

Selectboard Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2014
Approved

Selectboard: Scott Bassage, John Brabant, Rose Pelchuck, Toby Talbot, Denise Wheeler; Road Commissioner Alfred Larrabee; Will Walters, Hardwick Gazette; Paul Rose, Ginny Kern, John Rosenblum, Carolyn Morton.

Denise called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Appointment to Calais Roads Advisory Committee (CRAC) - Gary Schultz was appointed to CRAC. Toby moved the appointment. Scott seconded. The appointment was unanimously approved.

Approval of Minutes - Toby moved to approve the minutes of June 23, 2014. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved after Rose suggested adding term lengths and dates of appointment when appointments are made to commissions and committees.

Road Commissioner Report - Alfred Larrabee reported:

- 1) The security system at the town garage has been installed.
- 2) New lights have been installed
- 3) The salt shed is complete.
- 4) Work on Max Gray Road culvert begins tomorrow (7/15/14). Signs are up to redirect drivers.
- 5) The 2003 "spare" truck with 117,000 miles on it is in the shop. The pistons are cracked and the cost to fix is \$5,000. (This is the truck the town will trade in toward the next truck purchase.) Trade-in value was \$18,000 when Alfred looked into last year. The Board discussed the pros and cons of repairing the truck. The Board agreed to have it fixed and talk later about whether a spare truck is needed.

Operations Manager Report – There is about \$40,000 in the Highway Heavy Equipment Fund. The one-ton truck has severely deteriorated. At March 2014 Town Meeting, the voters would have been asked to replace the vehicle but, due to the anticipated rise in education taxes, the Selectboard did not put it on the warning. Toby passed out a spreadsheet showing past vehicle loans and payments into the Highway Heavy Equipment Fund and anticipated into the future. A new Ford 550 truck costs \$80,000. A new International costs \$100,000 not figuring the trade-in value of the old truck. The Board discussed holding a special town meeting to request permission from the voters to purchase the truck. Toby noted it will take two months to order the truck so the meeting should be held soon. Scott Bassage said he would choose to keep this truck and not spend the Highway Heavy Equipment Fund if the current tax burden is too great. Donna Fitch said the tax rate would be preliminarily set this week for Selectboard approval at the July 28 meeting.

Reappointment of Road Commissioner and Operations Manager - Denise made a motion to reappoint Alfred Larrabee as Road Commissioner. Rose seconded. Alfred noted that things are going well. Toby stated that Alfred has worked very hard to make this work (the addition of the Operations Manager position). Alfred was unanimously reappointed. Denise and John stated how pleased they are with Alfred's performance and with the relationship between the Road Commissioner and Operations Manager. They noted they have received positive comments on the roads.

Denise made a motion to appoint Toby Talbot as Operations Manager through the end of the calendar year. John seconded the motion. Toby said he has set goals for the operations manager position so the Selectboard can see how the goals are coming along. The motion was unanimously approved.

Alfred and Toby will be doing job evaluations with the road crew and will then have information about raises.

Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement Services (VMERS) – The employer portion of the VMERS payment increased from 5.375% to 6.825%. Toby made a motion for the town to pay the increase. Denise seconded and the motion unanimously passed.

Center Road and Martin Road Culverts Meeting - Toby has asked the engineer for more information before holding neighborhood meeting. In order for the State to approve the Martin Road culvert, the town has to rescind the North Calais retaining wall grant for this grant period. Toby has the paperwork for that. Toby will give two weeks' notice of the meeting to residents. The Selectboard needs to sign the Center Road grant paperwork. The town has two years to complete the culvert work.

Updates on Web, Reserve Fund Policy, Town Hall – Scott reported:

Website – Judy Robert, Assistant Clerk/Treasurer will take on updating the web site. Rolf Mueller will be available on an ad hoc basis for more indepth web site work. Committees should send minutes directly to the town office to the Assistant Clerk (assistantclerk@myfairpoint.net) so the office has the historical record to be filed in the vault and also to be posted to the web site to meet open meeting law requirements. The Selectboard unanimously agreed that Judy and Rolf should work on the website. John was temporarily out of the room and did not vote.

Reserve Fund Policy – Money was set aside at budget time for a financial consultant from Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT) to meet with the Selectboard. The Reserve Fund Policy could be rewritten when the consultant is here with the focus on what the Board wants to do with reserve funds and, in the case of the highway reserve fund, long term planning for purchases. Scott will follow up with VLCT.

Town Hall – The floor at the bottom of the stairs is collapsing. Scott will contact David Schutz about calling a Historic Preservation Commission meeting. John Brabant will contact Mike Fowler to see if he is interested in working on the foundation.

The Island – There is currently a Curtis Pond Recreation Area Ordinance. An Island Ordinance has been drafted by Conrad Smith. Denise suggested leaving the Curtis Pond ordinance as is and having a separate ordinance for the Island. She noted that the process to adopt an ordinance is long so it won't affect the Island this summer.

Comments followed:

1. Need specific hours for quiet time; 10pm to 8am was suggested.
2. Remove "imprisonment" and insert "civil" before "fine."
3. The town constables can give out civil fines and have ticket books.
4. Put information about how to obtain a camping permit in a separate document so ordinance does not have to be rewritten for administrative changes to the process.
5. Remove "town clerk office." Person responsible for issuing permits might change.
6. Permits will be issued to Calais residents only. (They can bring guests.)

Denise will update the draft, run it past VLCT, pass it around and the Selectboard will vote on it at the next meeting. Rose suggested having one ordinance for the entire Curtis Pond Recreation Area, with two sections, one for the swim area and one for the Island.

Scott left the meeting at 8 p.m.

East Montpelier/Calais Fire Department (EMFD) 50th Anniversary – The EMFD is holding a celebration of its 50th anniversary on Saturday, August 16, and has requested a donation of \$500 from Calais. There will be music, a meal, activities for the kids, including a bounce house and climbing wall. Union Mutual is a sponsor. Dinner tickets are \$11 and are available at the Calais town office for \$11. The catered meal includes lasagna, chicken, salads, corn on the cob, drinks and desert. Denise made a motion to support the anniversary celebration. John seconded. Toby abstained. The motion passed.

Washington County Sheriff Contract - Rose moved to approve the contract up to \$3,000 for FY15. The motion passed unanimously.

Open Meeting Law Letter to all Board and Commissions - Denise drafted a letter to remind all boards and commissions about the open meeting law, specifically the requirements for posting agendas and minutes. The law

is effective now and the penalty will be enforced in July 2015. Rose suggested adding, "We recommend a discussion about the open meeting law at your next regularly scheduled meeting."

Ancient Roads – Denise asked the Board to read/review the report on the web site. It is her understanding that the Board needs to walk the roads that are being discontinued.

Next meetings – The next meeting will be with the Planning Commission on Monday, August 4, at 7:00 to review additional portions of the draft town plan. The next regular Selectboard meeting will be July 28.

Agenda items for July 28th meeting:

1. Date for meeting re: Center and Martin Road culverts
2. Salary increases for road crew
3. Set tax rate
4. Review Island Ordinance
5. Drug and alcohol policy
6. Web site domain cost \$125
7. Ancient roads

At 8:55 p.m. Denise made a motion to go into executive session at on the basis that premature general public knowledge of the town's litigation with CCS Constructors, Hutch Crane, and EMFD would clearly place the Selectboard at a substantial disadvantage, because the Board risks disclosing its litigation strategy if it discusses the pending litigation in public and premature general public knowledge of the Selectboard's communications with its attorney regarding the CCS lawsuit would clearly place the Board at a substantial disadvantage by disclosing (and potentially waiving) otherwise privileged communications, litigation strategy and attorney work-product. Denise added that the Board enter into executive session, including the town clerk and town attorney, to discuss the town's litigation with CCS Constructors, Hutch Crane and EMVFD under the provisions of Title 1, Section 313(a)(1)(E) of the Vermont Statutes and to consult with the town attorney regarding that litigation under the provisions of Title 1, Section 313(a)(1)(F). Toby seconded the motion and the Board voted unanimously to approve.

Coming out of executive session, Denise reported that no action was taken and there was no action to report. At 9:40 pm the meeting was continued until Thursday, July 17, for a meeting with the EMFD.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Fitch, Clerk