

Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
October 13, 2014  
*Approved*

Present: Selectboard - Scott Bassage, John Brabant, Rose Pelchuck, Denise Wheeler; Donna Fitch, Clerk; Alfred Larrabee, Road Commissioner; Neal Maker, Paul Rose, Will Walters (Hardwick Gazette), Michael Caccavo (Twin Valley Senior Center).

Denise Wheeler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm.

Appointments: Scott Bassage made a motion to appoint Paul Rose to the Planning Commission to fill the seat previously held by Peter Brough who resigned. The term ends in March 2015. John seconded the motion and the motion passed 4-0.

Denise Wheeler made a motion to appoint Neal Maker to the Conservation Commission to fill the vacant set that expires in 2017. Scott seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

Minutes: Scott made a motion to accept the minutes of September 22, 2014. John seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved with no corrections. Denise made a motion to accept the minutes of October 2 with two corrections: add Planning Commission to name of meeting and change Energy Committee to Energy Group (the group is independent of town government). Rose seconded the motion and the minutes were approved with changes, 4-0.

Road Commissioner Update: Alfred reported that the road crew is working on the culvert on Martin Road. The road is closed at its intersection with Haggett Road. Alfred and Toby Talbot looked at the intersection of Worcester Road and Camp Road where water from Camp Road (a private road) is draining on to Worcester Road. Camp Road residents need to put gravel at that end of the road. Once that is done, the town will put gravel in the town right of way and install a catch basin so water does not drain into the brook. It will be a group effort between the town and the landowners on the private road. Another discussion with the residents is needed. Alfred will confer with Toby when Toby returns from vacation.

Curb Cut: A curb cut for Jason Rowell's driveway on Dugar Brook Road was approved with the condition that he close the existing curb cut. No culvert is needed and the new location is better for the road crew.

Twin Valley Senior Center: Mike Caccavo, president of the Twin Valley Senior Center board of directors and a resident of Marshfield, spoke about the services TVSC provides to the six area towns. TVSC has recently moved to Route 2 in East Montpelier and the hope is that the new location will inspire more residents from Calais and East Montpelier to attend events and take advantage of services offered. TVSC provides senior meals to the six surrounding towns and provides on-site meals three days a week at a cost of \$4 per meal. (Mike pointed out that the Montpelier Senior Center is not a meal site and does not provide Meals on Wheels.) Activities offered at Twin Valley include tai chi, art classes, movies, foot clinics, flu shots, foot clinics, etc. No fees are charged for activities. In addition, a bus is available to pick people up at their homes and deliver them to TVSC.

Property Tax Resolution: A resolution calling on the legislature for a two-year cap on the statewide education property tax at 2015 levels has been passed by South Burlington, Dorset, Killington, Huntington and Fairlee city councils/selectboards. An email from Kevin Dorn, City Manager – South

Burlington, was circulated from Denise to the Selectboard for their opinion on the resolution. Scott asked Charlotte Bassage, Calais Elementary School (CES) board member, for her opinion. It is not as simple as it looks, she said. It would hurt the town of Calais. The State would not be able to pay for items that CES depends on, such as small school grants, special education and per pupil payments. Charlotte (via Scott) said that in order to reduce the statewide property tax every school needs to reduce its budget. CES is aiming to reduce its budget \$100,000.

John Brabant said the resolution is not a good idea. The current funding equalizes the property tax impact throughout the State, he said, though "I hate what high taxes are doing to the elderly and those on fixed incomes." Stating that education was also a Federal issue, John pointed out that 50 cents of every dollar goes to the military. Scott said the Selectboard can "only do what it can do" by keeping town expenditures, and thus taxes, low even though it is a small amount of the taxes that landowners pay. The Board agreed they were all against the resolution.

Street Lights in East Calais: Scott made a motion allowing Denise to sign for the entire Board a memorandum of Agreement between Efficiency Vermont and the town to "improve efficiency of municipal street and public lighting." Paul Schekel of the Calais Energy Group will be the contact with town clerk Donna Fitch as the municipal contact. Rose seconded Scott's motion, and it was approved, 4-0.

Upper Road Bridge Closure: The Board received a report from DeWolfe Engineering on the bridge that links North Calais Road to Upper Road. The report was not received in time to be put on the meeting agenda. Based on the report, which recommended that the bridge be closed to all vehicle traffic, the Board decided it was a public safety issue and the bridge should be closed immediately. Denise emailed with Rick DeWolfe who said the road should be closed. Donna will let Alfred know and will post to Front Porch Forum, including that the report is available in the town office, by email and on the town web site. Rose suggested putting a notice in the Times Argus; Donna suggesting waiting until there was more information. In an emergency, the Selectboard may make decisions without a public warning.

#### Executive Session

At 8:20pm John made a motion to go into executive session in accordance with 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1) for the purpose of discussing a legal matter. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 4-0. After coming out of executive session at 8:40pm, Denise stated there was nothing to report.

At 8:40pm the meeting was continued until Thursday, October 16, for a joint meeting of the Calais and East Montpelier Selectboards and the East Montpelier Fire Department at 7pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Fitch, Clerk