

## Selectboard Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2015

Approved

Present: Selectboard members Scott Bassage, John Brabant, Rose Pelchuck, Toby Talbot, Denise Wheeler; Paul Cerutti, Woodbury Fire Dept; Will Walters, Hardwick Gazette; Tony Facos, Montpelier Police Chief; Scott Bagg, Capital Fire Mutual Aid System; Ty Roland, East Montpelier Fire Dept; Renee Carpenter, Zoning Administrator; Roads Advisory Committee members Peter Harvey, Rick Kehne, Stephanie Kaplan; Donna Fitch, Clerk.

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm by Denise Wheeler, Chair.

Non-agenda Items: Scott Bassage asked the Selectboard to confirm their support of state statutes regarding cutting shade trees, Title 24, Chapter 67. The members confirmed they did. Scott referenced the Vermont Tree Warden web site. Denise said she would put the subject on a future meeting agenda.

Minutes approved: The Selectboard unanimously approved Selectboard minutes of November 24, December 8, 15, 22, and 29, 2014 and January 12 and 19, 2015. Road discontinuance meeting minutes of December 8 and 15, 2014 were also unanimously approved by the Board.

Bridge weight limit: Toby Talbot reported that the state bridge inspector for the town's district visited the town garage and reported the weight limit on Moscow Woods Bridge is more than adequate at 24,000 pounds. It could handle more, he said. The bridge is a "short span" bridge, meaning that only part of a large truck is on the bridge at one time. Donna Fitch will send the road and bridge weight limit form/report to the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Official highway mileage map: Grist Mill 1 and Sand Hill Road will be added to the map as trails. Donna and Toby will be responsible for sending to the State by the Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> deadline.

Selectboard report and town meeting warning: The Selectboard approved their report for the town report. The town meeting warning was accepted with a rewrite of the articles requesting matching money for structures grants for County Road and the North Calais retaining wall. Toby said that engineer Doug Newton's \$170,000 estimate for County Road included a 5% contingency fee.

Restricted Landing Area (RLA): Denise recused herself and vice chair John Brabant led the discussion, asking Denise to describe her request for the Selectboard's support of an RLA. Denise explained the RLA would be a designated area for emergency landing of a helicopter. The town does not have any zoning regulations against RLAs and a letter would be sent to VTrans from the Selectboard stating that and supporting an RLA off Bayne Commolli Road. No construction is necessary. VTrans will visit the sight and designate it an RLA. Toby pointed out that EMFD is aware of open areas where emergency helicopters can land, though the areas are not on an official emergency map. Scott made a motion to support the RLA and letter to VTrans to be signed by John Brabant. The motion was seconded and passed 4-0 with Denise abstaining.

Capital West dispatching: Due to a sizable increase in the FY2016 cost of dispatching, Scott Bagg of Capital West was asked to attend the meeting. Scott Bagg referred to Capital West as a dispatching cooperative with dispatching coming out of Montpelier. Two years ago, Montpelier Police Chief Facos met with Capital West and indicated a need to increase staff. Capital West formed a committee to

negotiate with Montpelier. The committee issued email reports to fast squads, fire departments and sent hard copy reports to fire departments. In December 2014, a contract was accepted and bills were sent out. Acknowledging there has been a void in communications between Capital West, the fire departments and the town of Calais, Scott Bagg pointed out that Calais is unique in that it is served by two fire departments. Denise said it feels like the town is getting double billed. (Currently, Calais pays a portion of EMFD's dispatching fees in its annual payment and pays a fee directly to Capital West. Woodbury removes its dispatching fees before billing Calais.)

Chief Facos said they are laying the foundation for a change in Montpelier and surrounding services. An increase in the complexity of responses to emergency calls puts a lot of pressure on his two sergeants. There were six full dispatchers and they added a half time position. At that time, better data collection led the Chief to realize just how much staff is actually needed. There are two dispatchers on seven days a week from 8 am to midnight. To make that work and maintain the current level of service to Capital West, it is necessary to have seven full time employees. A dispatching supervisor was hired. The communications budget out of Montpelier is \$590,000. Chief Facos pointed out that Montpelier doesn't negotiate with individual towns, and he acknowledged there had been some breakdown in communications between Montpelier, Capital West and towns. Out of the \$590,000, Capital West pays \$275,000 and Montpelier pays \$315,000. Montpelier carries the liability, he pointed out, and goes beyond calling emergency services; they will contact a road commissioner, a telephone service provider and whoever or whatever resources are needed in an emergency. Chief Facos explained the fee assessment varies by town based on call volume. However, he said, the current Calais billing arrangement was set up 20 years ago and he didn't know the origin. John said, "Calais should be at the table." Scott Bagg apologized, saying there was no intent to not include Calais. Toby pointed out that Calais is represented by EMFD and WFD. He suggested taking the town out of the equation and the town will work with EMFD and WFD to handle the dispatching cost. Chief Facos said there will be a 7 1/3% increase in future years. The can make the change next year to bill EMFD and WFD and not bill Calais. The Selectboard agreed this would be a favorable change.

Roads Advisory Committee: Stephanie Kaplan reported there are seven members on the committee though Doug Lilley does not attend. Other members are: Greg Pelchuck, Barbara Weedon, Rick Kehne, Peter Harvey and Rose Pelchuck, representing the Selectboard. The committee updated their charge (dated January 21, 2015) and passed out copies. Tasks that had been completed were deleted. Stephanie requested the committee be told about highway projects before they commence. Toby agreed to keep them informed. The committee will be put on the Selectboard agenda once a month to give updates. They will bring recommendations regarding Lightning Ridge Road to their next meeting with the Selectboard. Toby and Rick have met, and will continue to meet, to identify upcoming projects. John Brabant pointed out the "sea of ugliness" in front of Adamant Co-op and asked the committee to pursue that area. The committee is aware of the issues at that intersection. Toby made a motion to accept the Road Advisory Committee's new charge. The motion was seconded and passed 5-0.

Zoning Administrator: Renee Carpenter presented the zoning report that will be in the town report. There were 36 applications in CY 2014, however, more than one request can be put on an application. The report indicates a total of 51 inquiries or complaints which, she explained, were 51 discrete topics. She included this number to indicate how she is spending her time. Renee requested an increase in the FY16 zoning budget, however, the Selectboard did not approve the increase. Renee explained her strategy for enforcement is to encourage people to come into compliance, avoiding attorney fees. She said she has been trying to discuss enforcement and the zoning budget with the the Selectboard since June 2014. Denise said Renee needs to make a specific request regarding a specific case and then the

Board could go into executive session to discuss. The Babic after-the fact permit request was discussed. The hearing is Thursday, January 29, 2015. The Babics are appealing the Notice of Violation that was sent to them on December 19, 2014.

Renee received complaints during the last week in December about major excavation on Paul Grant's property on Route 14, with dozens of truck hauling sand. While a Development Review Board (DRB) permit had been issued in 2013, there were specific conditions being violated (extraction taking place outside the time period set by the DRB). After a "cease and desist" request, the work stopped. She will write a letter to Paul Grant. Renee opened a discussion about using an enforcement/ticket procedure through the Judicial Bureau, the only way the town can receive fees for enforcement without going through Environmental Court. This would require a change to current zoning regulations. Renee pointed out that zoning fees are not in the zoning regulations, and she will bring that to the Planning Commission.

FY2016 proposed budget: In order to bring down expenses, Toby suggested reducing the amounts for guard rails, salaries, sand and fuel. FICA would also be reduced. Painting the town office was taken out of the budget; the cost will be taken out of the Town Hall/Town Office Reserve Fund.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn and all voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Fitch, Clerk