

CALAIS SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Monday, November 23, 2015

unapproved

Present: Calais Selectboard Members: Denise Wheeler, Scott Bassage, John Brabant, Toby Talbot and Rose Pelchuck; Town Clerk Donna Fitch; Road Commissioner Alfred Larrabee; Will Walters, Hardwick Gazette; Jan Ohlsson, Planning Commission; Gail Graham, Calais Historical Society.

Chair, Denise Wheeler, called the meeting to order at 7:03

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Denise introduced Lou Cherry as a candidate for the position of Administrative Assistant to the Selectboard. He would be taking the minutes for this meeting on a trial basis

ALL BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, COMMITTEES AND APPOINTEES DINNER MEETING

Denise suggested a Monday in January for the all boards and commissions dinner with the Calais Recreation Center as the location. There was general agreement.

SELECTBOARD MINUTES

Toby Talbot moved to accept the November 9th minutes, Denise Wheeler seconded. Motion passed 3-0, with John abstaining Brabant.

ROAD COMMISSIONER UPDATE

Regarding the school bus stop and a proposed student shelter near intersection of Fowler Rd. and Bliss Rd., Alfred reported his discussion with Michelle Ksepka at Washington Central Supervisory Union was unfruitful. She indicated too many other route changes would be necessary in order to change the Fowler Rd/Bliss Rd. stop. Neighbor Peter Harvey and Zoning Administrator Dot Naylor are working on an alternate location/solution for the shelter. Zoning regulations require a 40-foot setback. Dot report the Planning Commission is changing the regulation to exempt school bus stop shelters. A structure in the Town's right of way needs approval from the Selectboard. Toby suggested an amendment to the "Use of Town Right-of-Way Ordinance" under Section 8:

"The following may be placed in a town right-of-way, out of the traveled portion of the road without a permit: student school bus shelter no larger than 100 square feet. Approval of the location of the shelter by the road commissioner shall be required. Any such shelter will be removed when site is no longer a designated school bus stop."

The 2004 Ford truck is still for sale. The shed at the recycling/trash center on Moscow Woods Road was sold for \$400. Bruce Campbell has been hired as a permanent road crew member; he has been working for the town part-time. Patrick Smith from East Hardwick will now be the backup (part-time) road crew member. The road crew continues to replace culverts, putting in over 30 this year so far.

CARS ON LUCE RD.

Issue has come up about excessive cars on Tim Luce's property on Luce Rd. After a discussion about junk car regulations are and licensing of salvage yards, Denise requested that Donna send her the information she has on salvage yards. Denise will write a letter to Tim Luce and will contact Shawn Donovan at the Agency of Natural Resources. Rose will write a draft of the letter and forward to Denise

EMPLOYEE CONTRIBUTION TO HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUM

Denise pointed out that the town is contributing a larger portion to the Vermont Employees Municipal Retirement System (VEMRS) than is required by the plan. The plan requires the employer to pay 5.5% of salary and employees to pay 4.875%. Currently, the town is paying 7.075% and employees are paying 3.3%. The 3.3% is the amount employees were paying in 2010 when the retirement plan was through National Life. Scott pointed out that we are losing men to other towns because the hourly rate is greater there, even though our benefits package more than made up for it. He suggested leaving the retirement percentages as is and look at the entire salary structure early next year. John said those who only look at the hourly salary and don't look at the entire benefit package are not on board for the long term. Given the training Alfred invests in his staff, John said, it is folks in it for the long term we want to attract.

PERSONNEL POLICY – CLARIFICATION OF WHEN BENEFITS BEGIN

Donna requested that clarification be put into the Personnel Manual as to when benefits begin when a new employee is hired. It was agreed benefits would start on the first of the month following the date of hire.

SOCIAL SERVICE APPROPRIATIONS POLICY

Scott handed a draft of a policy for social service organizations requesting money at town meeting. The updated policy is intended to simplify the process of responding to these annual requests and reduce the burden on the clerk and assistant clerk. In the fall of 2016 when the next round of checks are mailed, the new policy will be included in that mailing. Scott made a motion to accept the revised policy. Toby seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

SELECTBOARD HEARING SCHEDULED FOR AMENDED ZONING REGULATIONS

The amended zoning regulations, which will be voted on at town meeting, are on the town's website. A public hearing is scheduled for Monday, December 14, at 7:30 at the Calais Recreation Center, E. Calais.

REPRINT OF "FOREVER CALAIS"

The Calais Historical Society is considering reprinting "Forever Calais." Donna Fitch suggested the Historical Society request a contribution from the town toward the reprint, to be an article on the warning at town meeting. Funding of the first edition included private donations and a \$2,000 appropriation from the town. The current printing cost for 250 is \$40 each. Printing the book in soft cover is not advisable as the printer said it would not hold up. The suggestion was made that it would be nice to give each new resident a copy of the book. It was decided to put a request for \$3,000 in the budget and to display the book during at the meeting. Gail reported the Historical Society has about \$25,000 in the bank.

TOWN MEETING WARNING

The Planning Commission requested the following article be included: "Shall the voters adopt the Calais Town Plan, and any amendments to the Plan, by Australian ballot

pursuant to 23 V.S.A. § 4385(c)?. Currently the Town Plan is approved by the Selectboard.”

Central Vermont Economic Development Council is requesting to be put on the warning for an allocation of \$500. Executive Director Sam Andersen says they are a membership organization, not a social services organization. Scott will follow up.

The Board previously discussed asking the voters if they want to keep the position of auditor now that the town plans to have a professional audit done annually and because there is little interest in the position. It was agreed to keep the option of town auditor positions for now.

The schoolboard would like to move the starting time from 8:30 to 9:00. Since the budget is being voted on by Australian ballot, they should be finished by 10:00. Consensus was to agree to their wishes.

The Selectboard plans to request the purchase of a commercial chipper. John asked if there is adequate space to keep all equipment under cover. Alfred said, no, there isn't and a pole barn would be handy. Scott suggested holding off on purchasing a chipper as the Board may be asking for money for a truck.

When the warning nears completion, the Board will discuss what order the articles should be in.

FY17 BUDGET

The following fiscal year 2017 budget categories were discussed: Salaries and Related Expenses; Washington County Tax; Town Office Expenses; Liability Insurance.

JOINT MEETING OF EAST MONTPELIER SELECTBOARD AND FIRE DEPARTMENT

A meeting of the E. Montpelier and Calais Selectboard and the EMFD will take place on December 3rd at the fires station to discuss the EMFD's FY2017 budget.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Scott made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Rose seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

NEXT MEETING ,

Dec 14. Tentative agenda

- 1) Third draft of warning.
- 2) 6:30 Board of Abatement
- 3) 7:30 Zoning
- 4) Scott Thompson will present on Act 48