

## Selectboard Meeting Minutes

*Monday, July 8, 2019 at 7pm at the Calais Town Offices*

**Present:** Denise Wheeler (Chair), John Brabant (Vice Chair), Rose Pelchuck (Member), Sharon Winn Fannon (Member), Clif Emmons (Member), Jerome Lipani (ORCA), Katie Lane-Karnas (Recording Secretary), Sandra Ferver (Town Treasurer), Alfred Larrabee (Road Commissioner), Toby Talbot (Operations Manager), Larry Bush (Historic Preservation Commission), Nick Emlen, Peter Harvey, Jan Ohlsson, Elisabeth O'Casey

1. Call to Order: Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. Public Comment: Larry Bush, representing the Historic Preservation Commission, shared that like East Calais, the Village of Adamant is seeking recognition on the national historic registry. The project has received a Certified Local Government grant and is using the funds to hire a consultant to assist in development of the report that is the basis of the historic registry nomination. Larry requested that the Board approve Brian Knight as the consultant on the project at the next Selectboard meeting.

Peter Harvey attended and reported on wild chervil on the roadsides he has been surveying. He brought samples of plants, illustrating the age of plants at different stages of growth and post-mowing growth, and discussed the effects of mowing and hand pulling. The Board considered that wild chervil is a perennial that puts up new plants near and around it. The Board thanked Peter Harvey for his work and asked him to request a place on a future agenda to discuss this item further.

3. Review, Additions/Changes to Agenda: The IT RFP discussion was moved to the end of the meeting.
4. Appointment: Denise Wheeler made a motion to appoint Elisabeth O'Casey as the Public Information Officer for Calais's LEMP. She introduced herself, and shared some of her background, including that she currently works as the communications director for the Agency of Natural Resources and has much experience with emergency communication with the public. The motion was voted and passed 5-0.
5. Updates/Reports:
  - a) Delinquent Tax Collector: The Delinquent Tax Collector reported that since the Board last met with her, a significant amount of delinquent taxes have come in, improving the outcome of the bottom line. The group looked at a report of specific parcels and the Delinquent Tax Collector's recommendations for parcels to be turned over to attorney Gloria Rice (properties that have made no response to communication and no attempt to

make payment). The group discussed the details of a few specific parcels. The Selectboard will discuss parcels to send to the attorney for tax sale at their next meeting.

- b) Treasurer: The Town Treasurer reported that the Town ended the fiscal year short \$9,173.34, quite a bit lower than originally anticipated, due in part to the delinquent taxes that came in. She counseled that in thinking about how to approach this approximately \$9,000 deficit, she will have input for the Board from the Town's independent auditors and/or the Town Attorney regarding whether the Town may allow the Fund Balance to absorb it, or whether this amount should be collected in next years' taxes. It was clarified that the Selectboard did *not* act imprudently: although the Town came up short by \$9,173.34, if all taxes were paid timely, the Town would have a *surplus* of approximately \$38,000. The FY19 budgeted expenditures were approximately \$872,000; the actual expenditures were approximately \$862,000. The Town underspent by \$10,000.

Fiscal year 2019 opened with approximately \$318,000 in the fund balance and closed with approximately \$309,000. The Treasurer reviewed that the Highway fund ended the year nicely in the black and that \$21,577.04 was transferred from Highway budget to the Capital Equipment Fund (for a total of \$102,401.96; approximately \$40,000 will be taken out to meet the West Star lease obligation in January).

Over the last few months, the Swim Program and Town Treasurer have identified and worked out several wage and labor issues. An issue that had not arisen in these communications was the age for swim assistants. The Town Treasurer attended a recent VLCT workshop at which the US Department of Labor presented and gained information specific to Calais's swim program. There is a regulation concerning "lifeguards" that the DOL felt our swim assistants fell under, which requires that they must be 15 years old or older. The Treasurer explained that a 14 year old swim assistant came in to the office to fill out employment paperwork, having worked a week already; the Town Treasurer requested that the Board approve salary for that young person's week of work. The Chair pointed out that this could have been avoided if this person had come to fill out employment paperwork before beginning work. The group discussed liability issues if this person is paid, and the question of a fee to the Town was discussed. For the future, the group agreed, it should be recognized that a process needs to be put into place with members of the Swim Committee, and potentially the Curtis Pond greeter program employees. Office staff is currently creating a memo geared to creating a checklist and process around this situation.

Denise Wheeler made a motion to pay the young person for the time she has currently worked. The group clarified that a fourteen-year-old could be paid if they do not get in the water. John Brabant seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The group focused discussion on working together. The Board asked the Swim Committee to communicate with the Town Office regarding hours of operation for swim program.

- c) Road Commissioner and Operations Manager: The lease purchase of the one-ton truck was discussed again, even though the Select Board recently authorized a purchase pursuant to the road commissioner and operation manager's proposal and ensuing discussion with the board.. The Road Commissioner and Operations Manager reported that local dealers do not have any inventory, so the Road Commissioner reached out further and spoke with an

additional dealer (Manchester, NH) who has trucks on the lot, one of which costs more than the previously authorized amount. The group reviewed a spreadsheet comparing three trucks (the original truck discussed at the previous meeting, and two more called “Black” and “White”). Discussion included the Road Commissioner’s concern about the speed with which trucks are purchased off the lots, why a hurry about purchasing a truck (with a working one-ton), and comparison of features between the three options.

Sharon Winn Fannon made a motion to table this item until the next meeting, and for Board members to ask questions of the Operations Manager ahead of the meeting. The Board appreciated the comparison spreadsheet provided and pointed out features on one model that seem excessive. The Board asked the Road Commissioner to learn the cost for swapping a bigger tank and an alternator on the black truck. John Brabant seconded the motion, and it passed 5-0.

- d) Town Clerk: This item was not needed.
- e) Town Hall Renovation: With the lead renovator out of commission, John McCullough has picked up a lot of the slack and is very busy. The elevator installation company is slated to come on Tuesday, and Green Line Builders is on vacation for two weeks.
- f) Act 46: This item was not needed.
- g) CVRPC: The Calais Road Erosion Inventory Report is now available as a draft. The Selectboard discussed their preference to have the draft reviewed by a small group and then be presented to the full Board.
- h) Planning Commission: Jan Ohlsson, Planning Commission Chair, attended and discussed the work of the Commission to revise a number of sections of the zoning regulations (which will ultimately result in public hearings ahead of the revisions coming in front of the Selectboard). They are now adding a “River Corridor” overlay, which would give the town an extra 5% toward insurance when there is a disaster (bringing any town insurance coverage rebate from 12% to 17%). The PC is working on meeting state requirements, reformatting the document, and making it more user friendly. The Commission wants to add specific sections for stormwater management and erosion control standards that would be applied to all districts (by the Zoning Administrator and the DRB). A vote in March for approval of these zoning regulation changes may be forthcoming. All language is updated on the [Town website](#) in a timely manner. Current members include Jan Ohlsson, John McCullough, Gary Root, Melanie Kehne, and Ron Shaw. The Board suggested clarifying on the website that each of the drafts listed there are currently being worked on, to further encourage the public to understand their attendance and input is welcomed.

Jan has attended workshops on strengthening Calais’s sense of community. She pointed out the different areas of Calais (Adamant, East Calais, Maple Corner, etc.) and ideas for efforts that may facilitate a unified sense of Calais community. She would like for Planning Commission to start reimagining what we are as Calais, and engaging the community in working together on that—from the bottom up, rather than from the top down. Ideas included allowing food trucks to come into town, pop-up businesses, and having a non-voting high school age Selectboard member. She requested the Selectboard to budget \$5,000 (a yearly amount) beginning in the next budget to allow a buildup of funds for a future grant that may require an in-kind match.

Jan proposed a contest among local artists for “Welcome to Calais” and “Thanks for Visiting” banner signs, which could be displayed in the newly renovated Town Hall for the public to select through a vote. She described this as an effort to engage the Calais artists and the community as well as to draw people to the Town Hall. She offered to work with Nel Emlen on moving forward on this project. The Board considered that their role is to support the efforts and leadership on projects such as this, not necessitating a motion. The Board offered their support of Jan’s efforts and thanked her for her work.

6. Municipal Cyber Security: VLCT’s attorney as well as rbTech has communicated with the Town regarding awareness of targeted phishing attacks.
7. Consideration of letter to WCUUSD for Reimbursement of Calais Staff Hours and Expenses: The Town Clerk is drafting a document regarding reimbursement for all the labor and additional costs that went into the election efforts surrounding Act 46 implications.
8. Revised Traffic Ordinance: The Board reviewed housekeeping changes to the draft of the traffic ordinance and will ask the Operations Manager to review sign locations and all other content.
9. Chair Update:
  - Poplar Cemetery’s closing will be held on 7/22/19 @ 6:30 pm at E. Mont. Town Office
  - Calais and East Montpelier joint Selectboard meeting will be held on Monday, 7/22/19 regarding the EMFD (held at E. Montpelier Town Office)
  - An update and discussion with Sheriff is being planned (8/12/19 or 8/26/19, tentative)
  - The Operations Manager has not yet contacted Tyler Brown regarding the beaver dam on Kent Hill Road
  - The office phone system is being worked on; the original installation had some issues that need to be corrected. Clif Emmons shared technical details related to phone system problems.
  - Office staff created a list of requests for physical changes in the office; requests will be reviewed at staff meeting and office staff invited to present at a Selectboard meeting
  - John Brabant and Andy Felice examined the roof which requires repair. The Board’s preference is to have Andy Felice remove the roof to reveal what the underlying situation is, so that contractor quotes can be obtained based on a full understanding of the underlying structure.
  - Board of Abatement will meet on 8/12/2019, at 6 pm
  - The Chair is working on outreach for Roads Commission membership. The Board plans to make former members aware of the opportunity to serve again, and maintain continuity, as the Commission becomes active once again.
10. Review and approve minutes, warrants
  - a) The Board reviewed the invoices and orders were processed for payment.
  - b) The Board signed the previously approved minutes of the March 5, 2019 Town Meeting.
  - c) The Board also signed the Chris Neff curb cut application, which had been previously approved.

d) Approval of the minutes was tabled for a subsequent meeting.

11. IT RFP: This item was tabled until a subsequent meeting.

12. Executive Session for Personnel Matters: Denise Wheeler made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:08 pm per 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (3), personnel matters and per 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(6), contracts. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0. The Board resumed Regular Session at 10:25 pm. The Chair reported the Selectboard will meet next Monday, July 15, 2019 at 7:00 pm for a special meeting. An agenda will be posted.

13. Other Business/Old Business/New Business: None.

14. Adjournment: Rose Pelchuck made a motion to adjourn at 10:26 pm. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.

Date: 7/9/2019 Respectfully Submitted, Katie Lane-Karnas, Recording Secretary

*Approved by the Selectboard at the 8/5/2019 meeting*

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

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1mAn15F891RrEOme-zFu96t9PonMrd3S1>