

BCA Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 10, 2020 at 6:15 pm at the Calais Town Offices

Present: Denise Wheeler (Chair), John Brabant (Vice Chair), Sharon Winn Fannon (Member), Clif Emmons (Member), Katie Lane-Karnas (Recording Secretary), Judith Robert (Town Clerk), Charlotte Hanna Bassage, Scott Bassage, Kristina Bielenberg, Dillon Burns, Barbara Butler, Gus Seelig

Absent: Rose Pelchuck (Member)

1. Call to Order: Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm.
2. Public Comment: None.
3. Review, Additions/Changes to Agenda: None.
4. BCA Chair Election: Scott Bassage nominated Denise Wheeler as Chair of the BCA for the coming year and Dillon Burns seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
5. Town Meeting Preparation: The Town Clerk shared a notebook the Town Office has created compiling all information for Town Meeting. Community Connections has been contracted to provide childcare at the school for Town Meeting Day, eliminating a number of logistical and insurance issues.

Town Meeting Day is held on Tuesday, March 3, 2020, with voting from 7 am to 7 pm. The town ballot has only incumbents (there are no contested races). Setup was discussed: two tables with identical lists (not alphabetical by table), color coded columns will assist in coordinating whether the voter wants the Town ballot, the school ballot, and which of the presidential preference primary ballots the voter requests (Democratic, Republican). The Vermont state statute states, "A person voting at the primary shall be required to ask for the ballot of the party in which the voter wishes to vote and an election official shall record the voter's choice of ballot by marking the entrance checklist...to indicate the voter's party choice."

The group reviewed a spreadsheet of election worker volunteer shifts. In the case of "division of the house," the Selectboard will divide the house. If there is a call to have a ballot vote, Scott Bassage and Judy Robert will hand out ballots.

Protocol and rules for the Election Area: People are not supposed to wear shirts or buttons with campaign materials within 50 feet from the door. Tabling inside has been arranged for the Friends of the Town Hall and Girls Scouts selling cookies. Other groups wanting to table should communicate with the Town Clerk. No surveys of any kind are permitted in the voting area. The question was raised about how to deal with somebody wearing a shirt or hat with a

candidate's name/image. Anyone "actively electioneering" will be asked to leave, but not asked to change their clothing if they are behaving in expectation with Town Meeting.

The Town Clerk will be the person handling voter registration for people whose names are not on the checklist. (She reminded the group that the law was changed a few years ago in Vermont to permit "same day voter registration.") Another recent law provides for use of an accessible voting machine at state elections. It is a tabletop electronic machine accessible for visually impaired voters (the group noted it should be brought indoors from its storage location a number of days in advance of the election). The group discussed the means for wheelchair accessibility, overseas voting, and absentee voting.

Lunch: Friends of the Calais Town Hall (a registered 501C3) is taking over lunch coordination and David Schütz and Artie Toulis are co-chairing the effort. The potluck lunch remains \$5, with proceeds going to the Friends group. The group thanked Barbara Butler and David Schütz for their work making the potluck happen.

Warning: The school warning is no longer printed in the Town Report (a page in the Town Report explains how to learn more on a website, and hard copies will be mailed to voters), and the cost for the report has gone down as a result. The Town Report is at the printers and will be mailed in about a week. There is no school meeting on Town Meeting Day; the Chair believes there is an informational meeting the night before at U32. There will be a short half-hour information session ahead of Town Meeting. A group that has reviewed the social services appropriation requests has met and will present their recommendation at the meeting. The Chair noted that resident Tristan Joy had brought a resolution to a Selectboard meeting on the topic of the Second Amendment, and they had explained the process whereby he could bring it up at Town Meeting. If he does, it may be discussed under new business. Sharon Winn Fannon noted the importance of committing to a protocol to pay close attention to who is waiting to speak, and not accept shoutouts to "call the question," thereby ignoring and invalidating those who had waited their turn to speak with a raised hand. The motion to cease debate is supposed to come in due course from a person who has raised their hand and has been called upon; it doesn't supersede the process of people being called on in turn. Such a protocol helps townspeople get to trust the process.

The Moderator commented it is partly a judgment call on how long the question has been carrying on. The group noted their desire to continue the tradition of welcoming new voters at Town Meeting. Representative Janet Ancel will attend and be allowed to speak when she arrives. Moderator Gus Seelig commented that if anyone in town wants to talk with him before the meeting, he can walk them through and provide guidance on how to get recognized, etc.

Proposed Budget: The Board noted that it spent a tremendous amount of time going through the budget line by line, scrutinizing every single line item. The Board set a target it felt appropriate and whittled down to achieve goals and remain under target (the proposed budget is less than a 3% overall increase).

All BCA members were sworn in.

Upcoming elections:

- Tuesday, August 11 Statewide Primary
- Tuesday, November 3 General Election

6. Adjournment: Barbara Butler made a motion to adjourn at 6:57 pm. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Date: 2/11/2020 Respectfully Submitted, Katie Lane-Karnas, Recording Secretary
Approved by the BCA at the 2/1/2021 meeting

Click on the link below to view documents associated with this agenda:
<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1NC79icvO8TZfo5cUsZNkbuOWEcyKQmG4>