



TOWN OF CALAIS

3120 Pekin Brook Road
East Calais, Vermont 05650
802-456-8720

Selectboard Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 27, 2022 at 6:00 PM
Location: Calais Town Hall (note no Zoom option)

Present: Sharon Winn Fannon (Chair), Denise Wheeler (Member), Rick Kehne (Member), John Brabant (Member), Marc Mihaly (Vice Chair), and ORCA Media

Jeremy Weiss, Tammy Leno, Alfred Larrabee, Peter Harvey, Reenie DeGus (East Calais Fire District)

Call to Order at 6 pm

Executive session under 1 V.S.A. §313 At 6 pm Marc Mihaly made a motion, seconded by Rick Kehne and approved unanimously by the Board to enter Executive Session. At 7 pm Rick Kehne made a motion, seconded by Marc Mihaly, and approved unanimously by the Board to exit Executive Session. The Board had nothing to report.

1. Public Comment (for items not on the agenda)

Tammy spoke to the board about her concern about roadside mowing, which doesn't allow wildflowers to grow. Denise Wheeler Wheeler explained the need to control wild chervil. Tammy stated that just when the wildflowers are at their peak to bloom, the mowers take them down, and she feels this is a violation of nature.

Tammy also stated concerns that Calais does not have a town constable; she shared that she had contacted the fire warden with concerns about a burn (plastic and cans and other materials) and was not satisfied with the response. She indicated that she has purchased a gun to protect herself. She indicated that when neighbors are being belligerent and driving on other's property and not following the expectations and rules, it needs to be addressed.

Some discussion followed around the rate of pay for the position of town constable in Calais.

Sharon Winn Fannon shared with Tammy that she had forwarded her concerns to other board members in advance of the meeting.

Some discussion followed around bringing up the issue of pay for positions such as town constable, at town meeting in March. Board members reminded Tammy that the budget can be amended on the floor at town meeting.

2. Additions/Changes to the Agenda: none

3. Review and Sign Warrants: Board members had circulated and signed the warrants.

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4. Consent Agenda

Adopt Edited Minutes of June 13, 2022 Regular Meeting: Denise Wheeler suggested that the board approve the minutes at the next meeting, as she has not had time to review them. This will go on the next regular meeting's consent agenda.

Approve and sign additional Community Bank documents related to the loan for the EMFD firetruck. (Loan is for \$66,667.00, to be paid over 5 (years) at 3.19% interest, and subject to other terms as outlined in the May 31, 2022 letter from Robin Ware of Community Bank to Denise Wheeler. This action is consistent with the town's approval of a warned item at the 2022 Calais Town Meeting.) NOTE: Entire board must sign.

Denise Wheeler explained that the documents have not arrived yet for board member signatures, but after the board approves this item, she will hand deliver the document to board members for signatures.

Marc Mihaly moved to approve additional Community Bank documents related to the loan for the EMFD firetruck, and to have board members sign the documents upon their receipt. Seconded by John Brabant, this motion was unanimously approved.

Denise Wheeler explained that the board recording secretary is not present tonight and will type the minutes from the ORCA recording. Sharon Winn Fannon thanked ORCA for being present.

5. Meet with Jeremy Weiss, Town Clerk

Review Town Clerk proposal related to server closet:

Jeremy Weiss explained his proposal to move the server from within the work area to a closet in the town office. He had prepared a document to detail this change, including an estimate for the work.

Denise Wheeler moved to authorize Jeremy to proceed with the work to move the server, as presented and discussed tonight, not to exceed \$6200, from the reserve fund. Seconded by Marc Mahily. Discussion: Rick Kehne suggested to be sure that the air quality resulting from this change will be conducive for the office as well as an appropriate temperature for the server in its proposed new closet space. **This motion carried unanimously.** Jeremy Weiss stated that this will be a good first step in upgrading the office space, for example, to create space for the town treasurer.

Discuss estimate for paint touch up of town offices: Jeremy Weiss stated that he is following up on having this work done; however, he does not have a quote yet. He will forward information to the board when it is available.

Communication: Brief discussion followed about communication between the board and the Town Clerk. Jeremy Weiss asked to be made aware in advance of his roles and responsibilities that are related to board action (for example, roadside mowing applications). Discussion followed around forwarding emails. Jeremy Weiss reminded the board that he works Monday through Thursday and he is confining his work hours whenever possible to those days. He does not expect to check work related emails on

weekends and asked board members to not call his house on weekends (except for emergencies.)

He noted that having Jamie Moorby on board as webmaster has been helpful to this end, and will be helpful going forward.

6. Personnel Updates:

Denise Wheeler updated the board: Barbara Butler resigned as Assistant Town Treasurer and Jeremy Weiss resigned as webmaster (but will continue to post town clerk-related items.) Jamie Moorby is the primary webmaster.

Denise Wheeler will post on FPF the vacancies for: Assistant webmaster, constable 1st & 2nd, and animal control officer 1st & 2nd. Sharon Winn Fannon noted that board members will be explicit when discussing or reporting on agenda items so that the issues are captured in the board minutes.

7. Roads Report

Mowing update; chervil sites as priority: Alfred Larrabee explained that the first pass (mowing) through town is almost complete. Discussion followed around chervil, including whether there are areas where chervil has gone to seed. Alfred Larrabee provided an update about keeping up with the chervil before it goes to seed.

John Brabant thanked Alfred Larrabee for helping with a dog issue, and Marc Mihaly stated that the road crew did a good job of cleaning up after the wind storm.

Peter Harvey's Application for Private Maintenance of Public Roadside: Alfred Larrabee had reviewed this application. Peter Harvey presented it for the board's review. Peter Harvey and Alfred Larrabee had not yet reviewed the property. Alfred Larrabee reviewed that Peter Harvey had been pulling up/weeding chervil on this property. He stated that if the chervil is not present, there is no reason he should not be able to mow. Peter Harvey noted that there is more chervil than he can find; he explained the life cycle of chervil and how it spreads. Sharon Winn Fannon asked the question: What does Peter Harvey need to do to maintain (private mowing) that area to allow for line of sight? She suggested that Alfred Larrabee and Peter Harvey do a site visit to inform the board's decision. Alfred Larrabee expressed concern over line of sight issues, and with the idea of holding off on a decision.

Sharon Winn Fannon suggested that if, and after, Peter Harvey and Alfred Larrabee meet and create a plan, they forward the information to the board. Some discussion continued around what is currently in place for the property (efforts that Peter Harvey is taking).

The board reviewed the sign that Peter Harvey displays and suggested that the language not indicate that it is a Calais Selectboard trial, but that it is "Calais Selectboard authorized trial."

John Brabant asked, for clarification, if he mows his own roadside, should he be submitting an application? The board discussed, and agreed that if he does not want the town to mow an area (for example, for fear of spreading chervil seed), then he should submit an application. Denise Wheeler stated that she would like to do a site visit to see

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what measures Peter Harvey is taking. Peter Harvey and Alfred Larrabee will work out a time for a site visit as discussed tonight.

2022-23 winter sand purchase and other road materials:

Alfred Larrabee brought two different samples of materials for winter sand. He explained the cost difference and availability of each material. Alfred Larrabee also noted that the groups of bikers often comment that the roads in Calais are great. Marc Mihaly asked, is this the type of issue that the board needs to take action to approve? Board members recalled that they had asked to see the materials, but that board action is not required. Alfred Larrabee had decided to go with the material called “Bickford Blend.”

Ron Thompson ROW application:

Rick Kehne moved to approve this application as presented. Seconded by John Brabant, this motion was approved unanimously.

Alfred Larrabee shared that the work related to grant funding will begin July 1st as the grants have been received. He reviewed, as he had at past meetings, that the Moscow Woods project will require road closure. Denise Wheeler stated that we will want to make several announcements on the website and on FPF about road closures.

8. Update Calais Recycling Center facility certification:

John Brabant shared that he had sought clarification around exemptions to permits for recycling options. He is going to send an email using Calais Selectboard letterhead, and copy the board members, to put this issue to rest. The board does not have jurisdiction over the recycling operation that is currently in place (via private contractor Perry & Sons) in E. Calais.

9. ARPA match process, requests, and timeline:

Denise Wheeler provided a brief update about ARPA requests. She had provided a document “Disbursement Spreadsheet” documenting funding requests. The July 25th board meeting will include public input on the agenda, for feedback related to the ARPA requests. John Brabant asked whether there will be some criteria for decision making related to ARPA requests. Denise Wheeler indicated that there needs to be a direct and positive impact to Calais residents. She will work on a survey.

10. Treasurer Report:

Denise Wheeler prepared a memo for the board, dated June 27, 2022: Payroll, FY 22 Closeout, Audit, FY 23 Budget, Tax Sale and Tax Bills.

This is the most **critical** component up next. The Listers need to file the final “as billed” grand list with PVR by a date certain. NEMRC needs to know the week of 7/18/22 that it has been filed with the state in order to set our tax rate. NEMRC is available to calculate the tax rate - we need to ask them to do so. We need to approve and set the tax rate at our 7/25/22 meeting. NEMRC will run the tax bills that need to be mailed no later than 8/10/22. This means we need volunteers to stuff the envelopes - maybe set aside our 8/8/22 Selectboard meeting to do this? We will need multiple volunteers to as this is a

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tedious and time consuming event. A quick thought, she suggested asking the Justices of Peace to volunteer to assist. There are often many, many reruns of tax bills requested by banks, escrow companies, updated addresses, phone calls and emails, etc.

When the tax checks start arriving usually mid-September (often residents pay ahead) someone will need to be in the office to open the mail and receive the payments which includes many steps to make sure the checks are accurate, input the payments, send out receipts, answer phone calls and emails, etc. This is an incredibly busy time of year. NEMRC is in the office every other week and can post payments which is a tedious task. This means that checks and cash will be held in the vault until NEMRC arrives.

11. Board round-robin on items of old business and other business

John Brabant noted that the Worcester Cell Tower is no longer a future agenda item for the board. (The project is application has been withdrawn)

12. Review future agenda items

13. Executive Session pursuant to 1 VSA §313

At 8:40 pm, Rick Kehne moved to go into Executive Session for personnel related discussion. Seconded by Marc Mihaly, this motion was approved unanimously and the Board entered Executive Session. At 9:45 pm Marc Mihaly moved to come out of Executive Session, seconded by Rick Kehne and unanimously approved by the Board. By motion of Marc Mihaly, seconded by Rick Kehne, the Board voted unanimously to approve the following actions:

- 1) Approval of a 5.9% COLA for the following employees and elected officials effective July 1, 2022 (as approved by the voters at town meeting):

Road Crew - Tyler Stecker, John Stafford, Peter Dailey

Temporary Road Crew - Dana Huoppi and Ed Rowell

Road Commissioner - Alfred Larrabee

Town Clerk (elected) - Jeremy Weiss

Asst. Town Clerk (appointed by town clerk) - Barbara Butler

- 2) Approve increase of Delinquent Tax Collector to \$11, 000 per year (as approved by the voters at town meeting).
- 3) Approve a one time payment to John Brabant for 6 hours of Animal Control work at \$20 per hour performed on June 19, 2022 including mileage. (NOTE: John Brabant recused himself on this vote.)

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- 4) The Board approved and signed the Director of Public Works job description and will post the ad in the Times Argus, Hardwick Gazette, FPF and website on Wednesday, July 6 with an application deadline of July 13, 2022.

14. Bi-Weekly Payroll and Direct Deposit Payroll Service – ACTION ITEM
Executive Session under 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(1)

At 9:45 pm Rick Kehne moved and Marc Mihaly seconded to go into Executive Session, pursuant to 1 VSA § 313(a)(1), after first making a finding that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the board and persons involved at a substantial disadvantage, the board entered executive session to discuss contractual issues, the motion passed unanimously.

At 10 pm the Board resumed regular session. Rick Kehne made a motion, seconded by Marc Mihaly to sign a contract with PayData (a payroll service company located in Vermont) to perform the payroll functions for the Town of Calais, the motion was approved unanimously.

15. At 10:05 pm by motion of Rick Kehne, seconded by Marc Mihaly and approved unanimously by the Board, the Board continued this meeting to 7:45 pm on Tuesday, June 28, 2022 to meet with Alfred Larrabee and Toby Talbot (possible Executive Session) to discuss the position of Director of Public Works.

16. On Tuesday, June 28, 2022 at 7:53 pm at the Town Office the Board reconvened. The Board thanked Alfred for being available to meet and regrettably acknowledged that Toby Talbot was not available. The Board gave Alfred a copy of the signed job description and ad. The Board and Alfred discussed and answered questions about the need to create this position.

17. At 8:43 pm by motion of Denise Wheeler, seconded by John Brabant, and unanimously approved by the Board, the Board entered Executive Session pursuant to 1 VSA §313. At 8:46 pm the Board resumed regular session and had nothing to report.

18. At 8:47 pm by motion of Marc Mihaly, seconded by Sharon Fannon and approved unanimously by the Board the Board adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Lisa Grace, Board Recording Secretary

July 11, 2022 Agenda Items

- Meet with Louis Porter, General Manager Washington Electric Cooperative
- Meet with Alfred Larabee, re: road commissioner reappointment (executive session)
- Tim Wheelock proposal for Maple Corner Speed bumps
- Speed carts and permanent electronic speed alerts/Lightening Ridge traffic calming – Rick/Alfred; ACTION ITEM
- Town Hall Usage Policy – Review and Renew July 2022 (Marc)
- Confirm Calais Road Standards Ordinance
- Meet new road crew members

July 25, 2022 Agenda Items

- Set tax rate and approve property tax timeline, mailing tax bills

Future Agenda Items

- Shade Tree Hearing at 6PM??? (8/8 or 8/27)
- Follow-Up Shade Tree Preservation Plan – July 25 at 6PM
- East Calais tree removal
- Curb Cut Application (**NEEDED**) and Curb Cut Application Assessment Form (new) (Sharon/Denise) – ACTION ITEM ([Curb Cut Materials](#) at this link; CC has requested input) – July 25
- Highway Capital Plan – Rick
- County Road Speed Limit -- Rick/Denise
- Immunizing Ash Trees – Rick/Neal Maker
- 2023 Property Reappraisal Process – Marc Mihaly/Jan Ohlsson

Review and Update Existing Policies and Ordinances

- Traffic Ordinance – Ric
- Personnel Policy – Sharon/Denise
- Job Descriptions Review and Update – Sharon/Denise
- Conflict of Interest Policy ([Conflict of Interest Background](#))

Create Ordinance/Policy

Junk Ordinance – requested

Issues Awaiting Further Development

- Worcester Cell Tower – John
- ARPA funds utilization process – Denise
- East Calais Stormwater Project – Rick

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