



# TOWN OF CALAIS

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

## SELECTBOARD MEETING Monday, May 22, 2023

### MINUTES Approved 6/12/23

**Attending:** Jamie Moorby, Gabrielle Malina, Anne Winchester, Anne Toolan, Jordan Keyes, Barbara Butler, John Stafford, Teegan Dykeman-Brown, John McCullough, Donna Fitch, Toby Talbot, Jeremy Weiss, Larry Orr, Michael Loignon, Scott Bassage, David Schutz, Sandra Ferver and Rose Pelchuck.

#### **Actions:**

The meeting was called to Order at 6:00 pm by Gabrielle Malina, Selectboard Vice Chair.

#### **Changes to the Agenda and Administrative Business as follows:**

**Approval of April 17, 2023 Minutes** – The Selectboard reviewed the April 17<sup>th</sup> Minutes. Jordan Keyes made a motion to approve the Minutes as written. The **motion** was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.

**Approval of May 8, 2023 Minutes** – The Selectboard reviewed the May 8<sup>th</sup> Minutes. Jordan Keyes made a motion to approve the Minutes as written. The **motion** was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.

**Town Invoices and Sign Orders** – The Selectboard reviewed the town invoices presented for payment during the meeting and signed the orders authorizing payment.

**Liquor License Permit Request** - The Selectboard reviewed a liquor license permit request for a wedding being held at Memorial Hall in June. Anne Winchester made a **motion** to approve the permit as written and added the condition that in the future the Town Clerk has permission to sign off without coming before the Selectboard. The caterer hired for such events already has a Liquor License Permit from the State. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.

**Fire Alarms Notification by Seacoast Security** - The fire alarm systems at the Town Garage and Town Hall are operated by Seacoast Security. When an alarm goes off, Seacoast Security notifies the fire department first and then a Town contact person. At times the alarm is set off by a problem in the phone line. If/when that happens in the middle of the night, they are able to discern this in the main office and will not call the Town contact person until 9:00 am. John Stafford has agreed to be the Town contact person for the Town Garage. We need to assign a Town contact person for the Town Hall. Toby Talbot agreed to be the Town Hall contact person. Anne Winchester made a **motion** to appoint Toby Talbot as the town contact person for the Town Hall. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.

**Public Comment** - none

**Curb Cut Application** – The Selectboard reviewed a Curb Cut application from Jeremy Weiss at 1456 Bliss Road, East Calais for a new agricultural access to provide access to a barn. Jordan Keyes made a **motion** to approve the Curb Cut Permit with no conditions. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.

**Orr Application for Work in Town's Right-of-Way** – Larry Orr of Leonard Road submitted an application dated 5/11/23 to work in the Town's Right-of-Way. John Stafford, Road Crew member, reported he has issues with a lot of damage done to the town's right-of-way, no run off control and work was done before the landowner applied for a permit. John noted the area is a mess and not acceptable. Jordan Keyes noted after reading the Class 4 Road Policy, if the road crew can determine what the scope of work would be to put the area back, have the applicant do the work then come back to the Selectboard to request a permit.

Larry Orr is asking the town's permission to fix 270 feet of the road to access his curb cut on Leonard Road (Class 4 road). Larry Orr noted there is a lot of drainage; stated he didn't think he was overstepping his bounds and is willing to do whatever. Larry wants to get a concrete truck up there to pour a foundation. Jordan Keyes noted two issues about Class 4 roads are owning the liability and the cost. The town needs to find out the benchmark for reasonable construction standards. John Stafford reported some of the conditions that would be needed to move forward.

Anne Winchester suggested that Larry Orr meet with John Stafford and come up with a written plan of what needs to be done with assistance from the Road Commissioners, Anne Toolan and Jamie Moorby. Jordan Keyes noted a path forward that the permit could be accepted with specific conditions.

This item will be continued and taken up for possible action on Thursday, May 25<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm.

**Cybersecurity Training** – Teegan Dykeman-Brown, Town Clerk, recently attended a training and reported to the Selectboard about some things she learned. Teegan recommends having a ransom ware attack response plan for the town. There are sample plans and lots of resources out there. Teegan said having a committee to work on a plan is recommended.

**Petition to Change Speed Limit on Lightening Ridge Road** – Michael Loignon came before the Selectboard with a signed petition (29 residents) to decrease the speed limit on Lightening Ridge Road from 35 mph to 25 mph for the entire length of the road. Anne Winchester, in consultation with CVRPC, found that traffic studies are absolutely required before changing speed limits in town. Calais has asked CVRPC to conduct four traffic studies this summer, including on this road. Mike understands it's not binding and to show support, it's advisory. A radar speed sign was installed on Lightening Ridge Road today; Mike said enforcement is the issue. Jamie Moorby said we download information from those radar signs and see the speed patterns. This will guide when the sheriff's department would be effective in catching speeders.

**Municipal Energy Resilience Grant Program (MERP) Grant Application for Energy Efficiencies in Town Buildings** - Scott Bassage, on behalf of the Friends of the Calais Town Hall, along with David Schütz and John McCullough came before the Selectboard to discuss this grant program. It was designed to increase energy efficiencies all over Vermont using some state and federal funds. Scott outlined the available grants eligible for existing town owned building, noting lower income communities have priority for the big grant.

1) *Community Capacity Grants*: Up to \$4,000 to support energy resilience in the community with applications now open;

2) *Energy Assessment Grant* \$4,000. The application will be available soon. The assessment is a prerequisite for applying for the Building Projects Grant. We would request an assessment of all three Town buildings (Town Hall, Town Office and Town Garage); and

3) *Building Projects Grants*: Each municipality can apply for a maximum of \$500,000 for building renovation projects. The application is available after the Energy Assessment (#2, above) is complete. The funds could be used for basic energy efficiency projects on all three buildings.

Scott noted the Friends of the Calais Town Hall are enthusiastic about having weatherization of the upstairs of the Town Hall paid for by this grant. Funds to pay a Calais clerk of the works can come from the Community Capacity Grant and from the BIG grant. Scott noted the burden of administration and reporting is intended to be less than most grants and there is no match requirement. To go ahead, Scott suggests a working group be formed to take responsibility to get this done.

Jordan Keyes made a **motion** to have Scott Bassage, in consultation with John McCullough and David Schütz, apply on behalf of the Town of Calais, for the \$4,000.00 MERP Community Capacity Grant to support administration of future energy grants and 2) to appoint Scott Bassage to organize and prepare an application for an Energy Assessment Grant on behalf of the town. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 5-0.

**Status of Acoustics Work in Town Hall** – John McCullough said some of the easy things of wall hangings have improved acoustics already. Gabrielle Malina inquired about the exterior shutters being installed. John and Andy Felice can hang the ground floor shutters and get a lift for the upper level shutters. Donna Fitch spoke about other things to hang on the walls.

**Status of Highway Grants & Capital Planning** – Toby Talbot, Highway Grants Administrator, reviewed a spreadsheet listing all the current highway grants he is managing at present. The RFP is going out next week for the culvert replacement project at Pekin Brook and Kent Hill Road. Toby asked for an increase in the AOT Class 2 Highway Grant for \$8,000.00 for paving Lightening Ridge since the project cost more than the initial \$40,000 grant award. Clay boils were repaired on Moscow Woods Road with a state grant of \$60,228.24 and reimbursement collected. The work to replace the failing abutment on the Moscow Woods Bridge is moving forward since the contract with DeWolfe Engineering Associates for engineering design and preparation of bid documents has been signed. The town received a structures grant in 2022 to replace a culvert and head-wall on Luce Road. Toby explained we started working on a culvert design, various issues occurred, the project wasn't done and the initial cost has since doubled. Toby is working with VTrans to double the grant amount they will give us or give us a different grant.

Toby Talbot reported he now is working on hydrologically-connected road segments where runoff can drain into waterways. In 2017, an entire inventory of the towns road was done in accordance with the Municipal Roads General Permit (MRGP). Toby noted as the road crew does work on these segments, the inventory hasn't been getting updated. Toby said it looks like the town is in arrears since the inventory is not being kept up. How do we keep the road erosion inventory current? We can get reimbursed for every section if there is a record of time spent, materials used and the road crew needs to take notes. Toby is updating the 50 segments that get us off the “high priority bad list” with the AOT. Toby is hoping that John Stafford or Tyler Stecker will be able to do the updating to keep the town current.

Toby Talbot reported that 400 feet of road work on Kent Hill Road near the substation in Maple Corner is planned for this summer at a projected cost of \$150,000.00. The road will be completely dug up and filled with big, drainage stones, covered with road fabric and topped with new gravel. That area is always bad in mud season and hopefully this will remedy the problem.

**Review April Finance Report** – Sandra Ferver, Treasurer, reported the town received a refund of \$65,000.00 from the school district. Currently the general fund balance is -\$60,188.67. Sandra is projecting a deficit at the end of this fiscal year in the general fund of \$ 75, to \$100,000.00. Sandra said to consider how to continue to put money away for highway capital expenditures going forward. There is money in the unreserved fund balance to cover the projected deficit. The town will not need to take out a loan in anticipation of taxes. Sandra is happy to come in to review these financial documents with the Selectboard as desired. Sandra informed the Selectboard that June 12<sup>th</sup> is the closing for the new fire truck and documents signing day. Overages in hiring a consultant to do the treasurer's work (66,798.00), legal fees (92,214.00) and professional fees (11,833.00) were some major contributors to the anticipated deficit. Sandra went on to note the interim treasurer was divorced from the previous Selectboard and they had nothing to do with her work.

## Selectboard Reports

**Highway Department & Roads** - Jamie Moorby reported a number of altered road signs with no warning signs near the Curtis Pond swim area that sees a huge amount of pedestrian traffic. Parking has been an issue in Maple Corner and has been requested that the Town install “No Parking this side of the road” across from the Maple Corner Community Center. The Selectboard agreed there should be a process and need to follow the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) that contains all the national standards covering all traffic control devices. Warning signs, parking signs will be on the next agenda.

Anne Toolan was informed that there are a large amount of tires at the town garage that need to be disposed of. About 500 tires, that were a collection of Green Up Day tires that haven't been disposed of for years. Jamie expects to connect with the Green Up Day people to see if they have funds to dispose of these tires. The Selectboard agrees to have the tire disposal expenditure come out of the highway budget. Anne Toolan spoke about an aluminum trailer that Ed Rowell would like to purchase from the town. The Selectboard discussed this and agreed it will be advertised for sale on FPF to give everybody a chance to buy it. Anne Toolan informed the Selectboard about Curb Cuts she has signed off on that were done correctly. For the past several years, the Road Commissioner hadn't been signing off on Curb Cut Permits. Anne Toolan is interested in learning the app for keeping the road erosion inventory current by documenting the road segments the road crew works on. Toby Talbot agreed he will take her out to show her the roads.

**Curtis Pond Dam Reconstruction Project** - Jamie Moorby and Gabrielle Malina had a meeting of the CPA; a meeting with Jeff Tucker is planned for tomorrow morning. They are continuing to do their work and trying to get the permits.

**Shared Documents and New Email Accounts** - Jordan Keyes reported he's doing more work on the platform and trying to recreate what was on the google drive before moving to that platform. Jordan explained other things he's working on. The Selectboard distribution list email was discussed.

**Administration of Selectboard email account** – Barbara Butler asked if the Selectboard email addresses should be posted on the town's website. Jordan Keyes said okay to put the general email address on the website and Jamie Moorby and Anne Toolan listed on the highway department page as Road Commissioners. The Selectboard agreed to give VLCT each of the five individual email addresses.

**Collective Bargaining with Road Crew & Union Report** - Jordan Keyes reported they had a second meeting and have a plan for moving forward. There is interest on both sides to get through the process as quickly as possible.

**Status of Shedd v. Calais** - Anne Toolan reported the monthly boarding fee for the impounded horses is \$450.00. The male horse has gastric issues and the boarder is interested in adopting the male horse if it comes down to that. There are three other horses involved in this action.

Anne Winchester made a **motion** to continue this meeting to May 25, 2023 at 5:30 pm for the purpose of hearing further details on the application to work in the Town's Right-of-Way by Larry Orr on Leonard Road. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried. 5-0

Rose Pelchuck  
Interim Recording Secretary