

SELECTBOARD MEETING
Approved Minutes

June 18, 2012

7:00pm East Montpelier Town Office

JOINT MEETING OF THE CALAIS SELECTBOARD and EAST MONTPELIER SELECTBOARD

Attending: Calais Selectboard Members: Denise Wheeler, Toby Talbot and Mike Garand; East Montpelier Selectboard Members: Bruce Johnson, Seth Gardner, Carl Etnier, and Casey Northrup; Jay Copping, Greg Pelchuck and Rose Pelchuck.

Actions:

Denise Wheeler, Calais Selectboard Chair, called the continued meeting from June 11, 2012 of the Calais Selectboard to order at 7:12pm. Bruce Johnson began by asking how to proceed. Bruce Johnson said this is a case of determining whether there is any way around the termination clause and if we want to use it or how do we go around it. The boards are trying to decide if we are giving notice as outlined in the contracts.

Mike Garand asked about coverage if both ambulances are out at the same time. Jay Copping, EMFD President, stated EMFD relies on mutual aid. Jay went on to explain about mutual aid coverage by Montpelier, Barre City and Barre Town Ambulances to the towns EMFD covers. Plainfield is a separate ambulance service contract, separate from the contract that covers Calais and East Montpelier.

Bruce Johnson brought up the amount Plainfield pays for their ambulance service and said, "We pay and also pay for the building." Bruce noted this was one of the issues citizens brought to his attention as town administrator. Bruce Johnson said, "Plainfield pays significantly less than Calais." Bruce said, "In 21 years the value of the building will be nil; we're not getting any equity out of it." Toby Talbot said, "The understanding from the beginning is that the ambulances bring revenue into the towns that was never brought in before." Bruce Johnson thought the capital reserve fund was only for ambulances and not fire trucks. Toby Talbot noted EMFD would raise about \$50,000.00 each year for 20 years for a total of about a million dollars in capital funds. In the end, Plainfield is supporting the EMFD capital reserve fund (part of all ambulance revenue received from patients go into the capital reserve fund). Toby Talbot further clarified that the fire budget covers all the costs of running the building; ambulance staff are paid from the ambulance service budget. Bruce Johnson noted that is one issue we'll have to work out.

Term of the contract will have to be decided; obviously will change the dates. The Selectboards noted this is the way to get the concerns out. Denise Wheeler wants to hear what East Montpelier wants to change in the contracts. Toby Talbot said the proportion of the budget (paid by each town) cannot be changed without changing the contract. Bruce Johnson checked the latest census figures as follows:

1607 Calais residents and 2576 East Montpelier residents

Mike Garand would be opposed to using population to determine town contribution toward the EMFD budget. Toby Talbot said, "The decision to split the amount for the budget is decided by Calais and East Montpelier; the fire department gives the amount needed to fund the department and the towns need to figure out the split." Based on population figures, Bruce Johnson said it would be about 3/8 for Calais and 5/8 for East Montpelier.

"The Memo of Understanding needs to be brought into the contract," Bruce Johnson said. Bruce Johnson said the fire budget was not level funded. Bruce said there are two different clauses that don't mesh. The EMFD budget (fire and ambulance) was level funded for four years. Toby Talbot went on to say the fire department will have to see how well the level funded budget worked these past four years and decide if EMFD wants to do an annual budget or level funded budget again. Seth Gardner said, "What the townspeople would like to see is more oversight, see the budget figures and would like to see the budget line by line."

Denise Wheeler suggested putting both Interlocal Agreements in one contract; incorporate it all into one contract. Bruce Johnson agreed. Seth Gardner noted the need to change this whole contract.

Denise Wheeler summarized the view of the Selectboard is to vote to reopen the contract; get the two Selectboards together to hash out line by line; going to have a lawyer do it; come up with one contract from one lawyer. Denise Wheeler said they have a partial list of issues and will agree to meet regularly. Bruce Johnson sees no reason why the fire department wouldn't be part of the meeting process; they are open, public meetings.

On behalf of the East Montpelier Selectboard, Carl Etnier made a motion to give notice to East Montpelier Fire Department to reopen the Interlocal Contract with Respect to Firefighting Services and the Interlocal Contract with Respect to Ambulance Services and will give notice to East Montpelier Fire Department, Inc. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 4-0.

On behalf of the Calais Selectboard, Denise Wheeler made a motion to make notice of nonrenewal and negotiation of the Contracts with Respect to Firefighting and Ambulances Services with East Montpelier Fire Department, Inc. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 3-0. Bruce Johnson will type the letter and Denise Wheeler will sign it on behalf of the Calais Selectboard.

The Selectboards agreed to meet on Monday July 30th at 7:30pm during the regular Calais Selectboard meeting at the Calais Town Hall in Gospel Hollow to continue collaboration on revising the emergency services contracts.

Toby Talbot made a motion to adjourn this portion of the joint meeting at 8:10pm. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Pelchuck
Calais Selectboard Administrative Assistant
EMFD Administrative Assistant