

SELECTBOARD MEETING  
*Approved Minutes*

November 26, 2012  
School

7:00pm Calais Elementary

**Attending:** Denise Wheeler, John Brabant, Scott Bassage, Mike Garand, Toby Talbot, Donna Fitch, Will Walters, Conrad Smith and Rose Pelchuck.

**Actions:**

Approval of the November 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes – Toby Talbot made a motion to approve the Minutes. Denise Wheeler offered one amendment. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 4-0-1. Mike abstained from the vote.

Budget Update – Donna Fitch provided a balance sheet and other documents prior to the meeting for Selectboard review. The Selectboard discussed the info with Donna and questions were answered. Denise Wheeler wondered what percentage of property owners doesn't pay property taxes. Donna is trying to reconcile her books every month with what Lesley Fitch collects in delinquent taxes.

Switching disability/life insurance companies – Donna Fitch will have it explained by Hitcock and Boardman Insurance Agency and report back to the Selectboard at the next meeting.

Equipment Loans Consolidation – Donna Fitch recommends consolidating the two equipment loans not presently financed at Merchant's Bank as this will save the town about \$1,800.00. The loans are for the Payloader and 2009 truck. Denise Wheeler made a motion to consolidate the two loans at Merchant's Bank per Donna Fitch's recommendation. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0.

Fireworks Ordinance Update – Donna has not warned the ordinance yet. No action taken.

Reschedule December 31<sup>st</sup> meeting – The Selectboard agreed to meet on December 10<sup>th</sup> (regularly scheduled date) and on December 17<sup>th</sup> instead of December 31<sup>st</sup>. The Joint Meeting at EMFD will be held on December 13<sup>th</sup> to discuss any EMFD Budget items and to answer any questions the Selectboards may have before Town Meeting 2013.

Town Invoices & Road Commissioner's Orders of the Day – The Selectboard reviewed and processed the invoices and orders of the day as per usual protocol.

Memo and Deadline from Federal Communication Commission re: Radio Frequencies – Toby Talbot reported that the town's FCC radio license had expired and the new license had to have the town's office radio on the license. Carl Rinker from Rinker's Communications issued a new license to the town and reprogrammed the radio for narrow band radio frequency.

Emergency Plan Update – Toby Talbot, Emergency Plan Coordinator, updates the plan each year, last time it was done was in May 2012. Denise Wheeler wanted the plan updated to include the new fire chief and have WDEV radio listed, too. Donna Fitch will send the latest version to Rolf Mueller, Town Webmaster, to put on the town's website.

Road Commissioner Update – Alfred sent a report via Denise Wheeler that the roadwork on Ballentine Road is done, the trucks are ready for winter weather and other than that, things have been stable.

Executive Session: Zoning Enforcement, Appeals, Litigation, etc. – Toby Talbot motion to go into Executive Session in accordance with 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (1) at 7:35pm for the purpose of discussing a

legal and real estate matters with Steve Cusick, Conservation Commission Chair. The motion was seconded, voted on and carried 5-0. The Regular Session resumed at 7:55pm. Denise Wheeler had nothing to publicly report.

Adamant Pond Discussion with Bill and Ruth Porter – John Brabant received a call from Porter's and John walked all around the pond with Bill and Molly Porter a few weeks ago, show water condition and at least partially dewatered due to the beaver baffles. The Porters had not seen the water levels this low in the past 40 years. The Porters wanted to speak to the board about their concerns. Bill Porter said the water on the backside has turned into a mud flat. Bill didn't realize a second baffle was put in; after the first one was installed, Bill noticed some drop in the water level but with the second, it really dropped. It has changed the wildlife habitat; almost every year loons have been there. Why did the second baffle go in and was that the cause for the change, Bill Porter wondered aloud. Bill Porter would like some way to protect against flooding but also protect wildlife.

Scott explained the second baffle was installed because in the spring of 2011 we experienced the double whammy of a big snowmelt and lots of spring rain. The high water overwhelmed the beaver baffle we installed in 2010. Because water was running high over the dam, the beavers built the dam higher than we would like and several of us were worried that there might be another dam break.

Scott Bassage went to explain that the baffle in Adamant is analogous to a bathtub overflow drain. Overflow drains are secondary drains that work to prevent an overflow. If you have ever been distracted for 20 minutes while filling the bathtub, you are probably glad for the overflow drain that is set just below the rim of the tub. In the case of the Adamant beaver dam, when there is flow over the dam the beavers build the dam higher. We don't want this to happen. The Calais Selectboard voted to increase the capacity of the "overflow drain" in Adamant by adding another baffle and set of pipes. Denise Wheeler suggested that Cory Cheever from ANR come and look at. Toby Talbot suggested maybe lifting the second baffle and capping it then wait to see what happens. Scott Bassage will contact Cory Cheever at ANR and schedule a meeting with the Porters to discuss concerns and solutions.

Proposed Changes to Zoning Regulations – The Selectboard needs to set a date to hold a public hearing. Scott Bassage will work on setting the notice and hearing dates. Denise Wheeler stated the Selectboard will go over it page by page and will have a member of the Planning Commission present to answer questions.

FY 2014 Budget Development and 2013 Town Meeting Preparation – Denise Wheeler knows that Donna Fitch is working on budget figures for next fiscal year. Denise also spoke to Alfred Larrabee to be sure he is working on the Proposed Highway Budget, too. A separate article will be warned to replace the roof on the town hall.

Draft Dog Ordinance – The Selectboard continued discussion as they reviewed the changes proposed from VLCT. VLCT will make a clean copy of the proposed dog ordinance and the Selectboard plans to discuss it publicly at the December 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. Denise Wheeler will distribute the draft ordinance on Front Porch Forum.

#### Other Business

- Scott Bassage reported the Historic Preservation Commission continues to have difficulty finding an engineering firm to work on water damage mitigation at the town hall. They only have a \$10,000.00 grant and Scott reported the money will have to be returned in January if they cannot find an engineer to do the work.
- Denise Wheeler made a motion to give the road crew and administrative assistant a holiday bonus of \$250.00 each. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 5-0.
- On Tuesday, 12/18/12, the CVRPC will hold a meeting to discuss "planning in the state" whereby they would like to plan for the future while looking at the big picture.
- Toby Talbot wondered about any appeal of the last small claims court case involving Doug Lilley. Donna Fitch has not heard anything official and will check the court records for the appeal deadline.
- Toby Talbot asked about getting proposed Selectboard changes to the Interlocal Agreement to EMFD.

Executive Session: Zoning Enforcement, Appeals, Litigation, etc. – John Brabant made a motion to go into Executive Session in accordance with 1 V.S.A. subsection 313 (a) (1) at 8:35pm for the purpose of discussing contractual and legal matters relating to McCullough Crushing gravel pit expansion. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 5-0. The regular session resumed at 9:15pm. Denise Wheeler had nothing to publicly report.

Tentative Agenda for the December 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting

- Look at Interlocal Agreement
- Informal public discussion about dog ordinance
- Disability and life insurance
- Beaver baffles in Adamant
- Town Hall

Toby Talbot made a motion to adjourn 9:16pm. The motion was seconded, voted and carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Rose Pelchuck  
Selectboard Administrative Assistant