

Calais Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Special Meeting
Monday, November 14, 2016
7 p.m, Calais Town Office

Approved 11-28-16

Present: Selectboard Members Denise Wheeler, Rose Pelchuck, Scott Bassage, Toby Talbot, John Brabant (by phone)

Others Present: Donna Fitch, Town Clerk and Treasurer, Lisa Stoudt, Board Recording Secretary

Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

- **Administrative work and changes or additions to the agenda:** none
- **Public Comment:** none
- **Review & Sign Town Invoices, Highway Orders and Budget Update:** Board members circulated the board orders.
- **Appointments**
 - DAB (Design Advisory Board) – ratify appointments of Ernie Parrish (to fill vacant position which expires 2019) and Karen Lane (to fill unexpired position of Jackie Weyraugh, expires 2018); Rose Pelchuck moved to ratify these appointments, which were discussed at the previous board meeting. Seconded by Scott Bassage, this motion carried unanimously.
 - New appointment Peter Brough (to fill vacant position which expires 2019): Scott Bassage moved to appoint Peter Brough to fill vacant position. Seconded by Toby Talbot. Discussion: Rose Pelchuck clarified that this vacant position is the Syver Rogstad position, which expires in 2017. Rose Pelchuck moved to amend the motion to reflect that the appointment expires in 2017. Seconded by Toby Talbot, this amended motion carried unanimously.
 - John Brabant – fill Selectboard unexpired 2017 term per 17 V.S.A. § 2682d. The Board discussed this Selectboard seat. Scott Bassage moved to appoint John Brabant to fill an unexpired term to 2017. Seconded by Toby Talbot. The Board discussed this. This appointment is good through 2017, at which time, at Town Meeting, the town must vote to fill the remainder of the term (through 2018.) This motion carried unanimously.
- **Review and Approve Minutes :**
 - October 24, 2016:* Scott Bassage moved to approve the minutes from October 24, 2016. Seconded by Rose Pelchuck. Discussion: Ms. Pelchuck pointed out a couple of edits for clarity. This motion carried unanimously; Toby Talbot abstained.
 - Joint meeting October 27, 2016:* Toby Talbot moved to approve the minutes from the Joint Meeting of Calais and East Montpelier, dated October 27, 2016. Seconded by Scott Bassage, this motion carried unanimously.

October 31: Toby Talbot moved to approve the minutes from this special meeting. Seconded by Scott Bassage, this motion carried unanimously; Toby Talbot abstained.

- **Road Commissioner update:** Alfred Larrabee was not present to provide an update; however, Toby Talbot reported that the Town Garage project is underway. Toby Talbot stated that the plow routes remain the same; still have not secured a substitute town plowman.

- **Operations Manager update:** Rose Pelchuck thanked the crew for filling the potholes on the roads before they freeze. Mr. Talbot reported that all of the paved aprons are installed along Route 14. He also reported that the line of sight from Lightening Ridge Road onto Route 14 has been much improved.

- **Begin discussion of proposed Interlocal Agreement for sharing equipment and personnel with Woodbury:** The Board discussed this proposal that Woodbury had extended. Denise Wheeler stated that she would like to have Woodbury discuss this with the Calais Selectboard at a future meeting. Discussion followed regarding whether the towns would charge each other for services, or whether this is an exchange without charging. Toby Talbot spoke about the history of “gentlemen’s agreements” around such arrangements of mutual aid. He stated that a written document to more formally and explicitly describe the terms of the agreement would be appropriate. Denise Wheeler will share the agreement document that Woodbury had shared, with James Barlow for his input. The Selectboard members as a whole are in support of such a written agreement.

- **Blue Cross/Blue Shield renewal:** The Board discussed the proposed plan for renewal of insurance. Toby Talbot stated that if the Board is considering increasing the amount that employees are expected to contribute toward their premiums, then the Board should consider an increase in wages. The time to discuss an increase in wages is during budget development. Rose Pelchuck suggested that the Board also decide during budget development whether to increase employee contribution (currently 5%).

Toby Talbot shared that each year he explains payroll related benefits with town employees.

John Brabant stated that when the Board discusses these issues during budget development, the employees should be invited to participate in the discussions.

The Board discussed the need to plan/ budget for the HRA. Scott Bassage and Toby Talbot discussed the desire to offer competitive wages and benefits to town employees.

Toby Talbot moved to renew the Platinum plan with BC/ BS for the Calais Town employees. Seconded by Scott Bassage, this motion carried unanimously.

- **Procedure for approval of payments relating to grants:** Donna Fitch asked for the Board’s direction regarding payments related to grants. Is it appropriate to ask vendors to wait until the next Selectboard meeting to receive payment under these circumstances? Toby Talbot suggested that if Donna Fitch checks first with the grant project manager (usually Toby Talbot or Scott Bassage), then it is appropriate to make these payments to the vendors and then include them in the board orders for the next Selectboard meeting.

● **Repairs to Town Office roof:** Donna Fitch reported that the roof has damage resulting from ice building; this is causing leakage. Toby Talbot will follow up on this issue. He will check first with Beauregard to pursue roof repairs.

● **Town Meeting Warning – Lakes and Streams Committee request:** The Board discussed this request. This committee is an offshoot of the Conservation Commission (not appointed by the Selectboard.) This will be included as a warned article for vote at Town Meeting Day. The Board discussed the various line items in the budget versus articles for the Town Meeting warning. The Board noted that they have been advised by legal counsel, as well as by Melanie Rodjenski, auditor, to have fewer separate articles for vote at Town Meeting day.

● **Continue discussion of possible charter adoption and timeline:** Denise Wheeler reported that she and Scott Bassage had met with Melanie Rodjenski regarding the audit. (suggestion to move to NEMRC as soon as possible). She also reported that she, Scott Bassage, Donna Fitch, and James Barlow had met this past Friday. Denise Wheeler shared some of the suggestions Ms. Rodjenski had made. Denise Wheeler and Scott Bassage will draft a letter to Nedene Martin explaining the auditor’s suggestion to “write off” certain small amounts.

Denise Wheeler shared James Barlow’s advice regarding adopting a charter, specifically, around the issue of the Selectboard appointing a Town Auditor. Some discussion followed around incompatible offices. The Board will create a list of incompatible offices as part of the drafting of a charter. Ms. Wheeler stated that the group that met to brainstorm on Friday had agreed the wisest next step is to hire some assistance in implementing NEMRC, versus hiring a bookkeeper position. Mr. Bassage stated that he believes it is important for the Board to find the resources to make the switch from Quickbooks to NEMRC as soon as possible. Donna Fitch is going to get an estimate from Dave Crawford, who might provide services to this end. The Board is in agreement that Donna Fitch should move forward in securing Dave Crawford, before the next Selectboard meeting, if necessary.

Denise Wheeler noted that Donna Fitch performs duties that are beyond the scope of those described for Town Clerk/ Treasurer. Some discussion followed around GASB compliance.

● **Planning Commission public hearing on Tuesday, November 15 @ 7 pm** proposed Amendments to the *Land Use & Development Regulations* (Zoning Regulations) – A quorum of Calais Selectboard members will not attend this meeting.

Denise Wheeler stated that she would be in touch with Board members about upcoming meetings.

- **Reports/Updates (as needed or as time permits)**
- **Other/New/Old Business that may come before the Board**
- **As needed:** Zoning enforcement issue(s)
 - Legal/litigation updates
 - Executive Session

● **Adjourn/continue meeting:** The meeting adjourned by consensus at 8:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Lisa Stoudt, Board Recording Secretary

Next meetings:

11-28 Selectboard

12-1 EMFD meeting with East Montpelier Selectboard (at EMFD)

12-5 Joint Selectboard Meeting: Calais and East Montpelier (at East Montpelier Town Office)

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