

Town of Calais, Vermont

CHARTERED 1781

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 9, 2019

7pm Town Office

Present: Denise Wheeler (Chair), John Brabant (Vice Chair), Rose Pelchuck (Member), Clif Emmons (Member), Jerome Lipani (ORCA), Judy Robert, Sandra Ferver, Barbara Butler, Will Schebeaum, Alfred Larrabee, Brian Thomas, Donna Fitch and Jan Ohlsson.

Absent: Sharon Winn Fannon (Member) and Katie Lane-Karnas (Recording Secretary)

Call to Order: Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Public Comment: Donna Fitch was wondering if Andy Felice can work a day on the Town Hall. Denise Wheeler and John Brabant responded by saying all you need to do is ask him.

Review, Additions/Changes to Agenda: Denise Wheeler advised of her preference to move a few agenda items in a different order to accommodate the people who were here for those items.

Curb Cut Application #CC2019-02 – The Selectboard reviewed the Curb Cut Application from Brian Thomas for a proposed residence on Long Meadow Hill Road. Alfred Larrabee reported the flagged area for the curb cut is just under the required 300' site distance but believes it is adequate since Long Meadow Hill Road is a low traffic road. Alfred recommended the installation of a 15" culvert. Denise Wheeler made a motion to approve the Curb Cut Application as presented with the condition of the applicant installing a 15-inch diameter culvert where the curb cut meets the road. The motion was seconded by Clif Emmons, voted on and carried 4-0.

Steeplechase Design+Build Contract Proposal for Town Office Interior Renovations – The Selectboard met with Will Schebeaum, owner of Steeplechase based in Montpelier, to discuss design services he can provide to change the interior layout of the Town Office. He will put together a design plan based on the list the town office employees provided that will enable the town to put the renovation project out to bid. Donna Fitch was concerned that the voters in town may not be happy about using the Town Office Reserve Fund for a renovation that isn't routine maintenance. The Selectboard discussed options.

John Brabant made a motion to borrow up to \$5,000.00 out of the Town Office Reserve Fund to perform design work with Steeplechase Design+Build in anticipation of paying back the reserve fund as part of our next budget cycle. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0. The Selectboard will put an article on the Town Warning in March 2020 to ask the voters to authorize this expenditure (the money would then go back into the reserve fund).

The Town Office layout has been ill-fitted for its use for some time, making it very difficult for personnel and the public to get their jobs done in a quiet, efficient environment. The current layout does not have a closed area for confidential business to take place. Judy Robert, Town Clerk, noted the best time she envisions to close the office (1-2 weeks) for the renovation would be in April 2020.

Zoning Administrator Job Description Revisions – Jan Ohlsson, Planning Commission Chair, presented the Selectboard with the newly revised Zoning Administrator (ZA) job description approved at their September 3, 2019 meeting. The Selectboard reviewed the document and further changes and clarifications were made. Denise Wheeler made a motion to approve the newly revised Zoning Administrator job description as approved by the Planning Commission on 9/3/19 with the Selectboard edits made this evening. The motion was seconded by Rose Pelchuck, voted on and carried 4-0. Jan Ohlsson will publish the ZA job opening on Front Porch Forum, Times Argus, Hardwick Gazette, our town website, CVPRC and VLCT websites in anticipation of finding John McCullough and Dorothy Naylor's successor.

Letter to Ms. Shedd re: parking in travel lane of town road – The Selectboard discussed a letter it received requesting notice be given to Ms. Shedd to not park her car on the travel portion of the road. The Selectboard and Road Commissioner discussed how parked vehicles and other obstructions on the road can impede traffic and pose a hazard. The

Selectboard authorized Denise Wheeler to draft a letter to Ms. Shedd reminding her about this and Denise will also include the Winter Parking Ordinance.

Update on Petition # 19-27, IBEW Local 300 – Denise Wheeler provided an update on her correspondence with Tim Noonan and Tim LaBombard to answer questions and determine the process going forward. The Selectboard again chose Option 1 to "voluntarily" recognize the Union and request that the Union willingly show the Town the cards to certify a majority of the three road crew employees that seek to participate in the Union. In the event this is declined, the Selectboard will try to find a third party person to verify the majority. We are also "unaware of any other employee organization that seeks to represent the employees". The Selectboard authorized Denise Wheeler to respond in letter to further correspondence as needed.

Review Ordinance Adoption Process - Denise Wheeler outlined the process of adopting a town ordinance; once adopted a petition of 5% of the voters received within 44 days can challenge an ordinance and call for a public hearing. If no such petition is received, a newly adopted town ordinance goes into effect 60 days following the date of the ordinance's adoption by the Selectboard.

Adoption of Amended Traffic Ordinance – Rose Pelchuck raised some issues with the Traffic Ordinance in its current form that was presented earlier in the day to the Road Commissioner, Operations Manager and Selectboard Chair. Based on these unclear issues with regard to road names with no number, unclear speed limit delineations and two missing stop signs, the Selectboard agreed the Traffic Ordinance needs continued work before it is ready for re-adoption. Denise, Alfred and perhaps Clif will get together and review it line by line for accuracy.

Updates/Reports

Road Commissioner: Alfred Larrabee has rented the tractor with side-arm mower. Doug Grout drove it for one day and decided he didn't want to continue in that capacity, therefore members of the Road Crew have been operating the machine. John Brabant told Alfred of a 5110 tractor used with 40 hours for the asking price of \$69,000. The tree limb on Tucker Road has not been cut because the pole saw was broken, Alfred just got it back today and will go out there to cut that limb. Alfred hired Joe Bayne to cut the two trees on Bliss Pond Road and one tree on Collar Hill Road. Peter Harvey asked the

Selectboard if he can post a Mowing Exclusion Zone on the County Road near Bob Bowles' house because there is wild parsnip growing there. Denise concurred since this is part of an ongoing effort to control invasive plants along our roadsides and has been on the Selectboard radar, that the town will allow this exclusion as to not spread seeds.

Treasurer: nothing reported.

Town Clerk: nothing reported.

Town Hall Renovation Committee: The Selectboard is well aware of and gratefully acknowledged the extraordinary number hours John McCullough is working at the Town Hall. Denise Wheeler reported that she plans to meet with Donna Fitch, Sandra Ferver and Clif Emmons to review the budget for the town hall renovation project to balance out the difference between the numbers when QuickBooks was the town's accounting system verses NEMRC, the current accounting system (accrual vs. cash basis accounting). Clif Emmons is working on septic system stuff and will forward info to Alfred to come up with a town-made septic quote.

Act 46 Update: nothing reported.

CVRPC: nothing reported.

Selectboard Chair Update:

Schedule meeting with surrounding towns and legislative representatives/senators to revise animal control statutory language – Denise reported she has seen a Draft Bill from Janet Ancel, State Representative.

IT RFP update – Clif Emmons reported there isn't any new developments and recommended the Selectboard get back on task with this project.

The Board will revisit the CVRPC, RCT & GMTA re VT Route 14 Commuter bus discussion at an upcoming meeting.

Bonnie Waninger, Nick D'Agostino from RCT and Jamie Smith from GMTA on 9/23/19

CVRPC Road Erosion Inventory Report will be presented by Dan Currier to the Selectboard at the September 23, 2019 meeting.

Review and Approve Meeting Minutes, Warrants

The Board reviewed the invoices and orders were processed for payment.

August 5, 2019 Special Meeting Minutes were reviewed. Some outstanding questions need further clarifications regarding the Veteran's exemption.

Clif Emmons made a motion to approve the August 26, 2019 Meeting Minutes with the changes as noted. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0.

Executive Session for Real Estate Matters: John Brabant made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:58 pm to discuss real estate per 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(2).

The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0. The Board resumed Regular Session at 9:30 pm. The Chair had nothing to report publicly.

Other Business/Old Business/New Business: none.

Adjournment: Denise Wheeler made a motion to adjourn at 9:30 pm. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0.

Date: 9/9/2019 Respectfully Submitted, Rose Pelchuck, Selectboard Member

Approved by the Selectboard at the 9/23/2019 meeting

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