

1 **SELECTBOARD MEETING**

2 February 1, 2023

3 Attending the meeting; Merrily Lovell, Maggie Gordon, Mike Loner, Dennis Place, Joy Dubin Grossman,  
4 Joe Gannon, Karen Tronsgard-Scott, Kate Webster, Miles Hickok

5 Attending remotely; Phil Pouech, Jennifer Decker, Dr. Jude Smith-Rachele

6 Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. via zoom

7 Agenda Additions or Deletions

8 none

9 Public Comment

10 none

11 Approve Minutes of 1/18

12 Maggie moved to approve the minutes of 1/18 as amended. Seconded by Mike and approved with 5 yes  
13 votes.

14 Selectboard Forum

15 Phil referred to the resolution by the Burlington Council regarding the funding structure for Green Mtn  
16 Transit. He will include a resolution for the Board to consider in the Board's packet for the next  
17 meeting.

18 Town Health Officer Interview – Joe Gannon

19 Joe said he reviewed the Statutes and noted a major change since he served as Health Officer 5 years  
20 ago. That was regarding the fact that the Health Officer is no longer a Humane Officer. Joe noted any  
21 Police Officer is also a Humane Officer. Merrily said the Police have dealt with vicious dog problems in  
22 the past. Joe added he will continue reviewing the Statutes to see if anything else has changed.

23 Maggie moved to appoint Joe Gannon as Town Health Officer effective 3/1/2023 and expiring  
24 4/30/2025. Seconded by Mike.

25 Phil thanked Joe for taking this on again and noted if he needs assistance with any difficult cases to  
26 reach out to the Town Manager and Selectboard for support.

27 Jennifer Decker asked Joe if he has a basic grounding in diversity, equity and inclusion issues and how  
28 that might influence his role. Jennifer asked Joe to stay for the presentation to learn how people in  
29 Hinesburg feel about belonging and equity issues in Town. Joe said he would stay and added this is a  
30 continuous examination for everyone. In his past training as an EMT they have trained on those issues.

31 Motion voted and approved with 5 yes votes.

32 Presentation of Hinesburg Inclusion & Belonging Survey Results – Dr. Jude Smith Rachele

Dr. Jude Smith-Rachele shared a presentation of the survey results from the Welcoming and Engaging Communities Cohort. She said the hypothesis they were working with was;

- the wellbeing of municipal staff in Vermont is not being addressed fully
- Vt municipalities may be overlooking significant diversity challenges that do not relate to race and ethnicity
- the volunteer model of governance may be creating a barrier to understanding and to advance diversity, equity and inclusion work in Vermont

Overall Hinesburg scored better than the other 7 towns in the cohort with some areas that can be improved on.

Phil said he likes the idea of also looking at the economic piece when we talk about inclusion, diversity and equity.

#### Consider Approval of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee Charter

Mike shared the draft of the charter. Maggie asked about removing the term “shall” under the mission heading saying she feels it is too strong to say you have to do something rather than can or should. Also, under core values she noted the term “recognizing” really is not a value. Mike said the committee recognizes the humanity of everyone in Hinesburg and this is saying they hope that everyone in the Town also does that.

Jennifer shared her concern that there are many people in Hinesburg engaged in DEI issues who don’t feel like a top down approach is going to be the way we will resolve these issues. She feels this needs a lot more time as the people most impacted by a board and a policy have not been consulted or surveyed. She feels more time is needed to be sure the language is reflective of the goals of the community.

Mike explained the DEI workgroup worked with a consultant and are trying to get the Selectboard to commit to creating a committee that will start doing a number of the things Jennifer mentioned such as surveying the Town to hear from more people.

The draft document was put on the screen to share so those who could not access it on the website could read it.

Mike moved the Selectboard adopt the proposed Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee Charter to be edited. Seconded by Dennis and approved with 5 yes votes.

#### Discussion of Proposed Changes to Boards, Committees, and Commission Application

Mike reviewed the changes made to the application.

Merrily said she feels the current application is fine and that it is important they look at the Town Plan. This is a working document which is supposed to guide the work in the Town.

Miles asked what the relevance is to the Town Plan. Merrily asked him if he has looked at the Town Plan. He has not. He said areas they looked at was being able to access the local government and volunteer. They were not convinced the Town Plan was a requirement for applying. It is a large document and seems like a barrier and difficult to read for someone who is not familiar with it. Merrily

70 mentioned when she applied for the Conservation Commission, she looked at the table of contents to  
71 see what areas applied to the Conservation Commission and read that. She found it very valuable and  
72 does not think there is a committee for whom the Town Plan does not apply.

73 Mike said the Town Plan is thick and difficult for some people to comprehend what is in it, so it could be  
74 a barrier to some who do not have a reading level past grade 8.

75 Merrily said they have had applicants skip that question and it has not been a problem

76 Maggie used the example of someone wanting to work on trails and join the trails committee but they  
77 don't bother when they see the application. Maggie said she like the question about the mission  
78 statement and feels that is important. Maggie said she would be willing to drop the question about the  
79 Town Plan for all appointments except the Planning Commission and DRB. The Planning Commission  
80 writes the Town Plan and regulations and the DRB uses those regulations as they review development.

81 Karen said the committee thought about the document as a gateway to bring more diverse people into  
82 committee work in our community.

83 Mike said all applications still come before the Selectboard which can ask pertinent questions for that  
84 committee.

85 Merrily suggested an applicant could meet with the chair of the committee they are interested in and go  
86 over how the Town Plan applies to the committee's work and the mission statement.

87 Karen said that the application could include a message that some committees require you to  
88 understand the Town Plan and for some committees it is a good idea to take a look at the Town Plan.

89 Maggie said we want to make it as easy as possible for people to join committees.

90 Kate said they also want to bring in a younger demographic and a 30 page document is not something  
91 the younger demographic is going to dive into while they might be very eager to participate in other  
92 Town activities.

93 Jennifer said the conversation about the Town Plan on one hand said it is too complicated – could we  
94 have a simpler version. She said for some people reading the Town Plan could be triggering because it  
95 might not have been created with DEI values and when inviting people to be part of an overall mission  
96 but say you have to adhere to all these things that were decided without your voice people may be  
97 offended. She also asked if the application addresses DEI values for all committees. She wondered if  
98 the process of creating the new application by the workgroup has been transparent to the community.

99 Merrily read the question about the Town Plan on the current application noting the applicant is being  
100 asked to read just one page.

101 Phil said he feels the application as presented is fine, it can be modified if needed in the future.

102 Dennis said he thinks it is appropriate for people to read the Town Plan as it relates to whatever  
103 committee they are applying for. It is important to understand the committee mission and goals and if  
104 needed they can talk with the chair of the committee.

105 Phil said the point of the change is to get someone to come and volunteer that the Board might not  
106 know at all who wants to help Hinesburg. While he has always thought the question about the Town  
107 Plan is a good one it does not necessarily have to be on the application.

108 Dennis said listening to the points Phil made he is now fine with the change.

109 Merrily said she is still not in favor of the change.

110 Phil moved to approve, at least for the next year, using this new application for Town commissions,  
111 boards and committee appointments. Seconded by Mike.

112 Kate suggested the DEI committee add something to one of the questions about the mission of the  
113 committee and how the applicant can serve the Town, or something similar. She suggested the  
114 committee tweak the wording in the application and bring it back to the Selectboard.

115 Phil said he is willing to withdraw his motion if the committee is willing to make that modification and  
116 bring back to the next Selectboard meeting.

117 Approve Warrants and Payroll

118 Maggie moved to approve the warrants signed by herself and Merrily, including payroll, as submitted by  
119 the Town Treasurer. Seconded by Mike and approved with 5 yes votes.

120 Adjourn

121 Maggie moved to adjourn at 8:06 p.m., seconded by Mike and approved with 5 yes votes.

122

123 Respectfully submitted,

124 Valerie Spadaccini, clerk of the Board