

MINUTES OF JOINT MEETING OF EAST MONTPELIER AND CALAIS SELECTBOARDS

December 7, 2015

Present: Calais Selectboard members; Selectboard Chair, Denise Wheeler; Scott Bassage; John Brabant; Rose Pelchuck; Administrative Assistant; Lou Cherry; East; Montpelier Selectboard members present: Seth Gardner, Bruce Johnson, Gene Troia

Denise called the meeting to order at 7:15

Seth said that he would like to focus on budget issues first. Starting with the ambulance. Denise felt that it was not going up significantly. The increase was due to increased staffing, necessary to provide more coverage and training. She believed they seemed to be managing the budget rather well. Bruce Johnson expressed concern about the manner in which the \$15,000 contingency fund was being used. It was not being used as a real contingency fund, but a part of the operating budget. John pointed out that the Capital Reserve is being short changed as a result of how the contingency fund is being used. Denise suggested that rather than putting the \$15K in the contingency, just increase the budget by \$15K or cut the \$17K increase being requested. Seth expressed concern about the \$22,300 figure. He needed more information about it as he does for the capital reserve. Bruce Johnson said that at the last meeting with them, they had asked for more information about the Capital Reserve. The figures that they used were estimates. Seth indicated that he had been trying to get them to make the report more usable, and was encountering some resistance.

The suggestion was made that the Department remove the income from the contingency fund. Calais and East Montpelier would increase their contribution by \$12,000, thereby requiring the Department to make up the \$3,000 shortfall. The \$12,000 would be divided 1/3:2/3. Denise moved that Calais will contribute \$117,209.34 (an increase of \$4,000) to the Department's fy 2017 budget with the understanding that there will be no contribution from the contingency fund. Motion was seconded by Scott. Motion was carried 4-0.

Decision was made to discuss Marshfield's request to use the Department's ambulance services. John pointed out that while the added expenses needed to be a consideration, a more significant issue would be the resultant dilution of services. John expressed his concerns; reflecting on the Barre experience. He pointed out that we didn't know if the expenses for the Marshfield contract were accurate. Rose reported that she understood that the discussions with Marshfield were in a very preliminary stage. Concern was expressed that we had no way of knowing what reasonable expenses would be in bring in Marshfield. The suggestion was made that a consultant should be brought in to make an assessment. Suggestion was made to ask Don. Seth said we should first ask the Department exactly what's happening with the Marshfield request and ask to be kept informed while at the same time, perhaps ask Don or a consultant to look into the costs and services needed for Marshfield and how it would impact on the services being provided to Calais and East Montpelier. Scott pointed out that the true cost of providing the service to the residents of Marshfield is to build their own firehouse, purchase equipment and hire staff. Any difference between that is a gift from the taxpayers of Calais and the taxpayers of East Montpelier.

Denise suggested putting their concerns in writing. Bruce said if we had some way of knowing what information would be helpful to Calais. Denise said that since Bruce has been exploring these issues he would be the best one to know what would be useful. Bruce to write the letter to the Department.

Scott moved to adjourn Scott, John seconded, motioned approved 4-0

Respectfully ,

Lou Cherry,

Administrative Assistant