

Selectboard Joint Special Meeting with East Montpelier Board and East Montpelier Fire Department Minutes

Thursday December 3, 2020 at 7 pm via Zoom conference call

Present: Denise Wheeler (Chair), Rose Pelchuck (Member, arriving 7:25 pm), Clif Emmons (Member), ORCA Media, Katie Lane-Karnas (Recording Secretary), Toby Talbot, Ty Rolland (leaving at 7:17 pm for a fire), Carl Etnier, Albert Petrella (leaving at 7:17 pm for a fire), Bruce Johnson, Jon Jewett, Seth Gardner, Judith Woodbeck, Amy Willis, Sandy Conti

Absent: Sharon Winn Fannon (Vice Chair), John Brabant (Member)

1. Call to Order: The East Montpelier Selectboard was continuing a meeting already in order. Denise Wheeler called the Calais Selectboard meeting to order at 7:03 pm.
2. Public Comment: None.
3. Review, Additions/Changes to Agenda: None.
4. Ambulance Budget: Toby Talbot reviewed the EMFD budget (one-third of the fiscal year in). They are at 36.7% of budget, with staffing slightly over (as expected). No expenses are out of line. Two computers for working downstairs in the office were purchased (this will be on the capital fund line). State of Vermont hazard pay was paid to staff. Funding for COVID-19 expenses was gained in the last fiscal year.
5. Fire Budget: Everything is on track. At 26% one-third of the way through the year, slightly below budget. Calais's payment is \$65 underpaid; the reason is unclear.

Jon inquired about the expectation for staffing (discussed at length last year). Salary does continue to increase in the ambulance budget, as more people continue to be available and are scheduled to fill shifts. The driving force on any increase is the salary line item. Last year the two towns discussed adding \$37,500 total this year to meet increased staffing needs. Calais's portion of that is \$12,500 plus an additional overall budget increase of \$3,960 (dispatch, workers comp, etc.). This is a total EMFD budget increase of \$16,460 for Calais. There may be some savings in vehicle repairs with newer vehicles. An overall *reduction* on the fire budget means that the combined (fire and ambulance) actual increase Calais will see is the planned portion of the \$37,500 and an additional \$100, essentially flat-lined.

6. Capital Plan: Rescue 2 and Ambulance Rescue 3 have loans and the schedule was reviewed. One fire truck is nearing replacement (it was pushed off one year and is due now). EMFD manages their capital plan and assets and may ask the Town for money but has not gone to the towns to buy equipment. The EMFD has used their own revenues (which are derived from their own operations); they take their own bank loan as a 501C3. If the two towns' boards agree to the EMFD purchase of capital equipment over \$20,000, the towns do not need to go to the voters for approval. They would bring it to the voters IF funds beyond the EMFD capital

equipment fund are requested. Power cots and defibrillators were purchased and the annual payment are about \$10,000 per year, and are now a line item as part of the budget. It is a pretty tight capital plan: yearly revenue expected at \$120,000 and expenditures at approx. \$102,000. The capital plan's next decade, keeping vehicles replaced on schedule, shows an anticipated deficit starting in 2027 and suggesting the need for further support from the towns. Toby Talbot explained that emergency trucks at the end of their lives (approx. 25 years) are worth very little in trade (if anything at all). Replacement of Engine 4 will be discussed soon (\$350,000).

Rescue 2 was a lucky deal at three years old with everything the EMFD needed. There are no really good used ones on the market for replacing the trucks we have. Crew cabs, for example, are too long to fit in our building. The trucks utilized in a rural environment are generally kept by their departments for the life of the vehicle. This map, a best-guess, shows that we will stick with the capital planning budget as presented, and the EMFD will ask the towns to increase funding in FY2027—unless revenue increases significantly.

7. Call Log Review: The total of this year through November had 566 calls total: 433 ambulance and 261 transports. 263 of these were in East Montpelier, 99 in Calais (the remainder are in other towns). Burn permit numbers are included here, and that number was significantly reduced this year. In East Montpelier, every burn pile is visited by EMFD. EMFD does not issue the fire permits in Calais.
8. There were some additional agenda items that the Chief had planned to discuss, but he was called to a fire during the meeting.
9. COVID Update: Keeping PPE on board has been a challenge; they haven't had many interactions with COVID-positive patients. All precautions are taken to keep staff safe at work. Volunteers or per-diem who were exposed have stayed away from the station, and staffing has thereby been affected by COVID. Mutual aid has had to be called in these situations.
10. Questions: The EIN number exposure was related to the station's sponsorship of a cub scout troop. Rose Pelchuck thanked the group for their presentation and work. Denise Wheeler also thanked the team. Denise Wheeler reported that the East Calais General Store is going to have a weekly "Everybody Eats" program operating from the porch. Meals will be handed out to family in need, no questions asked, Thursdays beginning on December 10 from 4-6 pm. Families do not need to be Calais residents.
11. Other Business/Old Business/New Business: None.
12. Adjournment: Clif Emmons made a motion to adjourn at 7:52 pm. The motion was seconded by Rose Pelchuck, voted on and carried 3-0.

Date: 12/3/2020 Respectfully Submitted, Katie Lane-Karnas, Recording Secretary
Approved by the Selectboard at the 12/19/2020 meeting

Click on the link below to view documents associated with this agenda:

<http://www.calaisvermont.gov/>

Calais Selectboard Special Meeting 12/3/2020

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1rwIXAOtU3jAM4ntQmOFYyly8ecq3L6KZ?usp=sharing>