

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 13, 2020 at 7 pm via conference call

Present: Denise Wheeler (Chair), John Brabant (Vice Chair), Rose Pelchuck (Member), Sharon Winn Fannon (Member), Clif Emmons (Member), ORCA Media, Katie Lane-Karnas (Recording Secretary), Toby Talbot (Operations Manager), Alfred Larrabee (Road Commissioner), Judy Robert (Town Clerk), Barbara Butler (Assistant Town Clerk), Nick Emlen, Pam DeAndrea (joining at 8:15 pm)

1. Call to Order: Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.
2. Public Comment: None.
3. Review, Additions/Changes to Agenda: None.
4. Updates/Reports, Operations Manager and Road Commissioner: The Operations Manager noted he and the Road Commissioner today discussed a plan for any outstanding road issues, in alignment with operations guidelines defined by the State. The Road Commissioner said potholes and clay boils are the main issue; grading will begin again after heavy rains. Social distancing is possible when the crew is on the road, staying in separate, assigned trucks and disinfecting machines that must switch users (like the grader). The Governor's order allows for "Construction necessary to support the COVID response, and to support critical infrastructure..." and the Board noted the Town would totally lose their critical infrastructure if the Road Crew stayed home until the end of the May 15 order. The quarry is open; different towns have different responses but generally are getting road crew members in different vehicles from each other and continuing road maintenance. The order language "normal springtime maintenance not allowed" was discussed. The Operations Manager had not spoken to the crew and expressed the need for a policy to keep them safe. They currently have gloves and disinfectant but not masks. The Road Commissioner will call the crew following this Selectboard meeting.

"Repairing potholes" is permitted under the order, which in Calais falls under keeping infrastructure operable. The Operations Manager noted that weather forecasted for the rest of the week will allow for road repair. The Road Commissioner stated that a solid two weeks of grading and hauling gravel occurs at this point every year. The Operations Manager stated that his interpretation is that improving conditions of the roads, to maintain critical infrastructure, is acceptable and can happen for the next two weeks.

The Board noted it does not want the Town to be interpreting the order expansively or creatively, or in any way that creates perception that the Town is not working to keep employees safe. The Road Commissioner was asked to read the order in its entirety; practice social distancing for critical road maintenance only; not "stretch" interpretation; keep the

break room off limits; clean the bathroom regularly; note that ditching work is not allowed; recognize any road crew concerns and communicate them directly to the Board.

The Governor's order is through May 15, the Chair suggested and the Board discussed extending the directive to April 30 (the next Selectboard meeting is April 27, at which time the directive could be considered again). The Road Commissioner or Operations Manager maintain responsibility of whether the crew will come in each day (in regard to weather and responsibilities).

Sharon Winn Fannon made a motion to extend the policy the Board put in place for the Road Crew to April 30 with the understanding the office staff and road crew, will operate strictly within the parameters of the Governor's order, and the Road Commissioner will talk with the Road Crew to learn any concerns to communicate back to the Board. Denise Wheeler seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The Road Commissioner encouraged the Board to call him at any time to let him know about road concerns. The Road Crew has communicated they are happy to come back in to work when needed.

5. CVRPC Project - Calais Design Implementation Block Grant for stormwater final designs: Pam DeAndrea said that the project around the E. Calais PO and Moscow Woods Gully is "ready to go." The project is still in the engineering phase of the grant funding. The Operations Manager talked with Shauna Clifford (District VTRANS contact) about the George Road project and can continue with work on it and rely on funding availability.
6. Town Clerk Update: The Town Office has a schedule that is working (alternating weeks between the Town Clerk and Assistant; lister in Friday, Town Treasurer Thursday afternoons). All the land recording is up to date as of this week; dog licenses, overweight permits, etc., have continued to be processed. The Assistant Town Clerk is monitoring the phones and messages. The lock box was ordered and should be arriving any day. A new door lock system will be installed by Andy Felice. The Town Clerk appreciated the support of the Board and felt the office staff are doing well. The Assistant Town Clerk concurred and added that community members have thanked them for their work as well.
7. Revised LEMP: The Chair noted that Nick Emlen has been an integral part of formation and update of the LEMP and the Board appreciated his involvement. Nick Emlen noted that Calais's response to COVID19, the "response phase," was fast and excellent. He would be looking for engagement from the Selectboard and working as a team to continue through the other phases. Government Emergency Telecommunications Service, "GETS," is a free service for identifying town officials who get put to the front of the line by landline providers for emergency communications; he suggested getting to work on this next. Denise Wheeler made a motion to appoint Nick Emlen as Emergency Management Director, and John Brabant seconded. The motion was voted and passed 5-0.

The Board asked Toby Talbot if he would continue serving as the Emergency Management Coordinator, and he agreed. The Director will appoint the Coordinator, as permitted by statute.

Clif Emmons made a motion to authorize the Chair to sign the LEMP documents on behalf of the Board; Rose Pelchuck seconded. The motion was voted and passed 5-0.

8. Town Hall Painting RFP: The Town Hall painting was anticipated being sent out to bid after the funding was approved on an article at Town Meeting. The painting was identified as a priority because of the status of unpainted trim. The Chair noted that according to VLCT, it sounds like the Town does have the authority (chipper, painting RFP) to not expend funds, to help with taxes in light of COVID19. The Board discussed reading the advice from VLCT; competitive offers may be available and helpful for contractors who are currently not able to work. The Board decided to send out the RFP after a review (to confirm that language cites current circumstances and does not obligate the Town to any work or particular start date). Clif Emmons will make editing changes and the Board will revisit the RFP document at the next meeting.
9. Chair Update
 - The Chair appreciated the awesome team effort that has been made to continue excellent Town function during COVID19.
 - The Town may be eligible for a refund for some COVID19 related expenses (\$3300+). Some IT efforts may qualify. A public WIFI hotspot was able to be turned on at the Town Hall at no cost (a firewall upgrade could be considered toward reimbursable expenses).
 - There are fewer cars and school busses on the roads. Calais has a considerable elder and senior citizen population, and the Board is committed to keeping roads passable for their health and safety.
10. IT Update: The Town signed the contract in moving forward with the server replacement. One item that came up in discussion with rBTech is that the internet connection at the Town Office is not as robust as we would like it to be, and limits ability to get a complete backup. An alternate backup solution is needed—a “slingshot” would provide backup at the Town Hall location. The quote is in the meeting folder (approx. \$2200 installed), plus expense of mounting carpentry by Andy Felice. It would be an extension of the security that’s in place at the Town Office and have nothing to do with the public Wi-Fi hotspot.

Other committees have contacted the Board to set up their virtual meetings, and Clif Emmons is coordinating.

11. Executive Session for Personnel Matters: This item was not needed.
12. Other Business/Old Business/New Business: None.
13. Adjournment: Sharon Winn Fannon made a motion to adjourn at 8:24 pm. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.

Date: 4/14/2020 Respectfully Submitted, Katie Lane-Karnas, Recording Secretary
Approved by the Selectboard at the May 4, 2020 meeting

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<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1nMMnif9zqzUpKiCwmFxvrHGskwqfVALE>