

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 11, 2021 at 6 pm via Zoom conference call

Present: Denise Wheeler (Chair), Sharon Winn Fannon (Vice Chair), Rose Pelchuck (Member), Clif Emmons (Member), ORCA Media, Katie Lane-Karnas (Recording Secretary), Jan Ohlsson, David Delcore, Liz Curry, Marc Mihaly, Judith Robert, Alfred Larrabee

Absent: John Brabant (Member)

1. Executive Session for Personnel Matters: Denise Wheeler made a motion to go into Executive Session at 6:04 pm per 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (3), personnel matters with a town road crew member. The motion was seconded by Clif Emmons, voted on and carried 4-0. Rose Pelchuck made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 6:58 pm. The Chair reported the Board met with an employee who had given timely notice of departure and the Board had an exit interview.
2. Call to Order: Denise Wheeler called the regular session portion of the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.
3. Public Comment: None.
4. Review, Additions/Changes to Agenda: None.
5. E. Calais Comm. Trust (ECCT) Update on the Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) Grant Application: The Chair recused herself from this discussion and any votes as she serves on the ECCT board. Liz Curry gave an update of the status of this process. The Regional Planning Commission has been checked with; this grant project is consistent with Calais's Town plan. The grant does not trigger the audit requirement (it will not meet the audit threshold of \$750K). Sharon Winn Fannon noted several minor edits in the draft as proposed, including to item 4 of the resolution: The Selectboard can appoint any member to act on behalf of the board, there's no reason to assume the person who will act on the board's behalf must be the Chair. The language should read, then, that the select board appointed member Sharon Winn Fannon to be the board's point person for purposes of the ECCT project and associated grant applications.

The Selectboard determination to make a Calais application for a grant from VCDP is preceded in this case by adoption of several resolutions at this meeting and a hearing on January 25th. The group reviewed four resolutions that the Board should consider for adoption which Marc Mihaly reported are prototypical policies which we largely follow already and would apply to any federal grant program involving housing. The East Calais Community Trust respectfully requests that the Selectboard adopt these. They are (1) a resolution granting authority to apply; (2) a resolution adopting various federal policies (fair housing, anti-lobbying, equal opportunity, excessive force, ethics, etc.); (3) a residential anti-displacement and relocation plan; and (4) a drug-free workplace policy. If the Town receives the grant, there is a requirement that a Board member take a housing discrimination video training. ECCT

Board members would also like to attend the video training. Sharon said she would send the link to the training with the ECCT Board. If a policy gets approved by the Board, and the grant is awarded, the board must give consideration to how any adopted policy will be included on the Town website listing. While the anti-displacement policy must be adopted as a town policy, as a practical matter this project does not displace any existing housing.

As discussed at the last meeting, January 25th is the date identified for the required hearing. The Board had expressed a preference for a hearing run by ECCT's consultants. ECCT talked to VCDP, the State agency that receives and makes determinations on these grants, and they've requested a sort of hybrid: they're fine with a hearing outside of the Selectboard meeting, one organized and managed by ECCT (that is by consultant Liz Curry), but also requested that one member of the Select Board be present. Accordingly, ECCT scheduled the hearing for 6:15 p.m. on the 25th, just before the start of the Selectboard meeting at 7:00, and Sharon Winn Fannon and Clif Emmons will attend early and be present for the hearing; the ECCT will take minutes and the Zoom call will be recorded. Although any of the Board is welcome, none besides Sharon need attend. The hearing will be closed just before the formal select board meeting begins.

Notice has been simplified due to COVID-19, and now involves simple posting as usual—at the Town Office, East Calais Post Office, Maple Corner Store, on the web calendar and on Front Porch Forum. Publication in the Times Argus is not required.

Clif Emmons made a motion to approve these four documents with the changes as discussed and approval to post the public hearing notice; the motion was seconded by Rose Pelchuck. Sharon Winn Fannon is the member designated to work with the ECCT on behalf of the Town, including to sign related documents for the board. The motion was voted and passed 4-0.

6. Highway Mileage: Sharon Winn Fannon made a motion to approve Certificate of Highway Mileage; Clif Emmons seconded and offered a friendly amendment to allow the Chair to sign on behalf of the Board. The motion was voted and passed 4-0.
7. Road Commissioner Update:
 - a) Truck Evaluation: The group reviewed the independent evaluation of the 2009 International truck performed by Shangraw's Truck and Trailer Repair and procured by the Road Commissioner. The truck passed state inspection last month but shows a lot of rust and deterioration. The evaluation notes a rusted body and chain, the side dump body and chain will need repair, a leak at the filter housing, and issues with ABS wiring. The Road Commissioner has looked into trading this truck in for a newer one with less issues and if he identifies one will bring a proposal to the Board. (Charlebois had provided a number for trade value of this truck at \$15,000.) The Board asked the Road Commissioner and/or Operations Manager to seek out a potential truck replacement and come back to the Board with what is found (asking price, specs, trade value).
 - b) VA Heavy Equipment Refund for Woodchipper: The Road Commissioner commented that he clarified at a previous Selectboard meeting that gasoline could not have been at fault for the woodchipper being broken; the Recording Secretary will review minutes to

locate the details. The refund check from the seller has been mailed to the Town and the Board discussed the check which has been received. The Board did not vote to accept the check for deposit. The Road Commissioner inquired where the loss on the purchase comes out of the budget. The Town Treasurer reported the loan the voters approved was taken out and the refund will pay off all but approx. \$5,000. The voters approved up to \$25,000. The Board will have to consider how to move forward if another chipper is identified.

The Board asked the Road Commissioner to attend the 1/18 meeting at 7pm regarding planning for filling regular and temp road crew positions. He commented that he has located a candidate for the temp position and asked the Board about pursuing filling the position. The potential temporary employee must complete drug testing before any road crew employee is eligible for a position. The Board wants to meet with the Road Commissioner on 1/18/2021 and the exact rate of pay will be discussed then; the Board supports the Road Commissioner moving forward as soon as possible with the drug testing requirement and to communicate to the candidate that final details (including hourly rate) will be available after the 1/18/2021 meeting. The candidate has a permit but needs a licensed driver with him and a truck to take the CDL test (scheduled 2/3/2021). The Board will discuss the issue of using a Town truck for the CDL after the 1/18/2021 meeting.

8. Town Meeting Preparation: The Informational Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, February 20, 2021 at 1 pm via Zoom. The Town Treasurer noted that the finalized budget is down \$487 (due to last minute amounts that came in). Denise Wheeler made a motion and Clif Emmons seconded to approve the total General Government and Highway budgeted expenses on the warning as article three (without special articles) in the amount of \$1,710,976. The motion was voted and passed 4-0.

The group reviewed the most recent version of the draft Town Meeting Warning. The Town Clerk explained that once approved, the warning will be posted on FPF, the website, and in three locations in Calais, and it will be in the town report. The ballot is anticipated to be distributed by mail to all voters (the legislature is expected to vote on it this week, along with articulating the details on that process). The school district has a ballot and the coordination of that distribution remains to be ironed out. The deadline for any article is Thursday and the Town Clerk is not anticipating receiving any. Language and process for the articles regarding taxes remain the same to create as little confusion as possible this Town Meeting. In Article 11, the penalty has been set the same as was voted (by amendment on the floor in 2020) at Town Meeting (3%).

Denise Wheeler made a motion to approve the warning with edits as discussed and to send it to Jim Barlow ahead of going to the printer. The deadline for public petitions is January 14 and the Selectboard will review them for approval at our meeting on January 18. Clif Emmons seconded and the motion was voted and passed 4-0. The Board thanked the Town Clerk and Town Treasurer.

9. Other Updates:
 - The Town received communication from a taxpayer who had the late penalty applied; they felt the Town should have called them by phone before applying the

late penalty. The abatement form was shared with them and a Board of Abatement meeting needs to be scheduled for this issue and abating small amounts of delinquent taxes (\$1.00 and under). A BCA/BOA preparation meeting may also be necessary before Town Meeting Day; February 1 at 6 pm will be considered for these items.

- Town Hall remains unused; the Friends group will meet next month to work on the agreement document to present to the Selectboard.
- Conservation Commission has requested Scott Bassage be appointed to the Commission. The Commission would like to speak with the Board about an access and neighbor issue with the Chapin Town Forest.
- The Town is awaiting applicant response before further action on the Bassage curbcut.

10. Review and approve minutes, warrants

- a) The Board has delegated review and approval for processing of invoices and orders to Clif Emmons, Denise Wheeler, and Rose Pelchuck.
- b) Clif Emmons moved and Denise Wheeler seconded to approve the minutes of the 12/7/2020 special joint meeting, with the changes as noted; the motion passed 4-0. Denise Wheeler moved and Clif Emmons seconded to approve the minutes of the 12/14/2020, continued to 12/19/2020 special meeting, with the changes as noted; the motion passed 4-0.

11. Executive Session for Personnel Matters: Clif Emmons made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:57 pm per 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (3), personnel matters. The motion was seconded by Denise Wheeler, voted on and carried 4-0. The Board resumed Regular Session at 9:07 pm. The Chair had nothing to report publicly.

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

13. Adjournment: Rose Pelchuck made a motion to adjourn at 9:07 pm. Denise Wheeler seconded the motion which was voted on and carried 4-0.

Date: 1/15/2021 Respectfully Submitted, Katie Lane-Karnas, Recording Secretary

Approved by the Selectboard at the 2/8/2021 meeting

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

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1yDUHvjMa1w5SOJuwvjVI2DUF2B92TVSi?usp=sharing>