Selectboard members present: Kate O’Connor, Brandie Starr, Tim Wessel, and David Schoales.

Staff Present: Town Manager Peter Elwell, Assistant Town Manager Patrick Moreland, Finance Director John O’Connor, Library Director Starr LaTronica, Police Chief Michael Fitzgerald, Fire Chief Mike Bucossi, Assistant Fire Chief Len Howard, Police Captain Mark Carignan, Recreation & Parks Director Carol Lolatte, Town Clerk Hilary Francis, others who did not sign the attendance sheet, and Executive Secretary Jan Anderson.

Media present: Chris Mays representing the Brattleboro Reformer and BCTV staff and volunteers.

Others present: Nick Nickerson, George Harvey, Libby Bennett, Ellen Schwartz, Pierre Landry, Thomas Zopf, Kelly Junno, Amar Langsdorf, Sharon Couturier, Michael Bosworth, Phoebe Gooding, RoseAnn Grimes, Kathleen White, Chris Lioveuse, Dick DeGray, Franz Reichsman, Tim Maciel, Brenda Siegel, Jim Levinson, Mara Lizer, Jim Freeman, ASL interpreters Janet Dickinson and Elizabeth Fox, and others who did not sign the attendance sheet.

Chair O’Connor called the meeting to order at 5:45pm. She confirmed that the meeting was properly warned.

MOTION BY KATE O’CONNOR TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS CONTRACTS, LABOR RELATIONS AGREEMENTS WITH EMPLOYEES, AND THE NEGOTIATING OR SECURING OF REAL ESTATE PURCHASE OR LEASE OPTIONS, WHERE THE BOARD HAS DETERMINED THAT PREMATURE GENERAL PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE WOULD CLEARLY PLACE THE SELECTBOARD AND THE PEOPLE INVOLVED AT A SUBSTANTIAL DISADVANTAGE. THE TOWN MANAGER AND ASSISTANT TOWN MANAGER WERE INVITED TO ATTEND. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

Chair O’Connor reconvened the meeting at 6:18pm.

APPROVE MINUTES

MOTION BY DAVE SCHOALES TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 3, 2017. MOTION CARRIED 3-0 (WESSEL ABSTAINED).

O’Connor noted that only four Board members were present and in order for a matter to pass, any motion would require a favorable vote from at least three members. She also noted that a vote of 2 to 2 would not contain a majority of the Board and would not pass.

CHAIR’S REMARKS
None.

MANAGER’S COMMENTS
Town Manager Elwell presented information on a question that had been raised at the last meeting about the proper procedure to dispose of sharps (syringes and needles). He noted that neither the Town nor the State accepted sharps at their facilities, but that the State Department of Health had on its website more specific information and detailed instructions. He recommended that people with concerns visit the Health Department’s website. He also noted that the Town Manager’s Office had copies of a flyer for distribution that was published by the State.

SELECTBOARD COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS
Wessel spoke of the community “highs and lows” over the weekend. He spoke about an outpouring of
support for Stanley Lynde [who recently passed away after a motorcycle accident]. He noted the amount of love that Lynde had for the community and that the community had for him. He also mentioned the Literary Festival that took place over the weekend. He said that the weekend was full of life and the celebration of life.

Starr spoke about the community support for Stanley Lynde and said there was a lesson to be learned from Lynde, where the participants in his memorial were from all walks of life, being business people, community members from both sides of the isle, law enforcement, people from The Wall, and a mixture of people from every circle that captured a moment where the community stood together. She said there was a lesson to be learned.

Schoales spoke of another bittersweet event in Brattleboro over the weekend which was a rally in Pliny Park in support of Mamadou Bah. Bah was a community member with a family who was in the process of applying for citizenship, but the process was interrupted and he was scheduled to be deported. Schoales said that Pliny Park was full of energetic people in support of Bah. He also spoke of a “nugget of an idea” that he was forming after attending a meeting of the Diverse Workforce Committee. He suggested employing a person to develop collaboration between the State, Town and School to match prospective employees with open jobs. He said that the School District recently employed a social worker to connect low income families with available support. He suggested that the Board could discuss it further during upcoming budget discussions.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
Nick Nickerson said that he did not notice any celebrations that took place for Indigenous Peoples’ Day. He spoke briefly about the history of humankind and said that he hoped for more celebration in the future. Starr briefly discussed a ceremony for Indigenous Peoples’ Day that took place in Pliny Park. She said she hoped that celebrations would build in years to come.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
Police-Fire Facilities Project – Update. Town Manager Elwell discussed the ongoing renovations to the Central Fire Station and the progress of the demolition at the old West Brattleboro Fire Station. He also discussed the financial portion of his report included in his memorandum dated October 13, 2017. Dick DeGray inquired about the use of uncommitted funds left from the bond proceeds after the project was completed. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

NO ACTION TAKEN.
Panhandling – Informational Sign (deferred from September 19 and October 3 meetings). O’Connor summarized discussions at past Selectboard meetings about an informational sign that was proposed to be posted on Town properties. She said that since the last meeting, staff redrafted the sign after receiving comments from members of the public and both drafts were included in the Board’s back-up materials. She read aloud the October 17 draft version of the sign. Many members of the public - Ellen Schwartz, Nick Nickerson, Brenda Siegel, Mara Lizer, Jim Levinson, Dick DeGray, Tom Zopf, and Kelly Junno - provided their comments and opinions. Schoales said he would vote in favor of the sign because members of the community were asking the Board to take action. O’Connor said that she was opposed to the sign because it was polarizing and that the Town was taking other actions to address the problem. Wessel said that although he had been opposed to a sign previously, he was in favor of the October 17 version because it was a positive way to provide information and address the issue. He also encouraged continuance of the other four initiatives that had previously been approved. Starr indicated that she was not in favor of a sign because she would rather organize and facilitate discussions between people who were panhandling, merchants, and other interested people, and that a sign would not start the conversation.

MOTION BY TIM WESSEL TO APPROVE THE OCTOBER 17 VERSION OF THE ‘PANHANDLING” SIGN. MOTION WAS DEFEATED 2-2 (WESSEL AND SCHOALES IN FAVOR, O’CONNOR AND STARR OPPOSED).
O’Connor and Wessel asked Police Chief Fitzgerald for an update on the outreach task force. Fitzgerald said that the outreach team had been in place for over a month and went out into the community five times. He said that the team spoke to the people who were panhandling, was building a rapport, inquired about their needs, and was “moving at the speed of trust.” He also noted that he was getting responses from other agencies who were offering their expertise, which would allow forward movement in a positive manner, assist with gathering data, and streamline the services. He then stated that calling the police was not a negative action and the police could deal with the complainant and the person who was the source of the complaint, recognizing that officers could get help or provide recommendations for caseworkers, case managers, agencies, or other resources.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Municipal Center Rental and Improvements – State of Vermont’s Letter of Intent.** O’Connor announced that the State of Vermont was interested in renting space in the Municipal Center for State offices. She said that Christopher Cole, Commissioner of Buildings and General Services for the State of Vermont, executed a “Letter of Intent to Lease Space in the Brattleboro Municipal Center” and the Board was asked to authorize Town Manager Elwell to execute the Letter of Intent on behalf of the Town. Elwell spoke about the conceptual agreement between the parties and said that a lease may be available by the end of the year and the project would be contingent on approval from Representative Town Meeting in March, 2018. He said that the anticipated completion date would be July, 2019. Dick DeGray suggested applying excess money from the Police-Fire Facilities Project to the Municipal Center Upgrade Project. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

**MOTION BY BRANDIE STARR TO AUTHORIZE TOWN MANAGER ELWELL TO EXECUTE THE “LETTER OF INTENT TO LEASE SPACE IN THE BRATTLEBORO MUNICIPAL CENTER” AND TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE STATE OF VERMONT REGARDING SPECIFIC TERMS OF A LEASE.**

**MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

**Financial Report – Monthly Report, September.** Finance Director John O’Connor discussed the September, 2017 financial report. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

**NO ACTION TAKEN.**

**FY17 Year-End Financial Report – Final But Unaudited.** Town Manager Elwell discussed the final report of revenues and expenditures for FY17, as set forth in Finance Director O’Connor’s memorandum dated September 8, 2017. Finance Director O’Connor clarified the difference between the non-spendable, committed, and unassigned fund balances. Franz Reichsman (speaking for Dick DeGray who had to leave the meeting) suggested that the Board “do a better job of aligning the budget with the results.” Elwell spoke about the reasons for the differences, including substantial savings realized in the retirement and benefit items that were results from changes made to those programs mid-year. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

**NO ACTION TAKEN.**

**Long Term Financial Plan – Update for FY19-FY23.** Elwell spoke about the updated Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP). He discussed in detail the information contained in the LTFP dated October 12, 2017, as well as its relationship to the upcoming FY19 budget discussions. There was much discussion by the Board.

**NO ACTION TAKEN.**

Chair O’Connor recessed the meeting at 8:30pm for a five-minute break. She reconvened the meeting at 8:35pm.
**Winter Sand for 2017-2018 Season – Award Bid, Department of Public Works.** Elwell said that the Board was asked to award the bid for winter sand for the 2017-2018 winter season to Zaluzny Excavating, from Vernon, Vermont, in the amount of $8.70 per cubic yard delivered by Zaluzny Excavating, as set forth in the memorandum dated October 4, 2017, from Public Works Director Steve Barrett.

**MOTION BY DAVE SCHOALES TO AWARD THE BID FOR WINTER SAND FOR THE 2017-2018 WINTER SEASON TO ZALUZNY EXCAVATING, IN THE AMOUNT OF $8.70 PER CUBIC YARD DELIVERED. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

**Recommendation for Interim Replacement of Ladder Truck – Fire Department.** Elwell said that the Board was asked to approve staff’s recommendation to purchase a 1993 aerial ladder truck from Minuteman Fire and Rescue Apparatus, Inc., of Walpole, Massachusetts, for $35,000. He said that the Town’s 1991 aerial ladder truck required repairs that would cost more than $67,800. He said that Sharon, Massachusetts was purchasing a new ladder truck and Brattleboro could purchase the trade-in ladder truck which was in substantially better condition than the Town’s 1991 vehicle, as set forth in a memorandum dated September 28, 2017, from Fire Chief Mike Bucossi and Assistant Fire Chief Leonard Howard. He said that purchasing a new ladder truck would be part of the upcoming budget discussions. Franz Reichsman, from the Finance Committee, suggested re-applying for a grant to purchase a new vehicle. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

**MOTION BY TIM WESSEL TO APPROVE (1) TRANSFER OF $35,000 TO THE CAPITAL FUND FROM THE FIRE DEPARTMENT OPERATING ACCOUNTS IN THE GENERAL FUND, AND (2) EXPENDITURE OF $35,000 FROM THE CAPITAL FUND TO PURCHASE A 1993 105-FOOT AERIAL LADDER TRUCK FROM MINUTEMAN FIRE AND RESCUE APPARATUS, INC., OF WALPOLE, MASSACHUSETTS. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

**Gibson Aiken Center Window Replacement – Plan for Completion of Multi-Year Project.** Elwell said that the Board was asked to approve a quote of $11,200 to Vermont Vinyl to replace the remaining 14 windows located in the Gibson Aiken Senior Center. He said that the window replacement project was scheduled to be completed next year but Recreation & Parks Director Lolatte received a favorable bid for the remaining windows and, if approved, would complete the project early with a draw-down of $6,720 from the current capital fund and cut a $30,000 expenditure from the 2018/2019 Capital Budget, all as set forth in the memorandum, dated October 6, 2017, from Recreation & Parks Director Lolatte. There was no discussion by the Board.

**MOTION BY BRANDIE STARR TO APPROVE A QUOTE OF $11,200 TO VERMONT VINYL TO REPLACE THE REMAINING 14 WINDOWS LOCATED IN THE GIBSON AIKEN SENIOR CENTER. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

**State Farm Good Neighbor Grant – Approve Grant Application, Recreation & Parks Department for BASIC (Brattleboro Area Skatepark is Coming).** Elwell said that the Board was asked to approve the application by Recreation & Parks Department on behalf of BASIC (Brattleboro Area Skatepark Is Coming) for a $20,000 Good Neighbor Citizenship Company Grant from State Farm to help pay for design and construction of a Skatepark located at Living Memorial Park. There was no discussion by the Board.

**MOTION BY DAVE SCHOALES TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION BY RECREATION & PARKS DEPARTMENT ON BEHALF OF BASIC (BRATTLEBORO AREA SKATEPARK IS COMING) FOR A $20,000 GOOD NEIGHBOR CITIZENSHIP COMPANY GRANT FROM STATE FARM. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

**Tarrant Foundation Grant – Approve Grant Application, Recreation & Parks Department for BASIC (Brattleboro Area Skatepark is Coming).** Elwell said that the Board was asked to approve the application by Recreation & Parks Department on behalf of BASIC (Brattleboro Area Skatepark Is Coming) for a
$50,000 Tarrant Foundation Grant to help pay for design and construction of a Skatepark located at Living Memorial Park. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

**MOTION BY TIM WESSEL TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION BY RECREATION & PARKS DEPARTMENT ON BEHALF OF BASIC (BRATTLEBORO AREA SKATEPARK IS COMING) FOR A $50,000 GRANT FROM THE RICHARD E. AND DEBORAH L. TARRANT FOUNDATION. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.**

Ordinance to Ban Single-Use Plastic Bags – First Reading. O’Connor said that the Board was asked to hold a first reading on a proposed ordinance to regulate single-use plastic bags. Assistant Town Manager Moreland spoke about previous discussions by the Board where the Board indicated a preference that the definition of a “single-use plastic bag” would be those bags with a thickness of 1.0 mil or less, and he presented a draft ordinance including the 1 mil thickness. Tim Maciel noted that he created the petition that brought the matter to a public vote and he spoke in favor of having an outright ban of plastic bags or, in the alternative, defining them with a thickness of at least 2.5 to 3 mil. He said that 1 mil would be meaningless and that the voters were given instructions indicating a 3 mil thickness (although that was not part of the petition). He said that Brattleboro would be the first municipality in Vermont to adopt such a ban and said it should be a bold statement and set an example for other communities. Several people in the audience – Roseann Grimes, Jim Freeman, George Harvey, Nick Nickerson, and Kathleen White – offered their opinions and spoke in favor of adopting a ban of bags much thicker than 1 mil or having an outright ban. There was much discussion by Board and some members indicated they may want to change the definition after having more time to research the matter. The Board agreed to hold a second reading and public hearing on the proposed ordinance with a 1 mil thickness at the next regular meeting, and would suggest changes, if any, at that time. If the ordinance was changed at the next meeting, another second reading and public hearing would be required.

**NO MOTION WAS OFFERED.**

**Energy Conservation Matters –**

(i) Energy Committee’s Annual Report
(ii) Energy Committee’s Downtown Brattleboro Building Energy Program
(iii) Staff Report re: Potential Full-Time Energy Coordinator or Sustainability Officer

(i) Members from the Energy Committee – Michael Bosworth, Kathleen White, and George Harvey, along with Energy Coordinator Phoebe Gooding, were present and provided a PowerPoint presentation with the Committee’s annual report, including future recommendations, a copy of which was included in the Board’s back-up materials. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

**NO ACTION TAKEN.**

(ii) Bosworth said that the Committee was asking the Board to endorse the Downtown Brattleboro Building Energy Program (DBBEP) that had been presented to the Board at a recent meeting. He said that the Committee continued to look for an entity to shepherd the program but was asking for the Board’s letter of support at this time to include with a grant application. The letter would be similar to the letters of support provided by the State’s Department of Housing and Community Development and Efficiency Vermont that were included in the Board’s back-up materials. O’Connor mentioned that the Board authorized a letter of support last spring, when Tad Montgomery submitted the program to a previous funding source, stating that the program aligned with the Town Plan. There was much discussion by the Board, including support for the mission of the program, questions and concerns about the program and budget, and confusion over the program structure.

**MOTION BY BRANDIE STARR TO DIRECT THE TOWN MANAGER TO SEND A LETTER THAT IS SIMILAR TO THE ONE THAT WAS SUBMITTED LAST SPRING ON BEHALF OF THIS PROGRAM APPLICATION AND OTHER PROGRAM APPLICATIONS THAT WERE APPLYING THROUGH THE**
SAME PROGRAM, WITH THE ADDITION OF LANGUAGE STATING THAT THE BRATTLEBORO SELECTBOARD IS PLEASED TO SUPPORT THE GOALS OF THE DOWNTOWN BRATTLEBORO BUILDING ENERGY PROGRAM TO ACHIEVE STRATEGIC AND FOCUSED ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS IN AREAS OF NEED IN THE TOWN OF BRATTLEBORO. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.

(iii) O’Connor suggested, and the Board agreed, that the matter of a full-time Energy Coordinator or Sustainability Officer be held at the time of budget discussions.

NO FURTHER ACTION WAS TAKEN.

Employee Health Insurance Program -- Renewal for Calendar Year 2018. Elwell said that the Board was asked to approve changes to the Town’s health insurance program that would increase the deductible for employees to $3,500 for single coverage and $7,000 for family coverage while the Town would continue to pay for all claims in the space above $1,500 for single coverage and $3,000 for family coverage (up to the new deductible levels, above which all claims would be paid by Blue Cross). He said that the proposed changes would provide savings to the Town’s taxpayers without reducing the value of the benefit provided to Town employees, which would be the Option A package set forth in the memorandum dated September 25, 2017, from Assistant Town Manager Moreland. There was a brief discussion by the Board.

MOTION BY DAVE SCHOALES TO APPROVE CHANGES TO THE TOWN’S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2018, AS PRESENTED.

Reschedule the First November Selectboard Meeting – O’Connor announced that the Board agreed to hold the first November Selectboard meeting on November 7 (rather than October 31 as previously discussed) in the Meeting Room at the Library, starting at 6:15pm.

There was no further business.

MOTION BY BRANDIE STARR TO ADJOURN AT 10:45PM. MOTION CARRIED 4-0.