

**Calais Selectboard Meeting
Minutes**

Monday, July 25, 2016

7:00pm Calais Town Hall

Approved 8-8-16

Attendance:

Selectboard members Scott Bassage, John Brabant, Rose Pelchuck, Toby Talbot, Denise Wheeler; Donna Fitch, Clerk; Alfred Larrabee, Road Commissioner

Others Present: Dot Naylor, Peter Backman, Millie Brumback, Ed and Nancy Rowell, Jody Bayne, Paul Lamberti

Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Public Comment: Dot Naylor stated that she believes that appointments should be listed on the agendas for the meetings. She spoke about her experience as a Calais resident; people in the past were more aware of the appointed officials' positions; she believes that voting by Australian ballot, in part, has changed this; community members do not feel as connected with the Selectboard and with the School Board as they used to be. She feels that Boards need to be more proactive in getting the community involved.

Dot Naylor stated she does not think having Selectboard members on the Development Review Board (DRB) is appropriate since the Selectboard appoints DRB members; they are in essence appointing and removing themselves from the DRB. Discussion followed about appointment of members to various boards and committees in town. Denise Wheeler shared the extensive efforts she has made to reach out to community members to get involved. She stated she has offered to serve on the DRB because of a shortage of members. She has researched the issue and VLCT does not find it to be a conflict of interest. Dot said all Selectboard members should take a one-year turn serving on the DRB. She asked that all Selectboard members make an effort – going as far as approaching people in person – to ask for their participation. Dot expressed her concern that not enough community members are represented on boards and committees when they are making important decisions which affect the community. Scott Bassage asked whether Dot would like to help with recruiting community members. Dot is presently Assistant Zoning Administrator.

Review & Sign Town Invoices, Highway Orders and Budget Update: Toby Talbot stated that the Center Road culvert project cost more than anticipated. The difference of \$4,000 is reflected in the Board orders tonight and will come out of the highway operating budget. Paul Lamberti, the contractor, explained that the labor and equipment time involved was more than planned. The Board will take formal action to approve this at the next meeting; this action item will be on the agenda. Denise said she wished this had been brought to her attention when creating the agenda so that the action could be taken and reflected at this meeting. Board members complimented Paul on the finished product.

Appointed Officials: Denise reported that Eileen Simpson, a new Calais resident, is interested in serving on the DRB and will attend a future Board meeting. John Brabant moved to appoint Jan Ohlsson and Denise Wheeler as DRB alternate members, with Jan's term ending in 2019 and Denise's term ending in 2017. Seconded by Toby Talbot, this motion carried unanimously. Denise recused herself from voting on her appointment to the DRB; she voted in favor of Jan's appointment.

Review and Approve Minutes: Toby Talbot moved to approve the Joint Selectboard Meeting Minutes of July 14, 2016. Seconded by Scott Bassage, this motion carried unanimously. Scott Bassage moved to approve the Minutes of July 15, 2016. Seconded by Denise Wheeler. Discussion: Denise suggested a few edits for clarity. This motion carried unanimously, with noted edits.

Road Commissioner Update: Alfred Larrabee reported briefly on a repair made to Marshfield Road. The new town truck has been received. The inside of the cab is still being customized. Alfred reiterated that the Center Road project was a job well done, and he thanked Lamberti Excavating. John Brabant shared a concern from a resident that a ditch was affecting two black locust trees on Adamant Road. The community member had asked that the ditch be refilled with soil. Some discussion followed about whether the ditch was responsible for the demise of the trees. John reported that Neal Maker, Tree Warden, had stated that he did not believe the ditch was responsible. However, John believes that filling in the ditch will appease the resident, and it may or may not affect the tree. John suggested Alfred remove the culvert that was placed there and to fill in the 20-30 feet of ditch with soil. John advised Alfred to move forward with this project; the Board is in support.

Alfred spoke about a permit request on Robinson Hill Road. Because time is of the essence for this, the Board suggested that the interested party go ahead and the board will take action on the permit at the next Board meeting. Alfred has discussed this project with the party, including specifications about using a "sleeve" in which to run pipe across the road. Action on this permit request will be on a future Selectboard meeting agenda.

Operations Manager Update: Toby reported that the pre-bid meeting on the North Calais Retaining Wall project will be this Friday, July 29th at 10:00 am. Bids will be opened on August 11th at 4:00 pm at the town office. Bid award will happen by the Selectboard at a subsequent meeting.

Reappoint Road Commissioner: Toby Talbot moved to appoint Alfred Larrabee as Road Commissioner for a one year term. Seconded by John Brabant, this motion carried unanimously. The Board thanked Alfred.

TH #16 – N. Calais bridge replacement plan: Denise reviewed the developments in planning this bridge replacement to date. Toby reminded the Board that the cost of the project is estimated around \$30,000. He explained some of the specifics involved in this replacement project, including guard rails and form work, using existing abutments. Because this project will use state grant monies, the bridge will need to meet state specifications. Toby expects this to be a one-way bridge. The town's share of this project will be mostly "in kind." The town will provide the excavating work and much of the labor. Millie Brumback asked whether a decision has been made already to replace the bridge. Denise explained the Board is discussing the project and deciding tonight whether to move forward with the bridge replacement.

John Brabant moved to apply for a VTrans Structures Grant (in April 2017) for TH#16 N. Calais bridge replacement as planned and engineered by Doug Newton; the town's portion of the grant will be "in kind." The grant application will be for approximately \$30,000. Seconded by Toby Talbot, this motion carried unanimously. The Board recognizes that though this is considered "in kind," there is the cost of labor and wear and tear on equipment. Toby suggested that the grant application reflect the entire cost of the project, including the work that is expected to be completed by the town. The grant will cover 90% of the total cost of the project. Millie asked about the timeline. The grant application is due in April 2017 and results are announced around the first of June 2017. The project cannot begin until July 1, 2017 (FY 2018). Millie asked how the Board would proceed if the grant were not approved. Toby stated there is a good chance the grant will be approved. If not, the Board would apply again and continue to pursue the project. Millie thanked the Board for its work on this project.

WEC permit request for construction of an electric distribution line on Bliss Road: Toby had met with Dan Weston from Washington Electric Co-op who explained the specifics of the permit request. Toby moved to approve the permit. Seconded by Rose Pelchuck, this motion carried unanimously.

Discuss and review designation of Chickering Fen from Class II to Class I Wetland as initiated by the State Wetlands Program: This is still in development; the Board will be kept apprised.

HDTV budget item request from Planning Commission: Denise shared this request for a larger screen TV for use during meetings and presentations. Dollar amounts and more specific information are still unknown, so the Board will address this request at a future meeting when more information is available.

Discuss payment for Constables and Animal Control Officers: A stipend for the positions of Animal Control Officer and Constable was discussed. Toby suggested \$20/ hour for casual labor to reimburse Nate Singelton's time for this

specific instance (taking a dog to Central VT Humane Society). Denise asked Donna to look into liability or other related issues if the Board agrees to pay this. Donna will check with the VLCT.

Further discussion and/or decision on Armstrong Farm: Denise stated the meeting the previous week with Jon Ramsay and the Calais Selectboard and Conservation Commission had gone very well. No further discussion or action from the Board is warranted at tonight's meeting.

Letter from the Selectboard to the PSB regarding Order Revision pursuant to Act No. 130 (H.577): John Brabant moved to approve the language as written in this letter. Seconded by Scott Bassage, this motion carried unanimously. Board members signed this letter.

GAR Road: The Board discussed GAR Road. Toby shared the history of the road, which dates back to the 1940s. The question remains whether this is a town highway or a private road. John spoke about a statute that is similar to "common law" regarding use of property or maintaining property. Toby suggested the Board decide whether there is any value in pursuing ownership of this road. The Board discussed the veteran's monument at Memorial Hall; a suggestion was made to move the monument to the Calais Elementary School grounds.

Executive Session – Toby Talbot made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:40pm in accordance with 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (3) for the purpose of discussing personnel matters, including annual evaluations of the Calais Road Crew. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0. The regular session resumed at 9:29pm. John Brabant made a motion to approve raises for the Road Crew retroactive to July 1st as recommended by the Operations Manager. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Stoudt
Selectboard Recording Secretary