

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 24, 2020 at 7 pm at the Calais Town Offices

Present: Denise Wheeler (Chair), John Brabant (Vice Chair), Rose Pelchuck (Member), Clif Emmons (Member), Jerome Lipani (ORCA), Katie Lane-Karnas (Recording Secretary), Toby Talbot (Operations Manager), Sandra Ferver (Town Treasurer), Donna Fitch, John McCullough, Gus Seelig, Jim Barlow (Town Attorney)

Absent: Sharon Winn Fannon (Member)

1. Call to Order: Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.
2. Public Comment: None.
3. Review, Additions/Changes to Agenda: None.
4. Operations Manager Update: VTRANS revised their road and bridge standards, including incorporating some MRGP standards. These state standards have to be adopted in order for a municipality to be eligible for VTRANS discounts and grants. The state policy will supersede in the case of any conflict with the Town's existing (local) policy. For example, the Town standard is to use non-galvanized guardrails, which would remain in effect as guardrail types are not set forth in the newly adopted state standards. The Board may ultimately consider revising the Town's road and bridge standards to be aligned with this new state policy.

John Brabant made a motion to adopt the State Road and Bridge Standards for the Town of Calais dated June 5, 2019, with additions as indicated on the document by the Operations Manager; these would be in addition to, when not in conflict, with the Road and Bridge Standards of the Town of Calais. Denise Wheeler seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

The Operations Manager noted that he will attend Town Meeting and that the Highway budget looks like it is in good shape. The group discussed codes for timecards. A truck has been loaned to East Montpelier while one of theirs is down; the Operations Manager noted the "mutual aid" relationship between the towns. The Operations Manager made the Board aware that this summer, the highway budget may appear to have gone over because sometimes a reimbursement does not fall into the fiscal year of the expense. For example, the George Road project will likely start in the spring, so approx. \$150,000 may be expended, but reimbursements will arrive in the next fiscal year. Highway as of February is at a 66% point in the budget, and highway salary will appear to be "running over" budget because of winter highway overtime.

Rose Pelchuck noted that a coil spring that had broken off of a vehicle on Lightning Ridge; moguls and encroaching snowbanks are getting rough. The Operations Manager noted that the crew has begun this work and will address Lightning Ridge tomorrow. Roads will get posted

in the first part of March, and logging trucks are trying their best to get everything out of Calais before then.

5. Treasurer/Delinquent Tax Collector Report:

General Government: The Selectboard's budgeted expenditures are on target. The grant matches are at 100%. Town Clerk salaries are a bit over budget due to election duties. Listers, treasurer, auditors, tax collector, elections, zoning administrations, fire and ambulance, planning, conservation fund, swim, and long-term debt budgets are at or under budget for the end of the year. The town office budget, police patrol, tax abatement, and town hall budgets are a bit over. Overall, the general government is about 2% over in budgeted expenses for this point in the fiscal year but it doesn't seem likely that expenses will be over by a significant amount, if at all, at fiscal year-end.

Delinquent Tax Report: The Town has collected \$65,000+ so far of the 2019 delinquent taxes (of approx. \$190,000 that was outstanding). Currently, there is approx. \$125,000 outstanding. Three of four parcels with 2018 delinquent taxes outstanding have been sent to the town's collection attorney for further collection and possible tax sale. The one remaining parcel with a 2018 delinquency owes under \$50.00 and is expected to be paid in full in March.

General Fund Balance: The General Fund Balance (the amount that opened FY 20, plus FY20 revenues, minus FY20 expenditures) is in excess of \$400,000.00. It appears optimistic that the Town will not need to apply for a note in anticipation of taxes again this fiscal year (the general fund balance will likely be healthy enough to cover grant expenses and the first two months of the next fiscal year's expenses pending the receipt of taxes in September).

The Town Treasurer noted that she will attend Town Meeting.

6. Town Hall Update: John McCullough reported that the Town Hall historically was not used and heated in the winter. Now that it is being heated, falling snow from the roof is quite an impact when it reaches the ground and turns to a block of ice (a snowblower cannot handle removing it), building up at the windows. A long-term solution could be a plywood panel to protect the sill and window, along with a strategy for removal. Bobcat makes a small excavator (approx. \$20,000) with a blade and small bucket, and could be the tool to clear where trucks cannot access (the side with septic); it could also do some plowing, and could deal with the snow around the windows in the town office as well. John McCullough will email Greg Pelchuck for more research.

The quote from the contractor for painting the Town Hall came in significantly higher than the amount warned in Article 7. The group planned to leave the amount as warned, and see how the price comes in when it goes out to bid. The heat exchanger will be considered and handled after the certificate of occupancy is accomplished (mainly, the CO is awaiting the electrician's work). John McCullough reported that he has a "punch list" of numerous small items that each take an hour and a half. Clif Emmons noted that the Friends Of group is considering doing a grand opening that may also serve as a fundraiser in mid-May.

7. Town Meeting: Gus Seelig, Moderator, attended and planned with the Board. The group considered each article and who will make motions, tabling, and schedule for the day.
8. Liquor Licenses: Clif Emmons made a motion to approve reauthorization of the liquor license for Adamant Coop (wine and beer). Rose Pelchuck seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

Clif Emmons made a motion to approve reauthorization of the liquor license and tobacco license for Maple Corner Community Store and the liquor license for the Whammy Bar. Rose Pelchuck seconded, and the motion passed 4-0.

9. Local Hazard Mitigation Planning Team Committee: The Planning Team will meet about six times through the fall. The Chair has been checking with potential members (Planning Commission member, Toby Talbot, Brian Lane-Karnas, Denise Wheeler, Nick Emlen).
10. IT Update: The Town is getting its slot reserved for server replacement when that time comes; more positive feedback has been reported from town staff on rBtech's service response.
11. Friends of the Town Hall Committee: Clif Emmons reported that the group is making progress, including website, FB page, logo, and grand opening event planning. The group is hoping the Selectboard will help fund the event. The group will have a table at Town Meeting. Clif noted that the Town Hall chandelier is an historic piece, which was originally gas, and is in need of a set of matching globes, preferably originals.
12. Chair Update:
 - UVM Roads Project is making progress. The Board will prepare a discussion points for questions at Town Meeting, including being proud of all they have worked on this year.
 - The Chair appreciated all that the Board members do, and the effort they have each put in this year, and the Board appreciated the work of the Chair.
 - Office update: Steeple Chase has submitted the final plan for the office redesign, which will be looked at after Town Meeting. The Chair and Clif Emmons met with office staff and learned that office staff are self-sufficient at this point in work that previously had been supplemented by Denise Wheeler. The Chair noted that she has not taken pay for her administrative work since November. Discussion moved to consideration of how restructure of office work has panned out, which is now working well, and emphasized the importance of responding directly to the voters and the unique needs of Calais.
13. Review and approve minutes, warrants
 - a) The Board reviewed the invoices and orders were processed for payment.
 - b) Approval of the minutes was tabled for a subsequent meeting (internet problems disallowed use of the projection screen for review).
14. Executive Session for Personnel Matters: Denise Wheeler made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:45 pm per 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (3), personnel matters, and 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (e), legal matters. The Board invited Town Attorney Jim Barlow, Esq., to join

them. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0. The Board resumed Regular Session at 10:00 pm. The Chair had nothing to report publicly.

15. Other Business/Old Business/New Business: None.

16. Adjournment: Clif Emmons made a motion to adjourn at 10:01 pm. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0.

Date: 2/26/2020 Respectfully Submitted, Katie Lane-Karnas, Recording Secretary
Approved by the Selectboard at the May 4, 2020 meeting

Click on the link below to view documents associated with this agenda:
<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1Tku9UtQCdFAgDJJPgEiwA6kCwCLPBIoA>