



TOWN OF CALAIS

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SELECTBOARD MEETING Monday, October 23, 2023

5:00 Executive Session
6:30 Public Meeting

APPROVED MINUTES

Executive Session

Attending: Anne Winchester, Jamie Moorby, Anne Toolan, Jordan Keyes and finalist for position of Town Administrator.

Anne Winchester called the meeting to Order at 5:00 pm at the Town Office. Jamie Moorby made a **motion** to go into Executive Session for the purpose of interviewing a candidate for the Town Administrator position under 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(3) regarding the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public officer or employee and invited the candidate to join the Selectboard. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.

Jordan Keyes made a **motion** to come out of Executive Session at 6:31 pm at the Town Hall. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0. Anne Winchester reported the Selectboard interviewed a finalist for Town Administrator and are very close, but we are not going to finalize this tonight.

Public Meeting

Attending: Anne Winchester, Gabrielle Malina, Jamie Moorby, Anne Toolan, Jordan Keyes, Barbara Butler, John McCullough, Teegan Dykeman-Brown, Scott Bassage, David Delcore, John Rosenblum, Larry Bush, Janice Ohlsson, and Rose Pelchuck.

Changes to the Agenda and Administrative Business

- Approval of October 9th Minutes – Gabrielle Malina made a **motion** to approve the Minutes as written. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.
- Sign Board Orders – The Selectboard reviewed the town invoices presented for payment during the meeting and signed the orders authorizing payment.
- Public Announcement – The handrail has been installed at the Curtis Pond swim area as approved at Town Meeting last March. Thanks to Linda Schütz, John McCullough and the Curtis Pond Association for making this happen.
- Municipal Energy Resilience Grant – Calais has been found eligible to receive a state Municipal Energy Resilience Grant to pay for energy assessments at the Town Hall and Town Office. This is part two of a three part grant program. We have received the first two grants, and once complete we will be able to apply for an implementation grant. Scott Bassage reported it is hard to know when someone will come to do the energy assessments. Jamie Moorby made a **motion** to authorize Anne Winchester to sign the form on behalf of the Selectboard. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0. The Selectboard expressed sincere thanks to Scott Bassage and Friends of the Calais Town Hall for applying for these grants.

Selectboard Minutes

October 23, 2023

Page 2

Public Comment – none

Surplus Property – In August, Brookfield Service installed a backup generator at the Town Hall and preferred to use a brand-name transfer switch instead of the switch that came with the electrical package from the town hall renovation project. The transfer switch is worth approximately \$249 according to John Rosenblum. The Calais Emergency Management Committee reached out to the three stores in town to see if they could use this item. The East Calais Community Trust and Adamant Co-op said they cannot at this time. The Maple Corner Community Store is working on installing a generator to keep the coolers and cash register operating during power outages and can use the switch but not until January or February. After further discussion, the board decided we will leave the transfer switch in Nick Emlen's garage until a store or town building needs it and give it to whoever asks for it first.

FY'25 Budget Discussion

➤ **Planning Commission**, Jan Ohlsson, Chair, provided a budget request for next year for \$3,450.00. Jan asked to remove Planning Maps since they come from the Zoning/Lister budget and assistant wages since they don't have an assistant. Jan suggested asking Sandra Ferver which budget line item pays for printing hard copies of the Town Plan and revised Zoning Regulations.

Jan Ohlsson and John McCullough recommend the purchase of an electronic town map system from CAI Technologies now, in this current FY'24 budget. This computerized, interactive map has so much capability with so many different features on it, John and Jan stated. The current town map is maintained by CVRPC and is often not up to date. The new system will allow the Listers to maintain the map and keep it current. The towns of Hardwick, East Montpelier and Waterbury use CAI maps for their towns. Teegan noted it would definitely make her job easier. The first year cost is \$6,500 and Sandra Ferver said she can find those funds in the current budget. The annual maintenance cost is \$3,000 per year. The Selectboard agreed to have a product demo at an upcoming meeting.

The proposed revised Zoning Regulations will be voted on by the Selectboard or by town vote in March. Then the Planning Commission will be working on revising the Town Plan. Jan Ohlsson strongly encouraged younger people to get involved. Jordan Keyes publicly supports increasing the PC Reserve Fund from \$2,500 to \$5,000 in the FY'25 budget.

➤ **Conservation Commission**, Larry Bush, Chair, reviewed the proposed FY'25 budget request with the Selectboard. The Conservation Commission members are very supportive of resumption of funding for a 2024 issue of the Calais Lakes and Streams Committee's Newsletter. Larry Bush urged the Selectboard to include \$1,500 in the budget, which is a portion of the projected cost for printing and distribution of the newsletter. Larry noted this to be a good outreach tool to landowners. Discussion ensued around printing or electronic media; all landowners in town or just those who live near bodies of water. Jordan Keyes sees the Education/Training line item costs as opportunities to give presentations to the public and SB, to bring expertise to the community. Jordan spoke about giving to other commissions/committees the same amount if we fund this. Jordan noted the need to have that conversation with other commissions. Gabrielle Malina asked if the town has a Housing Conservation Fund, to which the answer was no.

The Conservation Commission would like the annual allocation to the Conservation Fund increased back to \$8,000 as it had been for many years. Jan Ohlsson suggested making a public list of uses of the Conservation Fund and amounts, so taxpayers can see what this fund has been used for. A new line item in the budget request is for weed whackers and protective equipment for \$600. This would pay for two weed whackers or one industrial one to cut invasives.

➤ **Town Office**, Teegan Dykeman-Brown, Town Clerk, reviewed the proposed budget line by line with the Selectboard, providing explanations to each. Some increases are related to additional staff and increasing the appropriation to the Tech Reserve Fund that had been drastically cut this year. An energy assessment of the Town Office will take place in the near future. Teegan spoke about the need for air conditioning in the town office in order to keep the server, land records and staff cool in the warm weather.

Selectboard Minutes

October 23, 2023

Page 3

Selectboard Reports

- FEMA – Scott Bassage reported that today was the deadline for listing roads that the Town is seeking federal reimbursement on related to flood damage this summer. Scott noted 60 separate road incidents are on the comprehensive list. The Town has all the necessary documentation. The total comes to \$1.5 million dollars, including \$400,000 for Moscow Woods Road and \$70,000 for Bliss Pond Road. FEMA will reimburse 75% of the amount submitted. The State will give 10% on top of that. The Calais FEMA team continues to meet weekly with Michelle from FEMA.
- Highway Department & Roads – Anne Toolan reported guardrails for Moscow Woods Road have been ordered. The contractor that runs the trash/recycling depot wants to continue operation at the Calais Recreation Field parking lot instead of moving back to Moscow Woods Road. The Singleton Road project was being held up by two wrong sets of brackets, but were able to re-fabricate them for the job.
- ARPA – Gabrielle Malina reported the Town received \$479,590.00 from the federal government, all of which has been allocated except \$33,000 that is uncommitted. The Treasurer has all the information. Gabrielle noted we should figure out by the end of this year what we want to spend the \$33,000 on. The Curtis Pond Association asked if some of their expenses can be paid from these ARPA funds.
- Curtis Pond Dam Project – Jamie Moorby reported that after many meetings, they have come up with a potential re-design of the Dam Project. It is still being engineered and the CPA doesn't know if it is a definite possibility, but would save \$400,000 and bring the project close to the projected original budget. Construction is projected to begin June 1, 2024. Gabrielle Malina noted that Sandra Ferver needs to know about going forward with the Municipal Bond Bank application.
- IT Needs – Jordan Keyes made a **motion** to approve the purchase of a laptop for the Town Administrator not to exceed \$1,500, if needed. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.
- Status of Shedd v. Calais – Anne Toolan noted nothing to report in this ongoing legal matter.

Anne Winchester declared the meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm.

Rose Pelchuck
Interim Recording Secretary