

SELECTBOARD MEETING
Minutes

April 11, 2019

7:00pm EMFD Station 2

**JOINT MEETING OF THE CALAIS SELECTBOARD, EAST MONTPELIER SELECTBOARD and
EMFD BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Financial Review, Budget Discussion and General Update

Attending: Calais Selectboard Members: Denise Wheeler, Sharon Winn Fannon, Clif Emmons and Rose Pelchuck; East Montpelier Selectboard Member: Seth Gardner; Bruce Johnson, East Montpelier Town Administrator; EMFD Board Members: Ty Rolland, Chief, Toby Talbot, President, Sandy Conti, Jason Cote-Wong, and Albert Petrella, Board Members and Judy Woodbeck, EMFD Treasurer/Administrative Assistant.

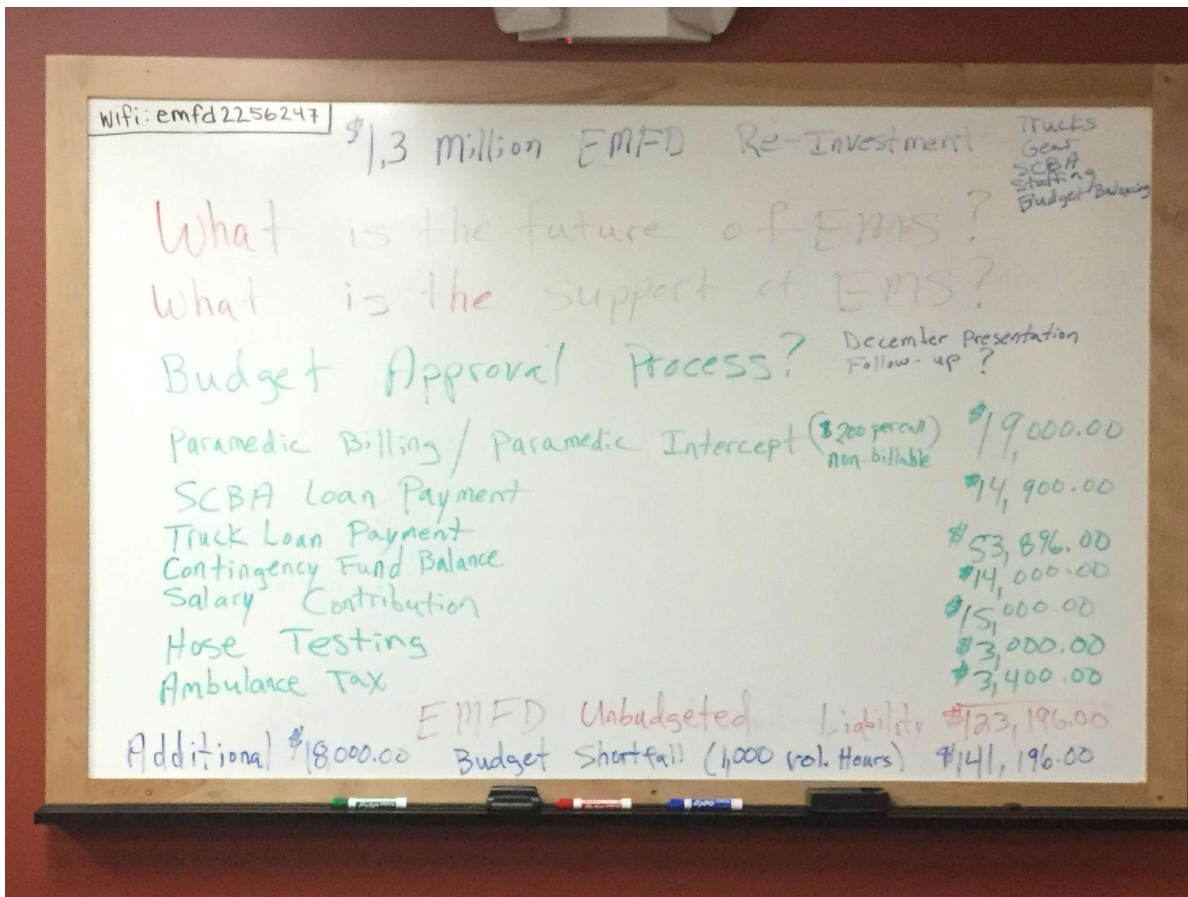
Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm for the Calais Selectboard and advised there would be a few more agenda items for the Calais Selectboard at the conclusion of this Joint Meeting. No public comment or changes to the agenda were heard.

Ty Rolland had no agenda to present and posed two questions to the Selectboard as follows:

What does EMS in Vermont look like?

What is the support of EMS by the Selectboard?

Ty referenced the articles he circulated via email regarding departments in Vermont going out of business. Ty also referenced the white board (see below) regarding EMFD financials/budget.



Discussion ensued. Ty Rolland blames the Selectboards for cutting the EMFD FY2020 budget when their proposed budget did not include all the expenses EMFD expected to incur, leaving the Department with a projected revenue shortfall. In fact, the joint Selectboards did not cut their proposed budget by \$18,000.00, rather agreed that \$18,000 would come from ambulance revenue before putting away funds in the Capital Reserve Fund. Seth Gardner said, "This is poor communication as far as I'm concerned" referring to the Department not letting the Selectboards know all the costs of doing business." Ty Rolland said EMFD learned from experience what to present and not present to the select boards. Sharon Winn Fannon responded that whether or not you believe the selectboards will agree to the budget you propose, you need to put all the information in front of them. Choosing not to is a decision you make without buy-in or support from stakeholders. Instead, put all the information forward and then have the difficult discussion when presenting a draft budget.

Ty Rolland responded by saying, "Our focus is not on the budget, it is where we are going forward". Ty added the Department is saving to buy the new truck and fund the budget.

Ty Rolland added we (as in the Calais/EM boards) didn't know what we were doing when we decided to add a revenue line to the FY2020 ambulance service budget for \$18,000 from ambulance income, replacing \$18,000 directly from the towns. That Selectboards didn't properly account for the EMFD capital costs and other items paid for by the ambulance income. Bruce Johnson stated that EMFD hadn't provided the required updated capital plan/capital cost schedule with the rest of the FY2020 budget info in late November/early December (i.e., before the annual budget presentation). We were operating on the best information available and made a rational choice after balancing the various concerns. The information should have been provided last December.

Denise Wheeler stated, “Just for the record, there is not an unlimited pot of money, we cannot afford to keep going up.” Denise suggested thinking of the big picture, work closely with Woodbury Fire Department and others to find a solution to save money and still provide the high level of service. Ty Rolland noted hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent to consolidate and form a regional dispatch service in this area and still haven't been able to – that's an example of regionalization. Sharon Winn said, “The question you seem focused on isn't what's the future of EMS but what is the future of EMFD?” “I'd rather be focused on what is the best way to provide emergency services to residents?” Sharon added. The Selectboards were aware of higher salary costs to fund the ambulance service as discussed at the last Joint Selectboard Meeting. Bruce Johnson stated, “We didn't cut your budget, we shifted against existing capital funds.” Sharon Winn again asked for different models on paper, for example with a 15-minute response time, 30-minute response time and 45-minute response time. Toby Talbot said, “Two paid staff on days with 1-2 minute response time plus travel time – that's the model-system EMFD is trying to provide.” Toby is concerned as we keep using the buffer, it drops the capital reserve fund. Sharon asked EMFD to model various approaches an assumption to provide emergency services to Calais residents, providing information about service levels, costs, and pros/cons about each idea; then the Selectboards will be well informed, understand how they work and be able to choose going forward. Toby Talbot said, “EMFD is prepared to staff for a timely response with nine years of experience and have staff in place to go.”

Denise Wheeler made two requests of EMFD for the next meeting. Firstly, have a printed agenda; secondly provide financial reports ahead of time for the Selectboards to review. Denise expressed how really disappointed she was with the way this meeting came about tonight and hopes the next meeting will provide a productive discussion. Bruce Johnson did say that Toby provided the model we are looking for. Sharon Winn responded by saying, “It's a staffing model, not a service model. If the industry norm is only about staffing and not service, maybe you need to tie it to service.” Denise noted that Toby Talbot only goes to Bruce Johnson with some discussions and not Calais. Denise asked, “Why can't we have Woodbury Fire Department at the table; it would be a better way instead of doing things in silos.”

This part of the meeting concluded at 8:00 pm. Bruce Johnson and Seth Gardner suggested and Denise Wheeler accepted the invitation for a Joint Selectboard Meeting on May 13, 2019. Afterwards, some financial documents were provided with no explanations, including the EMFD Vehicle Capital Planning Budget.

The Calais Selectboard continued with a few more items as follows:

Appointments – Clif Emmons made a motion to appoint the following people to the respective positions listed below for a one-year term as follows:

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) Delegate - John Brabant

CVRPC Alternate – Jan Ohlsson

CVRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee – John Brabant

CVRPC Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Delegate – David Ellenbogen

CVRPC TAC Alternate – Karin McNeill

Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District (CVSWMD) Delegate – Bill Powell

CVSWMD Alternate – John Brabant

The motion was seconded by Sharon Winn, voted on and carried 4-0.

RFP for IT Support Services – Clif Emmons has been diligently working on an RFP for the

town to obtain IT Support Services. The Selectboard reviewed the proposed RFP. Sharon Winn made a motion to approve the RFP for IT Support Services dated 4-15-2019 as presented. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0. It will be published in the Times Argus, Hardwick Gazette, on the Town of Calais website, and the VLCT classified portal. Clif Emmons also identified four vendors he would contact directly to invite a response. He also planned to see if the Vermont Agency of Digital services publishes a list of IT vendors. Deadline for submissions is May 17, 2019 at 4:00 pm.

NEMRC Auditor Contract – The Selectboard reviewed the contract for routine auditing services by NEMRC at a cost of \$500.00 per month. Clif Emmons made a motion to authorize Denise Wheeler to sign the contract with NEMRC to provide auditing services to the town as presented. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0.

Town Invoices and Road Commissioner's Orders of the Day - The Selectboard reviewed and processed the invoices and orders of the day as per usual protocol.

Sharon Fannon made a motion to adjourn at 8:27 pm. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Pelchuck, Selectboard Member

Approved by the Selectboard at the 6/10/2019 meeting