

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 12, 2021 at 7 pm via Zoom conference call

Present: Denise Wheeler (Chair), Sharon Winn Fannon (Vice Chair), Clif Emmons (Member), Rick Kehne (Member), ORCA Media, Toby Talbot (Operations Manager), Alfred Larrabee (Road Commissioner), Gail Graham, Judy Fitch Robert (Town Clerk), Tom Blachly, Tim Maker, Tom Cronin

Absent: John Brabant (Member)

1. Call to Order: Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. Public Comment: None.
3. Review, Additions/Changes to Agenda: None.
4. Operations Manager: Two grants were applied for last year that were not received (none were distributed last year because of Covid), and the Operations Manager is seeking approval to reapply for these grants (Class 2- re-pave the section from Rt. 14 to the school and structures- replace and re-size culvert on Luce Rd. from a 48-inch culvert to a 66-inch culvert). The Operations Manager noted there are no problems to be aware of with these projects. Sharon Winn Fannon made a motion to approve the Operations Manager reapplying for the Class 2- re-pave from Rt. 14 to the school and the culvert on Luce Rd. Rick Kehne seconded the motion. Both projects would be hired out. The motion was voted and passed 4-0.
5. Curb Cut Application #2021-01 Revised for Gail Graham (Leonard Rd.): Gail re-submitted the revised application (changing “agricultural” to “residential” per the Board’s discussion). The Road Commissioner is recommending a 15” culvert outside of the right of way and talked with the applicant about this, who agrees. Denise Wheeler made a motion to approve the curbcut with the recommended 15” culvert outside of the right of way, which Gail Graham has agreed to do. Rick Kehne seconded the motion, with authorization for the Chair to sign on behalf of the Board, and it was voted and passed 4-0.
6. Highway Department Updates: The Operations Manager inquired about the status of the woodchipper; it is dead and the Chair asked the Highway Department to look into a purchase and return to the Board with a proposal. The Road Commissioner noted there have been two trucks identified as potential trade-in purchases from Charlebois but neither will be available until later in the fall. The Operations Manager suggested the Road Commissioner speak with Charlebois about a specific truck and return to the Board with the specs and information, potentially for approval on putting money down, to be proactive. The Board asked the Road Commissioner to think about the roadside mowing schedule to get ahead of invasives this season (this will be an agenda item for April 26). Invasives are time-sensitive and have been discussed as a priority for four years. The Road Commissioner noted that the crew is ahead of its usual schedule for filling potholes because of the dry conditions. The board emphasized that mowing invasives is a priority equal to road maintenance, and in fact it is part of road

maintenance to keep our roadsides healthy. The funds for hiring another road crew person were approved by the town in March and will be available July 1. Gail Graham complimented the road crew on their road maintenance this spring. The Road Commissioner explained that work is starting on Memorial Hall and he received a message from the contractor who is bringing heavy equipment in; he asked him to wait until next week when the roads are not posted. GAR Road is pretty rutted and muddy, and he asked the Board if he could put some gravel and maintain it ahead of the heavy equipment. The Chair noted that historically the Town has done efforts like this and it is appropriate for him to decide within his discretion as the manager in accordance with the Class 4 Roads policy.

7. Town Clerk Vacancy/Interim Town Clerk: The Chair thanked the Town Clerk for her work and support with the transition in the position. Judy created a timeline that the Town Attorney has reviewed. The group realized this is the first time in 60 years that the Town has had to seek a Town Clerk. Denise Wheeler made a motion to accept and approve Judy’s memo of March 22, 2021 with the conditions she included (that she continue to receive the same pay and benefits from now until June 30, 2021). Rick Kehne seconded the motion. Clif Emmons thanked Judy for being willing to work with the Board on this, going above and beyond in terms of flexibility; she will be missed. Board members concurred. Judy offered to be available in July to do training. Sharon Winn Fannon underscored that Judy is resigning tonight, the Board is discussing accepting the resignation tonight; the Board will have ten days to notice the public of the vacancy. This was considered a motion and seconded by the Chair. The motion was voted and passed 4-0.

The Draft Notice of Vacancy for the town clerk position is posted on the website and in public places. If there were candidates who wanted to have a forum for the public, they could do that; an informational meeting is not required and the select board does not intend to convene one. Denise Wheeler made a motion to approve the Special Town Meeting Warning for June 30 for election of a Town Clerk. Clif Emmons noted there is the possibility that a member of the public could petition to have an article added and Judy confirmed it would have to be received by May 3. The motion was voted and passed 4-0. The Board thanked the Town Clerk again for putting this together so well. She reminded the Board they need to decide if ballots should be mailed to all voters (due to COVID-19) and they felt they would support sending them by mail (to revisit for a vote at the next meeting). The Town Clerk reported that everything at the office has been quite routine.

8. Appointments/ reappointments:
Denise Wheeler made a motion to move appointees to CVRPC and CVFiber as noted below, for a term of one year. Sharon Winn Fannon seconded the motion which was voted and passed 4-0.

Central VT Regional Planning, Alt.	Ohlsson	Jan
	Ellenboge	
CVRPC TAC Committee	n	David
CVRPC TAC Committee Alternate	McNeill	Karin
CVFiber Delegate	Healy	David
CVFiber Alternate	Thomas	Jared

Sharon Winn Fannon made a motion to reappoint Anne Winchester as the E-911 Coordinator and Denise Wheeler noted their thankfulness that Anne is willing to continue in her role. The motion was seconded, voted, and passed.

Denise Wheeler made a motion to reappoint Tobin Anderson (term ending 2023), Susannah Blachly (term ending 2023), Karen Lane (term ending 2024), and Larry Bush (term ending 2024) to the Historic Preservation Commission to complete their three year terms. Sharon Winn Fannon seconded and the motion passed 4-0.

9. Trails Committee: Tom Blachly of the Trails Committee attended and explained they are making a push toward some construction projects this year, including a boardwalk and observation deck at Little Mud Pond. The quote on construction from Randy Allen (\$2,500) is in the Trails Committee account (currently at \$3,500). They built a kiosk on Robinson Hill Trails, raised from private funds, but would like to build another at the Calais Town Forest (\$650) and have gained the full support of the Conservation Commission. This kiosk would support mapping and information about the Town Forest. The Chair asked if any of the funds in the account have restrictions; Tom didn't think so but will check with the Town Treasurer. The Chair appreciated hearing about the project, and if they have the funds without restrictions, the Committee can expend them as they see fit. Sharon Winn Fannon made the group aware that as a general matter, the Town's Purchasing Policy would be applicable if the expenditure was above \$5,000.

Gail Graham has resigned after having been a member since the Committee's inception. Two potential new candidates, Tom Cronin and Tim Maker, have been interviewed and the Committee is requesting the Board increase their membership number from 9 to 10. Tom noted there has been a lot of interest in the Committee and everyone has been attending meetings and active. Denise Wheeler made a motion to increase the size of the Trails Committee from 9 to 10 members; Rick Kehne seconded. The motion was voted and passed 4-0.

Tim Maker introduced himself (he is a long-time Calais resident) and shared about his passion for hiking and improving the Calais trail situation. Tom Cronin also introduced himself and stated how much he has enjoyed the trails since moving here in the past year, and his interest in giving back to the community in this way.

Denise Wheeler made a motion to reappoint Toni Kaeding, Denise Wilder, and Michael Fullerton to the Trails Committee for a term of three years (expiring in 2023); the motion was seconded and passed 4-0.

Denise Wheeler made a motion to reappoint Charlotte Hanna and Steve Killoran to the Trails Committee for a term of three years (expiring in 2024); the motion was seconded and passed 4-0.

Denise Wheeler made a motion to appoint Tom Cronin to the unexpired term of Gail Graham (expiring 2024) and Tim Maker to fill the newly created position (expiring in 2024). Clif Emmons seconded the motion. The motion was voted and passed 4-0.

10. Consideration of CVSWMD MSP Grant: There is an opportunity that John Brabant suggested may be utilized for a fence and a gate around the trash site in East Calais (hopefully deterring trash dumping). Bill Powell is looking into this opportunity. Snowplow access would need to

be confirmed. Denise Wheeler made a motion to authorize Bill Powell to take the lead on applying for a grant at the dump at Moscow Woods road for a fence and a gate and coordinate efforts on sizing with the Road Commissioner and Operations Manager, and to authorize John Brabant to be Bill's liaison on this. Sharon Winn Fannon made a friendly amendment to authorize them to bring back a grant application to the Board, if possible, on Monday April 19. Rick Kehne seconded the motion which was voted and passed 4-0.

11. Other Updates

- *Town Hall:* There have been many inquiries about when the Town Hall can be available for use again, and the Board has been deferring to input received from VLCT, the governor's recommendations, and the Town Health Officer. We don't have a management agreement with the Friends group, so they are routing inquiries to the Board. The Board's response will be shared with the Town Office staff (we have not opened it up; we are aware of the desire and the need and now the guidance we are getting is not before July 4). The Board is starting to talk about this, and will continue to follow the governor's and CDC guidelines and best practices and are looking at not reopening not before July 4.
- *Friends of Town Hall:* The Friends group is ready to discuss the management agreement with the Board and iron out details to everyone's satisfaction. They inquire if the Board would be willing to set aside a special meeting in May dedicated to the subject. The terms of use and management agreement and draft rental agreement will be reviewed.
- *IT update:* The Board will invite Rubin from RBTech at the April 26 meeting to update the Board ahead of contract renewal.
- Next Meeting: Special Meeting April 19
- Denise Wheeler and Rick Kehne attended the EMFD joint meeting and there will need to be time for reviewing the contract. Calais noted they have discussed this at a past joint meeting of EMFD and E. Mont. SB and will continue due diligence on behalf of the taxpayers to review the contract.
- The Chair explained a situation where an application for ROW work was submitted from a resident when in fact the applicant needed to be the utility company. The resident has an urgent need, but the utility company didn't submit the application timely; the Board decided to allow the application to be an agenda item at their special meeting on April 19, 2021. If this becomes routine, the Board will become more rigid in requiring folks to follow the process established by the Board.
- Peter Harvey has communicated with the Board around wild chervil invasives in Calais once again, and the Board planned to include the discussion at an upcoming meeting.
- North Calais Memorial Hall Association met with the Conservation Commission who have reviewed their interim management plan and suggested changes. Rowan has made those changes and construction is due to begin; the Board committed \$50,000 from the Conservation Fund for work, which the NCMHA will request be released. The interim management plan approval requires a discussion with the Board.
- The Local Hazard Mitigation Plan and Local Emergency Management Plan need review and adoption. Updates will be given at the Board's April 26, 2021 meeting.

12. Executive Session for Personnel Matters: This item was not needed.

13. Other Business/Old Business/New Business: Clif Emmons let the Board know it is his intent to resign his position on the Board effective immediately, to allow the Board the opportunity to get someone on the ballot (to coincide with the special election that is coming up) and he held the option that if the Board is interested, he would help with the transition to be appointed to the position temporarily. The Chair noted Clif's many contributions to the Board and how much she is going to miss him. Sharon Winn Fannon echoed Denise's sentiments.
14. Adjournment: Rick Kehne made a motion to adjourn at 9:04 pm. The motion was seconded and approved.

Date: 4/13/2021 Respectfully Submitted, Katie Lane-Karnas, Recording Secretary
Approved by the Selectboard at the 6/28/2021 meeting

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

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1mRERtpriviuLWxZ6NVnanc1vXKU0m3HW?usp=sharing>