

Town of Calais, Vermont

CHARTERED 1781

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 11, 2019 at 7pm at the Calais Town Offices

Present: Denise Wheeler (Chair), John Brabant (Vice Chair), Rose Pelchuck (Member), Sharon Winn Fannon (Member), Clif Emmons (Member), Jerome Lipani (ORCA), Katie Lane-Karnas (Recording Secretary), Alfred Larrabee (Road Commissioner), Toby Talbot (Operations Manager), Gus Seelig (Town Moderator)

1. Call to Order: Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.
2. Public Comment: None.
3. Review, Additions/Changes to Agenda: The Central Vermont ISP Alternate position will be discussed.
4. Selectboard Organizational Meeting:
 - a) Oaths of Office: Selectboard oaths of office were completed.
 - b) Adopting Rules of Procedure: John Brabant made a motion to adopt the full version of Robert's Rules of Order. Clif Emmons seconded the motion. The Board considered their current use of the Calais Rules of Procedure, which was adapted from VLCT and is abridged from Robert's Rules (and is not the same as the small board condensed version of Robert's Rules). They discussed their preference to require a second for any motion, maintaining a tone where meeting guests have clarity about their participation and behavior expectations at Selectboard meetings and having the Chair's role well defined. The Board decided to edit the "Calais Rules of Procedure for the Selectboard" and revisit it at a subsequent meeting.
 - c) Organization of Selectboard: Rose Pelchuck nominated Denise Wheeler for Chair, John Brabant seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Rose Pelchuck nominated John Brabant for Vice-Chair, Denise Wheeler seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
 - d) Official Meeting Schedule: The Selectboard set the Town Office as their official meeting place on second and fourth Monday of each month at 7 pm.
 - e) Official Town Newspapers and posting locations for agendas: Denise Wheeler made a motion for official posting places for agendas continue to be at the Town Office, East Calais Store, Maple Corner Store and electronically on Front Porch Forum. Clif Emmons seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The newspapers of record will be identified at the next meeting.
 - f) Designation for Signing Orders: Rose Pelchuck made a motion, and John Brabant seconded, to authorize a designated Selectboard member (Denise Wheeler) to sign orders on behalf of the town (pursuant to 24 V.S.A. §1623). The motion passed unanimously. For example, if a check (such as East Montpelier Home Center, who requires payment within

ten days) needs to be authorized before the next scheduled Selectboard meeting, the Chair may sign it, and the check will come for the full Board for signatures at the next Selectboard meeting.

5. Updates/Reports

- a) Road Commissioner and Operations Manager: The Road Commissioner reported the new truck is registered and in service. He is preparing for the weather to warm up fast for mud season and has a pile of gravel to use until gravel pits open. The Town pickup needs winter tires and the Road Commissioner requested two sets of rims (one for winter, one for summer). He provided a quote for new rims (\$190 apiece plus mount and balance); he offered to sell the Town 5 identical, new Ford steel rims that he personally owns (\$600, mounted and balanced at his shop). As a matter of general practice, the Board stated its preference to keep an arm's length relationship with vendors and not be purchasing from employees; they appreciated the Road Commissioner's foresight in approaching the Board and asked him to create an invoice for the rims.

The Operations Manager identified a location for use of the Structures Grant: installation of a 6' x 40' culvert on George Road. The Operations Manager and the Board reviewed overhead maps of the four acres of watershed that flows into the culvert. He also described a Class 2 Highway grant opportunity for resurfacing and sealing the paved part of Moscow Woods Road from Route 14, past the Post office to where it gets to Fellow's Road. The Board pointed out that Calais and CVRPC continue to evaluate the runoff in that specific area. The Board asked the Operations Manager to call Pam DeAndrea to let her know Calais is applying for this grant and request her feedback. The Operations Manager will return to the Board on April 8 for grant application authorization.

March 18 is the date set for the Town Office forum for public discussions on road conditions. Dates are soon to be set for forums at the East Calais Rec Center and Adamant Community Center. Vermont Local Roads will be sending a representative to articulate the issues happening with roads around the state and facilitate discussion. The Chair asked the Road Commissioner and Operations Manager to be in communication about their attendance at those meetings.

- b) Treasurer: The Board reviewed the requested information that NEMRC supplied regarding the monthly reporting features of their auditor proposal (the proposal would be fulfilling charter-required auditor duties in the absence of employment of a Town Auditor). Sharon Winn Fannon made a motion to permit the Chair to work with the Town Treasurer to contract with NEMRC on auditor services.
- c) Town Clerk: This item was not needed.
- d) Town Hall Renovation Committee: This item was not needed.
- e) Act 46 Update: There will be a special election for the U-32 budget vote at the Town Hall on April 9; there will be a continuation of the tabled meeting regarding the forced merger on April 8 (the regularly scheduled Selectboard meeting on that same night will be rescheduled).
- f) CVRPC: This item was not needed.

6. Updates/Reports

- The Board discussed the expense in staff time to the Town of holding a U-32 school district special election, as a result of the misinformed decision guided by the Supervisory

Union, to not include their school district's budget vote at Town Meeting as obligated by statute. The U-32 district needs to warn a budget every year (the expectation is to have it at Town Meeting). The Board decided to ask office staff to log their hours on this project. John Brabant will gain the advice of the Town Attorney regarding invoicing the school district for cost of staff hours for the U-32 budget vote that did not occur as statutorily expected to occur on Town Meeting Day.

- The Chair reviewed upcoming Selectboard meeting dates (April 1; April 15; April 11, joint with EMFD; executive session at 6 pm)

7. Debrief on Town Meeting: The Chair reported that the meeting was well attended and included Rumble Strip producer's film team who are working on a documentary that will include footage of Calais's Town Meeting. The Chair pointed out that the changes made to budget line items for increased transparency were not necessarily evident to voters and considered the value of including detailed notes in some way for voters' understanding. The Town Moderator suggested a brief narrative that describes the changes that have occurred over the last three years or so.

The Chair reported that she has followed up with voters who had questions. The Board will thank and follow up with the five people who volunteered to serve on a social services advisory committee. The Board discussed a request to pay taxes in four installments; this would be a significant burden on office staff, but any taxpayer may elect to prepay in four installments if they prefer.

The Board thanked Gus Seelig for his work as Town Meeting Town Moderator and throughout the year as well.

8. Liquor licenses: The Board made a motion to approve the liquor licenses for the Maple Corner Store (to sell retail), Whammy Bar (to dispense beer, wine and liquor) and Adamant Coop (to sell retail). The motion was voted and passed unanimously.
9. Washington Co. Sheriffs Contract: The Board made a motion to approve the Washington County Sheriff's contract at \$29.25/hour (an increase of \$0.50 per hour), mileage rate remaining the same, from a period of April 1, 2019 through March 30, 2020. The motion passed unanimously. The Board stated their preference to meet with the sheriff at least once per year and decided to send an invitation to an upcoming meeting.
10. Central VT ISP Board: David Healy is the CVISP delegate, and Scott Bassage has served as the alternate. Scott Bassage suggested that Jared Thomas be appointed as the alternate to the CVISP (the Chair read his biography, which included significant strength in IT and current employment at RB Tech). The Board discussed officially appointing him at the next meeting and their interest in checking in periodically with the CVISP delegates, as well as keeping clear representation of the Town's interests in development of CVISP. They decided to invite the delegates to a meeting. The Board recognized that Jared Thomas and David Healy both work in the private technology sector; Jared Thomas is an employee of RB Tech (with whom the Town has a current contract) and the potential for conflict of interest will be discussed.

11. RFP for IT Support Services: Clif Emmons reviewed the draft RFP for IT Support Services document with the Board. Next steps include consulting with office staff, editing and review by the Town Attorney. Clif Emmons explained that he has been working while referencing a dozen RFPs from municipalities around the country. The Board commended and thanked him on his work on the RFP. The Board discussed including in the RFP a penalty for lost productivity due to sustained systems issues. The Board considered the existing contract with RB Tech (office staff, the Chair and Clif Emmons will meet with them ahead of the upcoming autorenewal date). They will communicate with the current vendor about the RFP and gain information at that time about concerns over proprietary systems or mind share to be cognizant of. There is some potential for additional cost in the existing contract for the current vendor to charge an hourly rate for any conversion work that may be required in a potential move to a new vendor. The Board discussed the unwritten extension of professional courtesy typically demonstrated within IT services, particularly in a small state with small communities.
12. Joint Meeting with School Board: The Board decided to meet with the School Board and Town Attorney Jim Barlow to complete documents for a Special Town Meeting. The Chair will schedule for a night the School Board is meeting in coordination with Susannah Culvert.
13. Joint Meeting with Cemetery Commission: The Board discussed a joint meeting with the Cemetery Commission: possibly 4/22/19 from 6-7 pm. The Chair will confirm.
14. WVFD Station Committee Meetings: The Board reviewed the Town Meeting discussion on fire departments. The Chair recently attended the Woodbury Fire Department Station Committee meeting. The WVFD has presented three options, which the Chair shared. 1) renovate the existing building for office and meeting space, and build a 5000 SF truck building across the street; 2) renovate the existing house on the donated land and use it for office and meeting space and build a 4000 SF addition for the trucks on the new location, selling the existing fire station and annex building; 3) purchase Don Mason's building is (listed at \$130,000) which has an existing 600 SF with two bays, and additional square footage would be added and other WVFD properties sold. The Board considered that the third option would bring a fire department closer to Calais, possibly allowing homes in Calais to have the insurance benefit of a fire department located within preferable distance (5 miles). The next meeting of the Committee is March 21 and will include a real estate tour of the Don Mason building. A motion was made to appoint Denise Wheeler, Rose Pelchuck and Barry Bernstein to the WVFD Station Committee. The motion was seconded, voted and passed unanimously.
15. Review and approve minutes, warrants
 - a) The Board reviewed the invoices and orders were processed for payment.
 - b) Approval of the minutes was tabled until a subsequent meeting.
16. Executive Session for Personnel Matters: Denise Wheeler made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:10 pm per 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (3), personnel matters and negotiating or securing of real estate purchase or lease options per 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(2). The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0. The Board resumed Regular Session at 9:55 pm. The Chair had nothing to report publicly.

17. Other Business/Old Business/New Business: None.

18. Adjournment: John Brabant made a motion to adjourn at 9:56 pm. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.

Date: 3/13/2019 Respectfully Submitted, Katie Lane-Karnas, Recording Secretary
Approved by the Selectboard at the 3/25/2019 meeting

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