

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

January 12, 2015

Approved

Present: Selectboard members Scott Bassage, John Brabant, Rose Pelchuck, Denise Wheeler, Toby Talbot; Donna Fitch, Clerk; Woodbury Fire Department: Steve Morse, Paul Cerutti, Tim Neill; Historic Preservation Commission: David Schutz, Ernie Parrish, Reed Cherington, Syver Rogstad, Curtis Johnson; Kellogg Hubbard Library: Tom McKone; Others present: Rose Hayes, Pat Finnie; Will Walters, Hardwick Gazette.

The meeting was called to order by Denise Wheeler, Chair, at 7:20 pm at the Town Office.

Employee Time Sheets Approval Process: The Selectboard instituted the following process for payment of invoices, effective immediately:

- 1) Time sheet invoices from those in positions paid by the hour (listers, auditors, zoning administrator) must be submitted to the town treasurer on Thursday. The invoices will be added to the Selectboard Orders for approval by the selectboard at its next regularly scheduled meeting (the 2nd and 4th Monday of each month). Payment will be mailed or may be picked up at the town office.
- 2) Time sheets from those in positions paid by salary (clerk/treasurer, operations manager) may receive their paycheck without preapproval. The time sheet invoices will be on the Selectboard Orders for approval by the Selectboard at its next meeting.
- 3) John Brabant made a motion that the town clerk/treasurer may approve payment for the assistant clerk/treasurer. Scott Bassage seconded the motion and it passed 5-0. The time sheet invoice will be on the Selectboard Orders for approval by the Selectboard at its next meeting.
- 4) Weekly payment of highway department personnel was previously approved by the Selectboard.
- 5) Annual and semi-annual payments (selectboard clerk, DRB secretary, selectboard members) are on Selectboard Orders and are approved prior to payment.

The Selectboard authorized the chair, Denise Wheeler, to send a memo to those paid hourly and affected by the new process.

Representative to Central VT Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC): Denise Wheeler stated that the representative to CVRPC has typically been a town resident who was not paid to attend meetings. The position is currently filled by the Calais zoning administrator who is not a town resident. John made a motion to withdraw the appointment of the zoning administrator as representative to CVRPC due to fiscal considerations and in order for the zoning administrator to focus on the position's core responsibilities, and to leave the representative position open at this time. Rose seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

Woodbury Fire Department: The WFD presented its FY2016 budget, \$13,500 for the truck replacement fund and \$22,627 for the fire services contract. WFD is now using edispatch, which tones to cell phones, to augment its regular dispatching service. Toby said East Montpelier Fire Department is also using edispatch. WFD verified that Calais is not paying for WFD's dispatching services. John made a motion to

approve the fire services contract of \$22,627 and truck replacement amount of \$13,500. Rose seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4-1, with Scott voting no.

Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) – Town Hall: David Schutz reviewed the \$10,000 grant the town received from Certified Local Government (CLG) for repairing windows and paying for an engineering study of the belfry, with work to be done by November 2015. He noted the town hall has a new roof. However, the architectural study done in 2013 by Arnold and Scangas Architects did not reveal the condition of the town hall's foundation which is in urgent need of repair. Ernie Parrish and Syver Rogstad temporarily repaired the floor at the lower first floor entrance. The building was used after that until the floor at the bottom of the stairs began to cave in. Scott showed photos of the foundation taken from under the town hall.

David stressed that the selectboard and townspeople need to commit to repairing the town hall. "It is time to pay attention," he said. Additional planning is required 1) to address the foundation and other future concerns that might not be spelled out in the Arnold and Scangas study; 2) to be able to continue using the building and to increase its utility; 3) to address items such as an alternate heat source, relocating the lift to the back entrance to free up space on both floors. Another grant round has begun for CLG and the town can apply for a grant for \$10,000 to \$15,000. The grant is a 60/40 match with the town paying 40%. David will find out if the 40% match can include in-kind contributions. Denise said the selectboard is supportive of fixing and maintaining the historic building and using it for purposes other than meetings. David asked the selectboard to continue to request \$20,000 annually from the voters at town meeting to be added to the Town Hall and Town Office Reserve Fund; to work with the Historic Preservation Commission to build a budget for the repair of the town hall; and to reach out to voters to educate them about the poor condition of the building.

Toby made a motion to approve HPC to submit a grant to CLG for between \$10,000 and \$15,000 with a 60/40 match, encouraging as much in-kind contribution as possible for the town's share. John seconded the motion and it passed 5-0.

David stressed that the town must be committed to saving and using the building. HPC member Chris Cochran has developed a list of potential grants. Public awareness is key, said Denise. Reed pointed out that it is important to work on multiple uses for the buildings as this will assist with obtaining grants.

Kellogg Hubbard Library: Executive Director Tom McKone discussed the library's budget. Forty eight to 50% of the library's \$876,300 budget comes from the communities, the remainder from grants, foundations and donations. The library is requesting \$25,760 from Calais, 2.9% of the budget and \$2,190 less than last year. The funding method is based on a per capita rate of \$16; the statewide average is \$27 per capita for public libraries. Berlin has not participated in past years, but may this year. If it is voted down, the cost will not be shifted to other towns. Scott asked what would happen if Calais voted a lesser amount than \$25,760. Tom said, while it is Board policy that it must be the total amount based on their current budgeting process, the board is discussing if there should be more than one type of library card. The current \$40 cost is a courtesy to those who want to use Kellogg Hubbard but are supporting a library in their town through their property taxes. It does not cover the actual cost. Tom pointed out that the children's librarian is doing outreach to schools, including Calais. Calais has 387 active users who checked out 13,478 items over 11 months. (Details of the budget are available at the town office. Residents may ask that a copy be mailed to them.)

Overweight permit: Toby made a motion to approve the revised "Uniform Municipal Excess Weight Permit" dated 1/12/15 and allow the clerk to sign the permits. Denise seconded the motion and it passed 5-0. Toby and Alfred will look into the cost of hiring an engineer to evaluate the overweight restriction on the bridges listed on the permit (Moscow Woods Bridge and Max Gray Bridge).

Highway Budget FY2016: Toby presented a proposed salary schedule for the Calais highway department:

- New hire up to 6 months' probation \$14/hour
- 6 months to 1 year \$14.50 to \$15
- Second year to fifth year \$16
- Fifth year to tenth year \$16.50
- Merit raises 50 cents/hour

Toby presented proposed pay raises for the Calais road crew in order to plan the FY2016 highway budget. The selectboard reviewed the proposed FY2016 highway budget. Toby provided a highway equipment capital plan. He will add make, model and purchase year to the list. Toby asked that two items be put on the warning: 1) To see if the town will authorize the selectboard to purchase a 6-wheel truck at a cost not exceed \$165,000 to be financed over 5 years. The 7-year-old 6-wheeler truck will be traded in for \$18,000. Payments would begin in FY2017. First payment is \$23,575; 2) To see if the town will authorize the selectboard to purchase a used 3/4 ton 4x4 pickup with plow at a cost not to exceed \$35,000 to be financed over 5 years. The Board discussed using some of the highway reserve fund to pay the equipment loans in FY2016.

Executive Session: At 9:00 pm Denise made a motion that premature public knowledge of the town's litigation with CCS Constructors would cause the town to suffer a substantial disadvantage. The motion was seconded by Rose and approved 4-0, Scott having left the meeting. Denise made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss pending litigation with the town's attorney under the provisions of Title 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1). Rose seconded the motion and it was approved 5-0. Denise made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss a personnel matter in accordance with Title 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(3). The motion was seconded by John and approved, 4-0.

Meeting Continued to January 19: The Board came out of executive session at 9:55 pm with nothing to report on litigation or personnel matters. Denise made a motion to continue the meeting until Monday, January 19, 6:30 pm at the town office to continue work on the town meeting warning and budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Fitch, Clerk