

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Monday, November 26, 2018 at 7pm at the Calais Town Offices

Present: Denise Wheeler (Chair), Rose Pelchuck (Member), Sharon Winn Fannon (Member), Clif Emmons (Member), Katie Lane-Karnas (Recording Secretary), Jerome Lipani (ORCA), John McCullough, Alfred Larrabee (Road Commissioner), J.C. Myers, Tom Blachly

Absent: John Brabant (Vice Chair)

1. Call to Order: Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

2. Public Comment: None.

3. Review, Additions/Changes to Agenda: None.

4. Updates/Reports (as needed or requested)

- a) Road Commissioner and Operations Manager: The Road Commissioner reported that the old truck is still being utilized; it has needed minor repairs completed by his department. He brought information on pricing and considerations for tractors and mowers; the Chair read the article on the draft warning authorizing purchase of a mower. For the proposed 2020 budget, the Chair asked the Road Commissioner to determine an amount not to be exceeded for possible purchase of a tractor and as a point of comparison the cost for a lease.

Denise Wheeler moved to authorized payment to J&B Truck Center for the amount of \$29,988.03 to pay for the truck motor for the 2012 International, and other parts as noted. The total for the motor is \$26,883.78, but the total bill is \$29,988.03, which includes other parts needed for truck maintenance. Clif Emmons seconded, and the motion passed 4-0. The truck is still at J&B's; once they receive payment from the Town, and the Road Commissioner strips off tools, etc., the truck will be released for purchase.

The Road Commissioner updated the Board on staffing of the Highway Department, including a person he is considering for a part time position. The Board thanked the Road Commissioner for his leadership in recruiting good employees and creating a department with a strong reputation.

The Operations Manager was not present for an update.

- b) Treasurer: This item was not needed.

- c) Town Clerk: This item was not needed.

- d) Town Hall Renovation Committee: John McCullough attended representing the Committee, explaining the septic system exploratory process that has been completed. The Presby mound septic system has been selected. It is like one that would be designed for a two-bedroom house (this is as small a system as can be obtained for the Town Hall). The Road Crew is installing the system, helping to keep costs affordable. This system allows for up to 2 events per week of 130 people (additional capacity requires Portapotties). The

Committee will gain information on how many large events can be held (in terms of septic limitations) and will build the schedule around that limitation. John McCullough reported that he handled an asbestos reporting oversight (an official certificate proving that there is no asbestos). He also updated the Board on the well and water pressure, the weather's effect delaying the schedule, upcoming pier installation (this will allow backfilling and protecting the foundation for winter), patching holes that resulted from raising the building, lights going in; windows protected from winter weather, plans for getting concrete piers formed. He also reported that the location of the septic will permit 15-20 cars to be parked in summer in the field around the back of the building. J.C. Myers offered his help on the project if needed. The Board thanked John McCullough for the update and volunteer work.

e) Act 46: The Chair reported that the State Board of Education voted to merge the five towns into one district; there is no update on the appeal filed with the Superior Court.

f) CVRPC: This item was not needed.

5. Town Hall Uses: J.C. Myers attended to inquire about use of the Town Hall for performance space for his play which will be at the end of October 2019, and to share his experience in utilizing a town-owned building for theater to the mutual benefit of the Town of Plainfield and theater groups. The Chair described the Renovation Committee's conversation about possibly establishing a "Friends Of" group regarding the Town Hall, at some point in the future; she reiterated the Town's commitment to keep the Town Hall as foremost a Town office space, with which Tom and JC agreed. Tom Blachly, member of the non-profit Friends of the Plainfield Town Hall Opera House, attended to share his organization's experience with their restored Town Hall and use of it for performance space. The Friends organization receives charitable donations, fundraises, applies for grants and manages the scheduling of the building; Tom Blachly offered to share documents and advise on how Plainfield's Friends organization goes about administering the building and performance space. The board noted that conversations about how to manage use of the Town Hall space are premature right now, but the Board appreciates the proactive conversation about possibilities. They discussed when the Committee may have a projected completion date for the project and the Chair invited anyone to the weekly Wednesday Town Hall Renovation Committee meetings. She and Clif Emmons will update that Committee on the Board's discussion.

6. Budget/town report items – working session

a) Review budget and warning: The Chair indicated that this version of the budget is a "wish list," and the Board reviewed every line item in detail. The Board became familiar with the notes associated with many items and reviewed budgeted and actual amounts going back two years. The Board decided to bring questions and clarifications to the Treasurer at staff meeting and revisit the budget with more items filled in at the next meeting (insurance quotes and a few line item amounts are needed).

b) First Draft of the Warning: There is no increase on the Kellogg-Hubbard Library nor the CVSWMD requested amounts. The Board reviewed the first draft of the Warning.

The Board reviewed the language voted on in 2018 regarding due dates for timely tax payments and due dates for the grace period tax payment, and how to interpret the post mark date allowance (in light of a question raised by a resident on this issue). The 2018 Town Meeting article (#11) about the regular due date includes a postmarked allowance; the article (#13) about the grace period of 14 days does not include language about a

postmark allowance. Under common rules of statutory construction, the fact the postmark provision was not part of #13 means the voting body (i.e. the Town Meeting voters) did not intend to include it, particularly when another provision clearly included the postmark provision. The Board clarified that the grace period has been in place for only a few years. The Treasurer recently posted a clear deadline for the tax grace period on Front Porch Forum. The Selectboard considered determining who has the authority to interpret the language of the voted articles (the Treasurer, or the Selectboard), and through interpretation allow the postmarked date for the tax payment grace period to “count.” The Board agreed to clarify this in the article language on the 2019 Town Meeting Warning, as the most expedient resolution to the current resident’s question. The Board also noted the Treasurer’s notice in FPF provided plenty of time for taxpayers to either pay the taxes in person or mail them well before the grace period ends.

The Board discussed finding approaches to fulfilling the roles of Listers and Assessor and how it is being accomplished in other similar sized towns. The Chair said she would ask the Asst Town Clerk to research budget-related issues, as well as explore how similar-sized towns staff traditionally volunteer positions, such as lister, zoning administrator, etc.

- c) Zoning Administrator position: The Chair reported that, as previously discussed, the current Zoning Administrators do not intend to continue working into the distant future. She contacted Woodbury, and Jan Ohlsson contacted the Planning Commission at their last meeting (technically, it is the role of the Planning Commission to contact and recommend people). The Chair asked the Board to think about the line item for Zoning Administrator wages in consideration of hiring for this position in the future.

7. Computer Support: This item was tabled until a subsequent meeting.

8. Consideration of “draft” road naming policy: This item was tabled until a subsequent meeting.

9. Chair update, projects, etc.:

- There will be a meeting on December 6 with the East Montpelier Fire Department and Calais and East Montpelier joint Selectboards.

10. Executive Session for Personnel Matters: Denise Wheeler made a motion to go into Executive Session at 9:27 pm per 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (3), personnel matters. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0. The Board resumed Regular Session at 10:35 pm. The Chair had nothing to report publicly.

11. Review and approve Minutes, Warrants

- a) The Board reviewed the invoices and orders were processed for payment.
- b) Denise Wheeler moved and Rose Pelchuck seconded to approve the Minutes of the 11/5/2018 and 11/12/2018 meetings, with the changes as noted; the motion passed 4-0.

12. Adjournment: Denise Wheeler made a motion to adjourn at 10:37 pm. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 4-0.

Date: 11/27/2018 Respectfully Submitted, Katie Lane-Karnas, Recording Secretary
Approved by the Selectboard at the 12/3/2108 meeting

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