

SELECTBOARD MEETING

Approved Minutes

November 14, 2011

7:00pm Calais Elementary School

Attending: Denise Wheeler, John Brabant, Mike Garand, Toby Talbot, Scott Bassage, Alfred Larrabee, Peter Harvey, Donna Fitch, Peter Brough, Sage Kennedy, Doug Lilley, and Rose Pelchuck.

Actions:

Approval of the October 31st Meeting Minutes – The Selectboard reviewed the Minutes. Toby Talbot made a motion to approve the Minutes as written. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 4-0-1. John Brabant abstained from the vote.

Approval of the November 7th Meeting Minutes – The Selectboard reviewed the Minutes and made a few changes. Scott Bassage made a motion to approve the Minutes as amended. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 4-0-1. Toby Talbot abstained from the vote. Denise Wheeler inquired if the Approved Selectboard Meeting Minutes could be posted on the Front Porch Forum, community electronic newsletter. Rose Pelchuck will ask Rolf Mueller if he would be willing to post them on the FPF.

Town Budget Update – none per Donna Fitch.

Treasurer Update – Donna Fitch, Town Clerk & Treasurer, reported she is now processing the invoices differently. Scott Bassage made a motion to authorize the treasurer to disburse town money in order to disburse funds to pay the road crew showing to whom and for what purpose a payment may be made per 24 V.S.A 1623 (2), the treasurer may then issue a check. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 5-0.

Road Commissioner Update – Alfred Larrabee, Road Commissioner, reported a new town employee has been hired to fill the vacancy on the road crew. Guthrie Perry, who lives in Cabot, is set to begin on 11/28/11. Former employee, Bob Cutler, will cover the fill-in position as needed, covering some weekends and sick time. John Brabant made a motion to pay Bob Cutler the same hourly wage he received prior to his retirement. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 5-0.

Toby Talbot made a motion to authorize a year-end bonus of \$250.00 to each member of the road crew to be paid in December. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 5-0. Donna Fitch noted the Selectboard Administrative Assistant and each Selectboard member would receive their stipends in December.

Town Roads and Bridge Standards – Donna Fitch and Alfred Larrabee will look for the signed copy of the Town Roads and Bridge Standards that was submitted by Mike Garand with all the paperwork for the last round of state grants. A copy will be given to the Roads Advisory Committee. Alfred Larrabee reported the water pump may be going or gone on the old grader that just had a major overhaul costing more than \$11,000.00.

Vermont Local Roads Program Letter – As discussed at the October 31st meeting, the town received a detailed Roads Report from Steve Jerome, Circuit Rider, for the Local Roads Program. The Selectboard agreed it was a good letter containing concrete recommendations for the Highway Department. Denise Wheeler offered to scan the letter to publish it on the Front Porch Forum. A copy will be given to the Roads Advisory Committee.

Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission – The Selectboard discussed the CVRPC annual dues \$1,687.00 for FY 2013. Denise Wheeler asked our Planning Commission if they are satisfied with the services the town is getting.

Central Vermont Humane Society – The Selectboard discussed the CVHS proposed dues for calendar year 2012 of \$800.00. Denise Wheeler is trying to find out how many animals they have taken from Calais to the shelter.

EMFD Annual Audit – Denise Wheeler misplaced the copy of the audit provided by EMFD. Toby Talbot suggested bringing it up at the next quarterly financial review meeting on January 19, 2012.

Public comment – Sage Kennedy reported traffic hazards in two different locations in North Calais and her desire to have something done about it. Perhaps traffic signs can be installed to remedy the situation. Rose Pelchuck offered the town the *School Bus Stop Ahead* sign she purchased a number of years ago and no longer needs on Lightening Ridge.

Proposed Changes to the Zoning Regulations – The Selectboard needs to devise a time line to warn and hold a public hearing on the proposed changes to the Zoning Regulations. John Brabant will come up with the time line.

Vacant Positions on Town Boards, Commissions and Committees – The Conservation Commission has three openings in addition to other vacancies. Drew Lamb has expressed an interest in serving on the Conservation Commission.

Town Employee Health Insurance – For several weeks the Selectboard has been reviewing health insurance options offered through the VLCT for town employees. The Selectboard has agreed to offer Blue Cross/Blue Shield high deductible plan with the town funding the HRA for the deductible based on the coverage. If the employee contributes 5% toward the health insurance premium, the estimated cost would be as follows:

- 1 person: \$24.00 per month
- 2 people: \$40.00 per month
- Family plan: \$59.00 per month

At the new rates, the town would pay \$77,415.00 compared to the current cost of \$102,000.00; which is a net savings of \$28,000.00 for the town. Toby Talbot noted changing to a different plan will provide significant savings to the town and agrees the employees will be paying something towards healthcare but suggests asking the employees to begin paying the following year. John Brabant said it is not unreasonable to ask the employees to contribute towards the premium. Mike Garand, an East Montpelier town employee, pays 20% of his healthcare premium, also a high deductible plan, and has been contributing for many years. Mike noted the plan also provides less coverage. John Brabant believes a 5% employee contribution is reasonable but struggled with this decision. Toby Talbot reminded the Selectboard that tonight only the plan needs to be selected. Scott Bassage made a motion to offer the Blue Cross/Blue Shield High Deductible Plan, with a Healthcare Reimbursement Account that will be fully funded by the town of Calais (estimated at \$20,000.00) for 2012 calendar year and ask employees to contribute 5% of the BC/BS premium cost. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 4-0-1. Toby Talbot voted against the motion.

Personnel Policy – John Brabant forgot to do his homework. Other items were discussed such as holiday pay. Toby Talbot will make final changes.

Various Reports & Updates:

Website Design – The website policy statement (more procedural statement) is being redone. Rolf Mueller and Scott Bassage have been making some changes to make it improved. The E-VT grant includes money to make a whole different website. Scott is waiting to see what other towns have done. Scott and Rolf are going to training in December and will report back to the Selectboard.

Curtis Pond Dam – nothing to report

Roads Advisory Committee – Mo Cerrutti is supposed to schedule the first committee meeting. A copy of the Vermont Local Roads report from Stephen Jerome dated November 8, 2011 will be given to the committee as a basis for their work.

Other Business - Doug Lilley would like people to drive slower and recommends having a 25 mph speed limit throughout town. We do own a speed cart in conjunction with Marshfield and Plainfield. Cy Lambertson used to set it up at different locations around town to remind people to slow down.

Peter Brough, CVRPC Delegate, reported about a possible merger of CVRPC and Central Vermont Economic Development Corporation.

Zoning Violations, Appeals, Litigation, Personnel Matters – John Brabant made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:40pm in accordance with 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (1) for the purpose of discussing ongoing legal issues relating to McCullough Crushing proposed expansion and TH 44. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 5-0. Regular session resumed at 9:08pm.

Denise Wheeler reported John Klesch, Esq. drafted the final decision on TH 44 Wheeler Road discontinuance. There are some blanks on the document that need to be filled in and once complete, it will be filed in the permanent record of the town.

The State Environmental Court is currently sending the McCullough Crushing gravel expansion case to mediation. The Selectboard decided tonight to have Tina Bielenberg represent the DRB interest in the mediation proceedings and to advise the Selectboard. Denise Wheeler will represent the Selectboard in the mediation proceedings. John Brabant suggested informing other Selectboard members of the meetings in case they wanted to attend. Denise responded by saying three Selectboard members cannot be together due to Vermont's opening meeting law. Joe McLean, Esq. is representing the town in this matter. John Brabant made the motion to appoint Tina Bielenberg and Denise Wheeler to the respective positions as noted above. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 5-0.

Tentative Agenda for the November 28th Meeting

- Conservation Commission: Beaver Policy
- Town Appointments: Forest Fire Wardens and Conservation Commission
- Town Hall Restoration Grant update: David Schutz

Toby Talbot made a motion to adjourn at 9:22pm. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Pelchuck
Selectboard Administrative Assistant