

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 11, 2021 at 6:30 pm, Town Hall and Zoom

Present: Denise Wheeler (Chair), Sharon Winn Fannon (Vice Chair), Rick Kehne (Member), Marc Mihaly* (Member), ORCA Media, Katie Lane-Karnas* (Recording Secretary), Jan Ohlsson, Jeremy Weiss (Town Clerk), Alfred Larrabee (Road Commissioner), Bill Powell, Neal Maker

Absent: John Brabant (Member), David Healy

**Indicates attendance by Zoom video call*

1. Call to Order: Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. The group tended to technical issues connecting the hybrid meeting.
2. Zoning Administrator Recommendation: Marc Mihaly moved to go into Executive Session at 6:38 pm per 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (3), personnel matters and invited Jan Ohlsson and any other Planning Commission members to join them. The motion was seconded by Rick Kehne, voted on and carried 4-0.

The Board resumed Regular Session at 7:16 pm. Sharon Winn Fannon moved that the Board accept the Planning Commission recommendation to hire John McCullough as the Zoning Administrator (ZA), subject to three points of understanding from the Selectboard: first, that the Selectboard also intend to create an official Assistant ZA position; second, compensation for both the ZA and the Assistant ZA is TBD; and third, that both the ZA and Assistant ZA participate in training through VLCT and/or the CVRPC. Denise Wheeler seconded the motion which passed 4-0.

Sharon Winn Fannon moved that for now, until the Board hires an Assistant ZA, compensation for the ZA be \$400 per month, consistent with the Board's recent practice. Denise Wheeler seconded, and the motion was voted and passed 4-0.

3. Public Comment: None.
4. Review, Additions/Changes to Agenda: The order of the agenda was altered slightly to accommodate David Healy's presence for the CVFiber item.
5. Town Plan: The Chair asked members to review the proposed adoption process and schedule for the amendments to the Town Plan. Jan Ohlsson announced the PC public meeting is October 19, 2021 at the Town Hall and via Zoom.
6. Review and Sign Warrants: The Board reviewed and approved processing of invoices and orders.

7. Town Treasurer Computer Purchase: The Town Treasurer's computer has failed. rbTech has made repeated attempts to fix the problems but now suggests the purchase of a new computer. ~~die~~ and rbTech's quote is for \$2,039 (includes installation). This would come out of the Technology Reserve Fund. Denise Wheeler made a motion to move forward and authorize purchase of a new computer for the Town Treasurer, consistent with the quote from rbTech. The motion was seconded, voted, and passed 4-0.
8. Washington Electric Coop (WEC) Work on Kent Hill Rd.: Bill Powell reported that he met on site with the Road Commissioner a number of times and the group reviewed a screen shared map/diagram and language of the revised WEC plan to replace lines on Kent Hill Rd. "WEC has a municipal permit to replace buried three phase lines in Kent Corner, while accommodating the Road Commissioner's need to plan for the future replacement of the existing 5' culvert next to Allyson Evans' house." It went on to detail how that future replacement of the culvert will be executed in coordination between the Town and WEC.

The Chair inquired about the status of the concern raised at the last meeting by Mr. Duggan of Vermont Division for Historic Preservation. Bill Powell noted he met with VDHP twice in the last week and they said there is no problem. This proposed plan is the same as the permit originally granted by the Board with the addition of language specifying that WEC will pay for the pulling of the wire when the time comes (as noted above); the Chair read the language aloud and again confirmed that WEC will pay for all costs associated with this project.

Sharon Winn Fannon moved to accept the amendment to the WEC permit originally approved on August 24, 2021. Rick Kehne seconded the motion and the Chair will attach the document discussed tonight to the permit (which gets recorded in the land records). The motion was voted and passed unanimously.

9. Carmichael Curb Cut Request #2021-07: The Chair notified Mr. Carmichael that this item was on the agenda, but again he did not attend. The Road Commissioner met with him on site, and Mr. Carmichael explained the curb cut was made before a permit was issued because he was getting a large delivery and the truck was having a hard time getting into the field for delivery; Mr. Carmichael laid material to accomplish this access. The Road Commissioner explained to him that this is not permissible without a permit. The applicant acknowledged work was done before permitting due to other circumstances, and was apologetic about not following the process. The Road Commissioner stated the sight distance meets standards; no culvert is required; B71 design standards will be met. Rick Kehne moved that we approve as noted; Sharon Winn Fannon seconded. The motion was voted and passed 4-0.
10. Neal Maker Curb Cut Request #2021-08: Neal Maker is applying for this curb cut on behalf of the residents (Potter/Blake) on Kent Hill Road (who purchased Janet Ancel's property) for the purpose of accessing a field for mowing, logging, etc. It is intended to be permanent. The Road Commissioner noted sight distance meets standards; a 15" culvert is needed; B71 standards to be followed. Denise Wheeler moved to approve the curb cut with the conditions as noted; Rick Kehne seconded. The motion was voted and passed 4-0.

11. Ongoing Road Crew Hiring Challenges: The Road Commissioner continues seeking to fill two full-time road crew positions (one vacancy and the recently added 5th member effective 7/1/2021). There was some interruption to the posting of ads for position but the Road Commissioner now has it advertised again, with the benefits highlighted. The group noted once again this is a widespread problem, across industries.

The Road Commissioner will present a winter roads contingency plan (for communication to the town) at the next meeting, including defining the emergency scenario in which surrounding towns offer mutual aid for snowplow, the option of local plow contractors, plow route prioritization, and coordination with the school bus company. Denise Wheeler inquired as to how this might affect insurance liability/risk? The Road Commissioner confirmed a town employee plowing with a town truck doing municipal work is insured regardless of location. Rick Kehne asked the Board to consider a sign-on bonus. The Road Commissioner updated that Ed is still working forty hours and seeking benefits and he requested guidance from the Board on the number of hours to schedule him for temp work; the Chair will look into employment guidelines and options. A temp person seasonally hired is not subject to benefits (in contrast to a position that is permanent part-time).

12. Regional Emergency Management Committee (REMC) Calais Representative: Rick Kehne will approach Betty Copeland, Calais resident, about serving as the second as a representative for Calais.
13. National Opioids Settlement Notice: Calais's Town Attorney recommends that Calais sign on; it is not clear whether anything comes from this, but there is no reason not to participate. Denise Wheeler moved that Calais participate in the National Opioids Settlement Notice. Marc Mihaly seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
14. CVFiber Update: David Healy, Calais's representative to CVFiber, discussed the project status. He reviewed accomplishments such as the pole inventory in Calais and a new effort associated with a grant for connecting locations between East Montpelier and Calais. The goal is to reach all "underserved" (houses not currently served by cable internet) premises in Calais by the end of 2022, depicted as red dots on the map David Healy shared. Federal monies for broadband are destined for "underserved" households, so this is significant in that Calais has more than 500 such households designated. David Healy directed members' attention to a detailed cost spreadsheet. As in past meetings, he explained the extraordinary improvement in internet speed that will happen, actually allowing people to work from home. He recommended the use of ARPA funds for this buildout and asked the Board to keep CVFiber apprised of their intention for those funds. A document, "Sources of Financing the Network," was reviewed: ARPA state, ARPA local, and the pending infrastructure bill contributions are in the multi-millions, leaving a shortfall of \$16,500,000. Once the network has been in operation for three years, the Vermont bond bank will be an option for funding.

David explained that this year a Vermont Community Broadband Board was established and is responsible for creating design standards and distributing the funds appropriated this year. He reiterated CVFiber's pitch for each town's ARPA support and focused on the exact costs of running fiber to the Town Office and Town Hall. The Board agreed about the immense positive impact this internet access will have for a wide swath of Calais residents.

15. Review and approve minutes

- a) Denise Wheeler moved and Sharon Winn Fannon seconded to approve the minutes of the 8/26/2021 special meeting, with the changes as noted; the motion passed 5-0.
- b) Rick Kehne moved and Marc Mihaly seconded to approve the minutes of the 9/13/2021 meeting, with the changes as noted; the motion passed 5-0.
- c) Rick Kehne moved and Denise Wheeler seconded to approve the minutes of the 9/20/2021 special meeting, with the changes as noted; the motion passed 5-0.

2. Other Business/Old Business/New Business: Sharon Winn Fannon commented she received a resident request for developing a junk ordinance; the Chair noted it is on the list for future agenda items.

The site visit for Chapin Town Forest caused the Board to feel they would like to do an additional meeting that was not on a weekday, to hear from more residents and decided on Saturday October 16, 2021, 10 am.

October 25, 2021, at 6 pm is the Board of Abatement meeting.

3. Executive Session for Personnel Matters: Denise Wheeler made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:54 pm per 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (3), personnel matters. The motion was seconded by Rick Kehne, voted on and carried 4-0. The Board resumed Regular Session at 9:40 pm. The Chair reported that the Board decided to offer a signing on bonus of \$2,000 to be distributed as follows:
- 1) \$500. after the first 30 days of continuous employment subject to satisfactory performance;
 - 2) \$500. after successful completion of 6 months employment (probation) subject to satisfactory performance;
 - 3) \$500 on the 1 year anniversary of employment subject to satisfactory performance; and
 - 4) \$500 after 1 1/2 years of employment subject to satisfactory performance.
4. Adjournment: Rick Kehne made a motion to adjourn at 9:43 pm. Sharon Winn Fannon seconded the motion which was voted on and carried 4-0.

Date: 10/12/2021 Respectfully Submitted, Katie Lane-Karnas, Recording Secretary
Approved by the Selectboard at the 10/25/2021 meeting

Click on the link below to view documents associated with this agenda:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1zSGdVDa_M9ADvMLNhnNgYJp-MA3XgSG3?usp=sharing