

## CALAIS SELECTBOARD

**LOCATION: TOWN HALL**

**MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2017 @ 7:00 P.M.**  
**DRAFT MINUTES**

*UNAPPROVED*

*Attendance: Calais Selectboard: Denise Wheeler, Rob Richert, Rose Pelchuck, Sharon Winn Fannon; Judy Robert, Town Clerk; Donna Fitch, Treasurer; Toby Talbot, Operations Manager; Peter Harvey, Donald and Dorothy Singleton, Alfred Larrabee, Road Commissioner; Juanita Nunn, Stephen Morse, Paul Cerutti, Tim Neill, Randy Koch, Gail England, Charlotte Low*

**Call to Order:** Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

- Administrative work and changes or additions to the agenda: no changes to the agenda
- Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items: Peter Harvey asked to speak to the board about wild chervil and wild parsnips. He expressed his concern that these invasive species are spreading widely in Calais. He had attended the recent informational meeting in East Montpelier. He stated that they are often carried and spread by roadside mowing. He stated that he has over 1000 feet of road frontage and he would like to put up signs that indicate “no roadside mowing.” Denise Wheeler stated that an informational piece had been published in the paper about plans for roadside mowing. Denise Wheeler stated that she would like to have a presentation about invasive species, town-wide; she would also like to share information with the road crew about invasive species. Peter Harvey thanked the Selectboard for the piece on Front Porch Forum alerting the community about the East Montpelier presentation.
- Review & Sign Town Invoices, Highway Orders and Budget Update: The Board circulated, reviewed and signed the town invoices and board orders.
- Appointed Officials (make appointments or reappointments as needed): Denise Wheeler noted that while the position of Town Service Officer is not required by law, Marianne Miller is willing to continue in this capacity.
- Town Service Officer (Marianne Miller): Denise Wheeler moved to appoint Marianne Miller as Town Service Officer. This is not a position required by legislation, so it does not have a designated term (e.g., one year). Seconded by Rose Pelchuck, this motion carried unanimously.
- Approve Minutes: Rose Pelchuck moved to approve the minutes from May 22, 2017. Seconded by Denise Wheeler. Discussion: Rose Pelchuck suggested an edit to the minutes, to clarify her statement. This motion carried. Sharon Winn Fannon abstained from this vote, as she was not present. Denise Wheeler moved to approve the minutes from June 5, 2017. Seconded by Rob Richert, this motion carried unanimously.

- Road Commissioner Report: Alfred Larrabee updated the Board. The loader is repaired. Rose Pelchuck asked for the amount of the final bill; he estimated that the mechanical bills were around \$3,000; he does not have a dollar amount for the parts yet, but he believes the total repair came in under the \$5,000 that the Board had expected.

Mr. Larrabee shared that he had gotten two bids for roadside mowing. The lowest bid was approximately \$5100; Mr. Larrabee recommends going with Doug Grout. Sharon Winn Fannon asked – does the roadside mowing happen only once a year? Alfred replied– yes, typically. Ms. Winn Fannon asked, given the wild chervil and the wild parsnip invasion, is there a possibility of using both bidders to get the job done as soon as possible - can we cut the three week job in half? Alfred Larrabee had been planning on this job to begin around July 1<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Winn Fannon stated that she believes that July 1<sup>st</sup> is too late to begin the job, with respect to controlling invasive species. Mr. Larrabee does not think it would be possible to split the job in half, given the bids that have been received. Denise Wheeler asked if there are any places that are especially bad, that can be marked as priority? Route 14 is the biggest trouble spot. Mr. Talbot suggested asking Doug Grout to begin the job along Route 14 where the invasion is the worst. The Board also noted that he should be asked to keep an eye out for the species and to prioritize accordingly.

Alfred Larrabee stated that he had received a request not to mow in front of someone’s house, to preserve a plant that was growing along the road. He asked for the Board’s input. Some discussion followed. Sharon Winn Fannon stated that we are all learning about these types of species and she believes that the road crew should honor the requests of residents. Denise Wheeler stated that she agreed that the crew should do their best to honor these requests, as long as it does not become untenable; then the Board should reconsider. Alfred Larrabee will call this resident and explain that the roadside mower will do the best to honor this; the area will need to be marked by the resident.

- Operations Manager Report:

- Vermont Municipal Road Permit Grants-in-Aid Pilot project: Toby Talbot spoke about a grant: *Municipal Roads Grants-In-Aid Pilot Project*. Mr. Talbot had shared a map with the Board. He stated that this project would coordinate with the inventory project that had been discussed at an earlier meeting.

Rose Pelchuck moved that the Town apply for the Vermont Municipal Road Permit Grants-in-Aid Pilot project, in conjunction with Central Vermont Planning Commission. Seconded by Rob Richert, this motion carried unanimously. Board members signed the application. Rose Pelchuck asked if Mr. Talbot has any idea how long the inventory project will take. He guessed around three weeks, though he does not know how long.

- Road crew salaries: Toby Talbot stated that July 1<sup>st</sup> is the beginning of a new fiscal year; he had prepared information for the board for the coming year. Denise Wheeler questioned why his proposed budget line was approximately \$5,000 above what the town had approved on Town Meeting Day. Mr. Talbot spoke about overtime. Rose Pelchuck stated that the projected overtime seems high. Mr. Larrabee explained some of the need for overtime; for example, when he is required to watch weather conditions overnight. Ms. Wheeler stated that the Board will take this under advisement.

- Summer projects list: Toby Talbot stated that this summer will be particularly busy for the road crew, due to the usual work plus grant projects. Mr. Talbot stated that he intends to use some of the grant money to hire a substitute road crew member for more hours during the summer. Donna Fitch has been working on creating a spreadsheet to show grant projects. Denise Wheeler reminded Mr. Talbot that the Board had agreed to let residents know when projects are going to affect their roads. Mr. Talbot stated

that he has already done this for some; Mr. Larrabee stated that he has heard back from some of the residents thanking them for this notification. Mr. Talbot noted that the smaller inconveniences will be less-notified, but any road closures or larger inconveniences will be notified through letter of Front Porch Forum posts.

- Town Clerk Report: Judith noted that she has advertised the Town Clerk Assistant position, and has hired Ann Marie Shay; she will start on July 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Judith Robert stated that she is currently looking into a firewall as suggested by RBTech, to finish the credit card system capability setup. She reiterated that the town will not incur a merchant fee for this service. Some discussion followed around the firewall costing around \$600; Judith Robert and Donna Fitch have been working on this issue and will keep the Board apprised.

- Schedule BOA meeting: Denise Wheeler stated that she is working on scheduling a Board of Abatement meeting. 6:00 is a difficult start time for some Selectboard members. She suggested scheduling this on June 26<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 7:00; the Selectboard meeting would begin at 7:30. She will confirm this in the next few days with Judith Robert.

- Town Treasurer Report:

- FY 17 Audit: Donna Fitch shared some information audits for local entities, for the Board to consider. An audit has been complete for FY15. Some discussion followed around whether the Board is required to have an audit every year. Denise Wheeler noted that, because Fothergill, Segale & Valley is currently working with the town office on converting to NEMRC, they will not do the audit, as they would consider it a conflict of interest. Ms. Fitch will ask for bids for the auditing work and will report back to the Board.

She stated that the roof of the town office will need work; Ms. Wheeler stated that this would be an appropriate project for the Town Clerk Assistant to take on. Discussion followed around the fact that the town listers are leaving their positions, and whoever takes over these positions will have a large learning curve. Ms. Fitch suggested the possibility of finding an intern who might be willing to overlap with the current listers before their terms end. Some discussion followed about the possibility of offering payment for this overlap time versus unpaid internship.

Donna Fitch asked the board whether there is a need to keep a legal fee spreadsheet as in the past. Ms. Wheeler stated that she does not think it is necessary to keep a spreadsheet since we now have James Barlow by contract and are keeping data otherwise.

- Sign municipal equipment loan paperwork:

Denise Wheeler moved to sign *Municipal Equipment Loan Fund* in the amount of \$85,275 for the 2014 Volvo excavator, loan payments beginning June 2018, paid off in June 2022. Seconded by Sharon Winn Fannon, this motion carried unanimously.

- Review and sign Woodbury Fire Department FY 18 contract: Stephen Morse, Woodbury Volunteer Fire Department President, provided *2017-2018 Fire Protection Contract with the Town of Calais*. Rose Pelchuck moved to approve in the amount of \$28,650 (general operating expenses) and \$14,000 (truck replacement fund.) Seconded by Rob Richert, this motion carried unanimously. Paul Cerutti provided his contact information and asked the Board to reach out to him with any questions or concerns.

- Town Hall Edible Garden and haying of field behind Town Hall: Gail England and Charlotte Low spoke to the Board about the proposed map they had shared. Some discussion followed around septic

system capabilities. Rob Richert stated that there are many unknowns around the upgrade to the Town Hall building; some discussion followed around how changes might affect the proposed garden. Rob Richert stated that once plantings begin, the person who is doing the haying of the property will not continue working on the parcel, since working around plantings will not be worthwhile for the person who provides this free service.

Sharon Winn Fannon thanked Rob Richert for speaking to John Rowell. She asked Gail England to speak to the issue of invasive species. She is concerned that letting the parcel grow and only mowing once a year will provide opportunity for invasive species. Ms. England stated that this will be addressed over time as it plays out. Currently the parcel is hayed twice yearly.

Rob Richert stated that he is nervous that the Town Hall Restoration Committee is looking to bond and plan a major renovation to the Town Hall building and that he worries that the garden plantings will complicate this planning.

Ms. England stated that these discussions have been occurring and that the planners of the garden are aware.

Sharon clarified that the Board is authorizing an informal community group to begin some plantings, knowing that we are going to lose the service of haying the parcel.

Rob Richert suggested that the group provide a management plan.

Sharon Winn Fannon moved to authorize a group of Calais citizens the opportunity to plant a small garden, roughly along the lines of what is outlined on the map presented tonight, with the understanding that a management plan will be provided by June 26, 2017, including responsibility for mowing/ haying the entire parcel with the exception of what the Westons mow, with the understanding that the Town Hall project may have significant impact on the plantings. Seconded by Denise Wheeler, this motion carried unanimously. This project will be of no expense to the town.

- Moving Veteran's Memorial Monument to Town Office property: Denise Wheeler stated that an offer has been made to move the monument and place it on town property. Stow Women's Relief Corps would need to transfer ownership of the monument to the town. Ms. Singleton asked what is the purpose for moving the monument? Ms. Wheeler stated that the monument is not handicap accessible, and that the property is posted as private property.

Ms. Singleton stated that she had been instrumental in updating the monument in 2004. She asked the Board to delay considering this, because there are issues that need to be settled before ownership can be transferred. Mr. and Ms. Singleton stated that the monument currently sits in what is considered a sacred spot. Ms. Singleton expressed concern that the stone would break if it were moved.

The Board cannot take any action tonight. Rose Pelchuck asked whether the Board has considered contacting the Stow Women's Relief Corps to express concerns around accessibility. Ms. Wheeler suggested that the Calais community members that are unable to access this monument write a letter of complaint, and that the board can act accordingly, as it deems appropriate.

Kathy Silk is the president of the Stow Women's Relief Corps. Ms. Singleton stated that not allowing the public access to the monument is against the rules as stated by the national organization under which Stow Women's Relief Corps operates. She provided a copy of the Rules and Regulations. Donna Fitch reviewed the deed for the property. Ms. Singleton suggested bringing this issue up on Front Porch Forum to see if there is interest in the community to address this. Randy Koch asked whether there has been any discussion about moving the monument on the actual property where it sits, to a more accessible location. Ms. Singleton believes that the 2004 Calais Town minutes state that the town took action to pay to update the monument. Concerns were discussed regarding the monument being fragile and the possibility of its breaking, were it moved, even on the current property.

Some discussion followed around membership to the Stow Women's Relief Corps. Rob Richert noted that the Corps's building itself has concerns.

Board members thanked Mr. and Mrs. Singleton for attending. Donna Fitch stated that she has heard interest from the Housing Conservation Board and others in town, about addressing building concerns.

- Review and Sign CVHS 2017 Contract: Denise Wheeler reviewed this document, which is the same as previous years. Denise Wheeler moved to approve the Central Vermont Humane Society contract for January 1, 2017 through December 31, 2017. Seconded by Sharon Winn Fannon, this motion carried unanimously.

- Selectboard Administrator applications and interview process (*possible Executive Session related to personnel issues*)

- Discussion of delinquent tax penalty. (*Possible executive session for confidential attorney-client communications for the purpose of providing legal services.*)

Sharon Winn Fannon moved to go into Executive Session at 9:00 to discuss personnel issues and to discuss delinquent tax penalty, in accordance with 1 VSA subsection 313 (a) (3) for the purpose of discussing (1) personnel issues and (2) delinquent tax penalty, to include Donna Fitch to stay for the delinquent tax penalty issue discussion. Seconded by Rose Pelchuck, this motion carried unanimously. Rose Pelchuck made a motion to resume Regular Session at 10:00 pm. The Chair, Denise Wheeler, had nothing to report publicly on the delinquent tax penalty issue. Denise reported the Selectboard received a small but strong pool of candidates for the Selectboard Administrator position and were particularly pleased to have several candidates with direct municipal experience.

Adjourn/continue meeting: Sharon Winn Fannon made a motion to adjourn at 10:05 pm. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Stoudt, Board Recording Secretary

<http://calaisvermont.gov/>