



## SELECTBOARD

(802) 247-6455

Town of Goshen

50 Carlisle Hill Road | Goshen, Vermont 05733

selectboard@goshenvt.org | [goshenvt.org](http://goshenvt.org)

### Selectboard Informational Meeting

11/4/23

**Selectboard members present:** Thomasina Magoon, Tammy Walsh, Bill Mathis

**Members of the public present:** Timmi Moffi, Jeff and Vicki Whiting, Ben Lawton, Chad and Morgan Beckwith, Fran Viko, Madine Reed, Susie Rider, Judith Murphy, Claudette Lawton, Tim Robinson, Kendra Lawton-Robinson, Joanna Bagnulo, Bob West, Michelle Davis, Diane Witt, Ranada Gomez, Elia Gomez, Vicki Whiting, Jeff Whiting

### Goshen Ballot Items for 2024:

The selectboard will be putting forth a number of ballot items to be brought forward at the next election regarding changes to certain elected positions. As the town does not currently have a town charter through the state legislature, it is only required that these changes be warned and then put forward on the ballot. They are as follows:

#### ROLE OF TREASURER

#### **Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to appoint a town treasurer as provided in 17 V.S.A. Sec. 2651f?**

The reasoning for this change is that finding a qualified and experienced person for the treasurer position, who must be a town resident as is currently required, is becoming exceedingly difficult. Allowing the selectboard to appoint and dismiss a town treasurer will make it possible to hire a professional from within or outside of the town of Goshen.

To the question of what the treasurer currently earns, the current salary for our town treasurer is around \$10,000/year. Vicki Whiting states that moving the treasurer role from an elected to an appointed position is becoming common across the state as many towns like ours struggle to find a qualified candidate from within their municipality. To the question of how much time is worked per week by the treasurer, the treasurer position works between 10-20 hours/week depending on the time of year. Our town has been applying for more grants in the last year and there is significantly more involvement required by the treasurer to track and record.

Magoon states that the town is at the top of the list for the MERP grant which will provide significant insulation and heating upgrades for the town hall and office.

Vicki Whiting states that following the money market to make efficient financial decisions is a necessary skill for a future treasurer. Mathis emphasizes that the complexity of the financial paperwork for the treasurer will require a person of experience.

Discussion ensues regarding salary of the treasurer and whether it is lucrative enough to hire and retain a qualified professional. Magoon states that the priority for the selectboard with this change is to increase the hiring pool so that a qualified candidate can be hired.



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Jeff Whiting states that Vicki Whiting had retired from this role and had agreed to serve as treasurer until the next town meeting to allow the selectboard to find the next treasurer.

### ROLE OF AUDITORS

**Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to eliminate the office of town auditors as provided in 17 V.S.A. Sec 2651b?**

**The selectboard shall contract with a public accountant licensed in the State to perform an annual financial audit of all funds of the town...**

As with the role of treasurer, finding qualified applicants for the role of auditor is becoming very difficult for smaller towns in Vermont and small towns are now making changes to eliminate the role of auditor in favor of contracting with a certified public accountant to perform an annual outside audit.

Reider questions who will be in charge of the town report if the role of auditor is eliminated. Magoon states that the town report is not required by state statute to be completed by the auditors role and that the selectboard has the discretion to make the appointments to complete the work. Discussion ensues on the merits of a paper town report. Magoon states that an outside firm would be conducting an outside audit once a year which would provide the financial report of the town. Viko states that having worked in the role for many years she would highly recommend an outside audit.

Discussion ensues regarding the timeframe for turning in time sheets, which is currently set to be turned in no later than 60 days. An outside auditor would go over all of the timesheets when reviewing the financials.

The current budget for auditors is set at \$4,000/yr divided between all three roles, Vicki Whiting states that an outside audit would likely cost the town \$3-4,000/yr.

### ROLE OF CONSTABLE

**Shall the voters authorize the Selectboard to eliminate the office of constables as provided in 17 V.S.A. Sec 2651a?**

**The selectboard shall appoint an Animal Control Officer to perform any duties pertaining to animal or dog policy/stray dog/unlicensed issues in town, as per the Goshen Dog Ordinance.**

The constable position has become an antiquated role as they are not trained in policing nor do they have the authority to enforce the law as they have not taken the state police training. Eliminating the role of constable and appointing an animal control officer will save the town the fees of bonding our constables. With the authority to appoint an animal control officer, the selectboard can oversee that the proper trainings for the role are adhered to. The duties of the constable will be discharged to the role of animal control officer if the role of constable is eliminated.



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Judith Murphy asks who would be contacted in lieu of contacting the constable. One would call 911 or Vermont State Police in lieu of calling a constable, as the town constable would typically be relaying an emergency situation to these same emergency services. Police services are required by law to respond, whether it is State Police or a relevant local police agency.

Discussion ensues regarding paying for a policing agency. Whiting reports that the Addison County Sheriff is currently contracted to perform 10 hours of patrolling per month by the National Forest Service to patrol the parking lots of National Forest trailheads.

Constables current salary is at \$2,000/yr, with a bonding cost of \$1,500/yr. Paying an animal control officer would be set at \$1,500/yr.

Magoon states that the selectboard will look into what other towns our size are doing. The question of why we were approached by the town of Brandon to create a contract with their Police Department was raised.

Respectfully submitted by:

Martin Fjeld, Selectboard Clerk  
Town Clerk of Goshen