

**Special Merger Committee Meeting Minutes  
Poultney Board of Selectmen**

**Monday, September 16, 2024 – 6:00 PM  
Poultney Town Hall**

**Zoom Recording:**

[https://us02web.zoom.us/recording/detail?meeting\\_id=tMA%2FNujwTvSMtQalgYgmfQ%3D%3D&device\\_id=1ce06072-78ee-4a82-947c-27a2f4a256b0](https://us02web.zoom.us/recording/detail?meeting_id=tMA%2FNujwTvSMtQalgYgmfQ%3D%3D&device_id=1ce06072-78ee-4a82-947c-27a2f4a256b0)

Jeff King called the meeting to order. Selectmen present included: Jeff King, Sheryl Porrier, Alan-Glen Burnell and Valerie Broughton. Village Board of Trustees present included Joe DeBonis, Gerri Harrison, Robert Williams and Idris Atwood. Other appointed members of the board present included Ben Thirkield, Steve Betit, Carol Bunce and Nic Stark. Others present included Paul A. Donaldson and Sarah Pelkey. Appearing via Zoom were Janice B. Edwards and Paul Bishop of Center For Governmental Research (“CGR”).

**Adoption of the Agenda:** Carol Bunce made a motion to adopt the agenda. Robert Williams seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes:** Idris Atwood made a motion to approve the minutes of June 3, 2024. Alan-Glen Burnell seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor.

**Merger Discussion:** Presentation of Merger Study proposal by Paul Bishop from Center For Governmental Research (CGR). Mr. Bishop introduced himself, and discussed the history of his company and the matters his non-profit assist with different communities. He proposed a timeline, if CGR is engaged, to start the study in October and be done with the study and CGR’s recommendations, including alternatives, by February, 2025. Discussion followed. The cost of the study would be \$35,000.00, and if anything is added to the scope of the project, additional costs would have to be negotiated. The MRGP grant is currently \$11,530.00, and we would need an additional \$23,470.00. Sarah Pelkey stated there were 2 other sources of funding she will investigate. Carol Bunce expressed concerns that with all the items both the Trustees and Selectboard have on their plates right now, that this may not be the right time to undertake this study, and perhaps the committee should see if there is flexibility in the timeline for the study. The remaining consensus of the committee was to move forward with the project on the projected timeline. ARPA funds discussion followed. Paul Donaldson stated the Village has spent or obligated all of its ARPA funds, but the Town still has some unobligated ARPA funds. Paul Donaldson stated that from his personal perspective, some could argue that the Town ARPA funds are also attributed to Village taxpayers since the Village does pay Town taxes. The Selectboard will discuss the possible use of Town ARPA funds at its next meeting. Joe DeBonis made a motion to engage CGR. Ben Thirkield seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor.

**Adjourn:** Robert Williams made a motion to adjourn. Ben Thirkield seconded the motion. Motion passed with all in favor.