

SELECTBOARD MEETING
Approved Minutes

November 28, 2011

7:00pm Calais Elementary School

Attending: Denise Wheeler, John Brabant, Mike Garand, Toby Talbot, Donna Fitch, Rolf Mueller, Alfred Larrabee, Peter Harvey, Candace E. Shaffer, Andrew “Drew” Lamb, Guthrie Perry, David Schutz, Steve Cusick, and Rose Pelchuck.

Absent: Scott Bassage

Actions:

Approval of the November 14th Meeting Minutes – The Selectboard reviewed the Minutes and made one change. Mike Garand made a motion to approve the Minutes as amended. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0.

Appointments for Town Offices, Boards and Commissions:

Conservation Commission: Drew Lamb appeared before the Selectboard to affirm his interest in serving on the Calais Conservation Commission. John Brabant made a motion to appoint Drew Lamb to fill the unexpired term of Phil Tonks, a four-year term that expires in March 2013. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 4-0. There are three remaining vacant positions on the Conservation Commission; if interested please contact Steve Cusick, Conservation Commission Chair or any Selectboard member.

Forest Fire Warden: Greg Pelchuck, incumbent, has expressed interest in serving the town as Forest Fire Warden for another term. Toby Talbot made a motion to reappoint Gregory Pelchuck as Forest Fire Warden and Christopher Tuller as Assistant to five-year terms each, expires June 30, 2016. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 4-0. The appointment form was signed by the Selectboard and will be sent to Jay Lackey, Dept. Forests, Parks and Recreation.

Town Invoices and Road Commissioner’s Orders of the Day - The Selectboard reviewed, discussed and processed the invoices and orders of the day as per usual protocol.

Property Tax Payments – Donna Fitch, Town Treasurer, reported our accounting firm requests the town have a policy how to handle tax payments received that are over or under by \$5.00. Denise Wheeler will research the statute authority prior to implementation of such a policy.

Retirement Plan at National Life – Retirement Solutions, a firm in Barre, is going to help close out the former National Life retirement plan. Donna Fitch reported she needs to find out who is in the plan and notify people that if they were not employed for six years with the town, they are not vested in the plan. In order to be compliant with state regulations, the town needs to not have two pension plans at the same time. Since National Life does not administer plans, Retirement Solutions can be hired (\$95.00 per hour) to determine the compliance issues. Vicky is the contact at Retirement Solutions Donna has been speaking to. The Selectboard authorizes Donna Fitch to spend professional services in the budget to close out the National Life retirement plan.

Annual Generator Maintenance Service Contract – The Selectboard reviewed the annual service contract from Brookfield Service for maintenance on the two generators in town for the 2012 calendar year. The Selectboard agreed to the twice per year service (every six months) at the annual cost of \$1,215.00 for the generator at the school and \$668.00 for the generator at the Town Office. The practice has been that the school pays for one visit of the service contract and the town pays for the other service visit on the generator at the school. Toby Talbot made a motion to approve the semi-annual service and inspection contract on the town generators, pay the invoice in full to take advantage of the discount when paid by 12/15/11 and to get reimbursed from the school for the cost for servicing the generator at the school once annually. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0.

Town Hall Restoration Project – Historic Preservation Commission Chair, David Schutz, came before the Selectboard to update the town on plans to repair/restore the historic building in Gospel Hollow. David began by reporting the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) earlier this year to hire an architect and engineer and failed to get anybody. David thinks the RFP was too detailed so the HPC decided to wait until the next grant cycle in January 2012, reapply for a grant and start over. The grant requests \$10,000.00 to employ an architect/engineer (specializing in flood mitigation) to assemble information as to what the vision is needed for. The HPC is going to investigate the realistic uses for the building. Toby Talbot said, “Doesn't the architect/engineer need the list of uses before beginning its work?” David Schutz responded that a previous assessment of the building by Mary Jo Llewellyn, Historic Preservation Consultant in January 2010 identified the issues. David hopes for a HPC meeting in December and will get the grant application done in January 2012. David said repairs made in a modest way should be done; whatever it takes to keep the building from deteriorating. Foundation with proper drainage and flood mitigation techniques will be a priority. Denise Wheeler suggested the Historic Preservation Commission put something in the town report to get people thinking about the historic town hall and it's future. David Schutz hopes to have something concrete to report in the fall 2012. The Selectboard is very concerned about postponing repairs on the town hall for another year. David will meet with the HPC in December, send Minutes to Denise Wheeler, which will then be forwarded to Rolf Mueller for inclusion on the town's website.

Other Business - John Brabant inquired about making the town report larger, in a larger size with bigger print. John has spoken to Larry Brown about it and the cost is minimally more. Toby Talbot offered to work on designing cover images and will have some suggestions at the next meeting (can re-do the town seal or make a new logo). Donna Fitch would like to have new letterhead but has not had time to work on it. Alfred Larrabee wants to re-letter the town trucks and may be able to use a new image or one that is totally different from one that would go on the town letterhead. To be continued at the next meeting.

Road Commissioner Update – Alfred Larrabee introduced the newest road crew employee, Guthrie Perry, from Cabot. The road crew is back to capacity. The water pump was fixed on the old grader. High oil pressure pump on the spare 2004 truck was repaired at a cost of \$4,041.00. Alfred Larrabee stated he wants to go to an automotive shop for the vehicle inspections to get them professionally inspected instead of using small shops.

Speed Cart Traffic Calming Device– Alfred Larrabee will contact Plainfield to pick up the speed cart and install it in town in an effort to slow traffic in various areas of town. The Town Road Ordinance and speed limits was discussed. Denise Wheeler will check with the VLCT to see what the process is to add a street sign. Alfred reported missing street signs from the Worcester Road. Per regulations, the sign will be replaced. Neighbor Watch can be alerted to be on the lookout for suspicious activity in hopes to apprehend those responsible for sign removal.

Ditching and Culverts on Lightening Ridge Road - Mike Garand reported to the Selectboard about his recent conversation with Don Moulton, former Calais Road Commissioner and Lightening Ridge resident, regarding recently completed ditch work in front of Don's home. Mike reported that Alfred Larrabee did the ditch work and they are not happy. In Mike's phone conversation with the Carlene Moulton, the closing statement was that a third party will put the yard back and send the town a bill.

Alfred said there are three culverts on Moulton's property and there was a large berm preventing the water from flowing into the culverts. In a telephone conversation about a month or so prior to doing the work, Don Moulton gave Alfred permission to work there even though it is in the town's right of way. Mike Garand said there is a tree on Moulton's land that she is concerned about, that the work was too aggressive and may harm the tree. In the future, Mike Garand suggested Alfred talk to the landowners a few days prior to the project. Mike Garand clearly stated that Alfred is doing what he's supposed to do. Mike will contact Tom Anderson, VTrans District 6 Engineer, to have him look at the work done or have him recommend someone else in order to deal with the road design for proper drainage. Mike will call Don Moulton and notify him that further discussion on this item will be on the next agenda.

Town of Calais Beaver Guidelines was presented by Steve Cusick, Conservation Commission Chair and

Candace Shaffer. The goal is to have the town generally accept guidelines and adopt a process and procedure for dealing with beaver/human conflicts. Suggested language changes were made by the Selectboard to clarify the intent. Toby Talbot suggested having two separate documents: one for town/municipal issues and one for dealing with the public to refer them for assistance. There are manuals available to assist private landowners and can be obtained from the Conservation Commission. John Brabant made some changes to the document during the meeting. Mike Garand spoke in detail about beaver problems in culverts in East Montpelier for the past 15 years.

Zoning Violations, Appeals, Litigation, and Personnel Matters – Toby Talbot made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:12pm in accordance with 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (1) for the purpose of discussing mediation with town attorney, Joe McLean. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 4-0. The Regular Session resumed at 9:40pm. Denise Wheeler reported the Selectboard was unable to reach the attorney by telephone. Mediation in the McCullough Crushing gravel pit expansion case is set to begin next Wednesday, December 7, 2011. Denise Wheeler and Tina Bielenberg will be attending on behalf of the town. A member of the Conservation Commission will be on call for their expertise. Rob Halbert, Esq. is the mediator for this case.

Personnel Policy – John Brabant provided a copy of the “Speaking as a Private Citizen” handout to be incorporated into the personnel policy.

Roads Advisory Committee – Denise Wheeler spoke to Mo Cerutti today and urged him to get moving with this newly appointed committee.

Tentative Agenda for the December 12th Meeting

- Ditch work on Lightening Ridge Road

John Brabant made a motion to adjourn 9:50pm. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Pelchuck
Selectboard Administrative Assistant