a Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration approved trainer and this is very costly, several \$1,000. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that as a result, it has become much more difficult to hire CDL drivers not just for the Town but for any entity that employs CDL drivers.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that last year he approved a hiring bonus of \$7,500 for new hires who already have a CDL, and he should have updated the policy last year to reflect this change. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the Town currently has three open positions that we are trying to fill before winter. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that he is asking the Board to update the policy with the new schedule of bonuses.

Chair Kristi Morris inquired if we have had drivers already that this bonus has been extended to. Town Manager Jeff Mobus confirmed and added that this is updating what we have been doing into the policy that was overlooked before.

Further discussion ensued that addendum "A" reflected the \$7,500 bonus and the wording of the policy did not change.

MOTION: Crissy Webster moved to approve the systemic vacancy policy specifically addendum "A" which is a commercial driver's license hiring bonus of \$7,500.

Seconded by: Walter Martone

Further discussion ensued that this bonus was not new they were just updating the existing policy to reflect this bonus.

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Everett Hammond as being absent.

E. FINANCIAL REPORTS

FY2024 Warrants to October 6, 2023 – copies on website.

Town Manager, Jeff Mobus stated that any questions regarding these warrants should be directed to the Finance Director, Cathy Sohngen.

F. MANAGER'S REPORT

Town Manager Jeff Mobus presented the “Manager’s Report” item included in the meeting packet. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that it has been a very busy and difficult couple of weeks for the Town's infrastructure and facilities. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the Town has temporarily closed Velma Street due to a washout and the Town has also temporarily closed a bridge on Greeley Road after receiving a report recommending that the bridge be closed for safety reasons. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that the heating system at the Community Center is not working and cannot be used until a number of repairs are made.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that there is better news on Eureka Road where the installation of the new culvert has been repaired and the road has been opened to vehicular traffic. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that also in the good news category, the Wayfinding signs should be installed by the end of the month, completing a project begun three years ago.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus provided a quick update on the Toonerville Trail Extension. Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that last week he met with representatives of Springfield Development Corporation, Mount Ascutney Regional Commission, and private property owners to move the project forward. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that it looks like all parties are agreed on the plans for the project and the next steps are to complete the easements and obtain Act 250 approval.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he has worked with Nate Fraser, Superintendent of Wastewater, on a Request for Public Assistance. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that during the July flooding, a sewer main was damaged. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that with assistance from Gurney Brothers, the main was temporarily fixed in July and the final repair will be completed any day. Town Manager Jeff Mobus continued that the total cost is roughly \$25,000 and we are hoping to receive assistance for 75% of this cost.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that he has met with the Cemetery Commission and the Airport Commission to discuss concerns and possible steps forward to address those concerns and he also met with the Inclusion

Committee to discuss some of their concerns. Town Manager Jeff Mobus thanked all the commissioners and committee members of all three entities for their service to Springfield.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that the Town has posted requests for bids for two properties in town that we're looking to sell, 151 Wall Street which was a property that we obtained via tax sale and 188 Wall Street which is a property we received as part of a judgment. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that the information for these two properties is on the Town's website.

Further discussion ensued to clarify that the bridge on Greeley Road mentioned was the first bridge closest to Eureka Road, before Bugbee Road.

G. FUTURE AGENDA ITEM PROPOSALS

Crissy Webster requested an updated list on what the matches were for grants that we have committed to for 2024 and for 2025 for the budget. Town Manager Jeff Mobus confirmed and added that he would also give them a list of funds that we have encumbered for certain purposes too.

Walter Martone discussed the Regional Priority Project Nominations. Walter Martone added that in the past, this has been done routinely by our organizations like SRDC (Springfield Regional Development Corp) and MARC (Mount Ascutney Regional Commission). Walter Martone further added that the process is now open for new projects to be added and it's been impressed upon him that suddenly being a nominated project on this has much more importance as far as priority funding. Walter Martone continued that he thought it was important that the Selectboard weigh in on these and at the next meeting in October they could act as a Board to nominate projects to the list.

Further discussion ensued that the Board has not put their input in the past on projects and the Town Manager has been nominating projects. Additional discussion ensued that the review of projects is done by MARCs Regional Transportation Committee that Chair Kristi Morris is a liaison of.

Walter Martone noted that at the last MARC meeting it was mentioned that there are new funding sources that can be used which will provide more

opportunities. Walter Martone added that the deadline is November 3, 2023, for submissions.

Further discussion ensued regarding involving the Public Works and Wastewater Treatment Plant departments in the discussions.

Town Manager Jeff Mobus discussed that the more immediate concern at the treatment plant is the composting facility which is at the end of life, and the State requirements and testing standards are changing so drastically we would have to change how we're treating anyway, but it's not going to be cheap. Town Manager Jeff Mobus added that he and Nate Fraser are looking at considering going to a regional facility and then charging other communities to participate with us and the State is trying to encourage a few regional facilities and that may give us very attractive funding packages based on that. Town Manager Jeff Mobus further added that Nate Fraser offered to provide the Selectboard with a tour of the treatment plant also. The Board was receptive to this offer.

H. COMMITTEE REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Walter Martone discussed that the Inclusion Committee asked him to provide a handout for VLCT (Vermont League of Cities and Towns) they are looking for participation of towns in a Welcoming and Engaging Communities Program. Walter Martone added that normally it would be something that the Inclusion Committee would be interested in doing, however, for a town to participate in it the members that we designate have to be from the Selectboard members, department heads, or the Town Manager. Walter Martone continued that as a Selectboard member he is the only member of the Inclusion Committee that qualifies as this, but he did not feel he would be an appropriate choice as his term is going to run out before this project.

Crissy Webster announced the new bleachers at Riverside and urged residents to go and see them. Crissy Webster added that the bleachers are really nice and are ADA accessible. Crissy Webster added that they have received a lot of positive comments on them. Crissy Webster announced that Thursday (10/12/2023) is the Booster Club's first annual golf tournament. Crissy Webster

noted that the funds were for the Booster Club donating \$23,000 towards the bleachers and this tournament was supposed to happen in July but was delayed.

I. OTHER MINUTES & CORRESPONDENCE

Chair Morris read aloud the list of Other Minutes and Correspondence and noted these are all available online.

1. Connecticut River Conservancy – Letter of September 27, 2023
2. Myrton Graham – Letter of October 2, 2023
3. Springfield Airport Commission – Minutes of August 24, 2023
4. Springfield Cemetery Commission – Minutes of October 4, 2023
5. Springfield Inclusion Committee – Minutes of September 26, 2023
6. Springfield Senior Center – October 2023 newsletter
7. Springfield Town Library – Library Director’s report for September 2023
8. Springfield Trails & Rural Economy Committee
– Minutes of September 28, 2023
9. Vermont League of Cities & Towns
– Memorandum of September 15, 2023

Further discussion ensued that the Vermont League of Cities & Towns Memorandum deals with a new unemployment mandate for small nonprofits.

J. CITIZENS’ COMMENTS

No citizens’ comments at the time of the meeting.

K. ADJOURN

MOTION: Michael Martin moved to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by: Crissy Webster

Vote: 4-0, unanimous, recognizing Everett Hammond as being absent.

The meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Carrie M. Kellow, Recording Secretary