

Calais Selectboard Meeting
Monday, May 23, 2016
Unapproved

Present: Selectboard Members Denise Wheeler, Rose Pelchuck, John Brabant (arrived at 7:19), Scott Bassage. **Absent:** Toby Talbot

Others Present: Alfred Larrabee, Road Commissioner; Donna Fitch, Clerk & Treasurer; Scott Williams, Esq, Washington County States Attorney; Bonnie Waninger, Executive Director, Central VT Regional Planning; Reed Cherington.

Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

- **Sign Park & Ride Resolution** (approved at 5/9/16 meeting)
Board members signed this resolution.

- **Review & Sign Town Invoices, Highway Orders and Budget Update**

Combine Town Hall Reserve fund accounts #1811.1 and #1811.2 and move #1806 Ancient Roads fund to general fund: Donna Fitch suggested, based on the auditors' recommendation, to combine the two funds and merge the Ancient Roads fund into the General Fund. All Board members were in agreement.

- **Appointed Officials**

Denise asked whether there was any interest in the vacant position of E911 coordinator. Rose Pelchuck noted that Rolf Mueller had expressed an interest; she will follow up.

- **Approve Minutes of May 9, 2016**

Selectboard members suggested a few edits for clarity. Rose moved to approve the minutes of May 9, 2016, with noted edits. This motion carried unanimously.

- **Road Commissioner update**

Alfred Larrabee reported the Mirror Lake culvert project is done. The state inspection will happen soon; he will update the Board after the inspection. The town has been grading the roads, as needed and as possible. Alfred may need to look for a road crew "fill in" replacement. He will contact and get closure with Patrick, and then begin a search for a replacement. Rose suggested sending a letter to Patrick; Alfred would like to try to get in touch with him via phone before a letter is sent. Denise asked for Alfred to update her before the next Selectboard meeting so the Board can send a letter if needed.

The repairs for the truck that is to be traded in will be around \$3K, but after these repairs are complete, it will be trade as planned.

North Calais Bridge (Town Highway 16) update: Alfred has information that will be shared with Board members by email.

Alfred gave Shauna Clifford, AOT District Coordinator, a tour around Calais to show her some of the upcoming projects. The state has changed the permit application for working in the state's right-of-way. Shauna told Alfred the town is going to get approval for the North Calais retaining wall.

Rose noted that when the time comes to go out to bid, there is a free (to municipalities) web site for requesting proposals. She will share the information with Donna Fitch, and when the time comes Donna will post the bid online in addition to the usual means of posting.

Alfred reported the Center Road project will begin mid-June. The road closure will be for two weeks when the project is underway, and E. Montpelier may work on the portion of the road in that town at the same time. The contractor is Lamberti.

● **ROW – Ben Ali (Curtis Pond)**

Proposed installation of fence in ROW: Denise reported she had reviewed the right-of-way ordinance and had driven by the site. Donna had communicated via email with the property owner to clarify the height of the fence. The Board still feels that some specific details need to be known before approval:

1. Clear measurement from the edge of the road
2. Clearly flagged with yellow flags or orange stakes;

(The Board noted that if the fence is three feet from the front face of the house, then it is not in the right of way, so does not require Board approval.) The Board tabled this action, pending further information.

● **Meet and greet with Scott Williams, Esq., Washington County State's Attorney:**

Denise introduced Scott Williams and stated this is the first time a state's attorney has asked to meet the Board. Mr. Williams explained he is reaching out to all Washington County towns and covered the responsibilities of his office. He looks at crime as a public health issue. Discussion included the issues of school truancy, opiate addiction, legalization of marijuana. There is the possibility of a new case manager position to coordinate with schools to address truancy. Denise asked, What can the Selectboard do? Mr. Williams suggested that, going forward, the legislature should consider an increase in staffing at the State's Attorney's office; he suggested Selectboards support this necessary staffing increase when it is proposed. He and each of the office's attorneys have over 600 caseloads a year each.

● **Bonnie Waninger, Executive Director, Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission**

Ms. Waninger spoke to the Board about the Commission's role working with municipalities to support effective local government and to work cooperatively with them to address regional issues. She spoke about some of the Commission's tasks:

- Providing local technical assistance
- Regional planning activities: helping municipalities work together (e.g., Plainfield and Barre Town and Barre City working together around storm water master plan)
- Trainings for planning boards
- State and federal policy development

She spoke about recent legislation. Towns and regions will be required to complete a comprehensive energy plan (how the community uses energy and where does it come from? e.g., electric, gasoline, etc). Topics of discussion included weatherization and the need for Vermont to address the issue of so many drivers needing to drive so many distances due to the state's rural nature.

John Brabant spoke about his frustration with the legislation around zoning and development, related to S230. He suggested that the Board discuss this at a future meeting.

The Board briefly discussed the Clean Water Act; Denise suggested that the Board invite Dan to a meeting to discuss this in depth.

Referring to grants available for bike and pedestrian lanes, John noted the concerns expressed by cyclists and pedestrians regarding County Road and East Calais. Denise asked whether it is possible for CVRPC to assess and review the traffic study done in 2004 of E. Calais village and the intersection of Route 14. John noted Woodbury is also interested in addressing some related issues; the Board asked Bonnie for support in working together with neighboring towns to use grant monies effectively. John suggested, for example, a Route 14 passageway study group with Woodbury, Calais, and East Montpelier to use grant monies to work on the same issues each town has.

Scott Bassage expressed a desire to connect with the CVRPC over many issues such as these. He noted that he believes many people would like to see the Calais Town Plan rewritten. Bonnie said there is a current trend to create more concise plans; CVRPC provides support with this.

Denise stated that she believes both the East Calais Revitalization group and the Maple Corner Park and Ride initiation have some common ground. She would like to work together with the support of CVRPC to capitalize on the energy that is generated with these and other interest groups. Denise will email the 2004 traffic study to Bonnie.

Bonnie explained that Forest Integrity is become a critical piece in town plans. The Board discussed the natural resources inventory that is currently underway in Calais. Scott expressed his interest in creating an Economic Development Committee.

• Review budget and audit update

Donna stated the audit is going well and is resulting in many suggestions, some of which are already in place. A draft of the audit will be shared with the Selectboard (in about a month) and the Board will be required to review and sign off on it. The auditors explained that after this year's extensive audit, there are other options for less comprehensive audits in future years, for example a "review audit." The auditors may recommend transitioning from Quickbooks to NEMRC for accounts payable, cash receipts, general ledger. The cost for all three modules is \$5,250, but NEMRC will push the cost out over future years. These modules integrate with the modules already in the town office: tax administration, grand list, dog licensing.

• Appoint Assistant ZA and designate authority

John moved to appoint Dorothy Naylor Assistant Zoning Administrator to assist Zoning Administrator John McCullough with zoning paperwork and hearing notices. The motion was seconded by Denise. The motion carried unanimously.

• Reports/Updates

John suggested watching the webinar that is being held for the bike and pedestrian grant on May 24, 6 – 8 p.m. or May 26, 1 – 3 p.m.

The meeting adjourned by consensus at 9:34.

Future Meeting(s)

ROW – Ben Ali
Roads Committee/Roads standards
North Calais Bridge
Bike Pedestrian Grant Program
Fellows Property Offer