

CALAIS SELECTBOARD

**LOCATION: TOWN HALL
Approved Minutes**

MONDAY, MAY 8, 2017 @ 7:00 P.M.

Approved 5-22-17

Selectboard Members Present: Denise Wheeler, Rose Pelchuck, Rob Richert, John Brabant

Absent: Sharon Winn Fannon

Others Present: Donna Fitch, Toby Talbot, Alfred Larrabee, Judith Robert, Larry Smith, VLCT, Lisa Stoudt

Call to Order: Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

• Administrative work and changes or additions to the agenda:

John Brabant moved to approve the revised LEOP: Local Emergency Operations Pland.
Seconded by Rose Pelchuck, this motion carried unanimously.

• Review & Sign Town Invoices, Highway Orders and Budget Update: The Board reviewed and circulated the board order for signatures.

• Appointed Officials (make appointments or reappointments as needed): The Board discussed that Town Service Officer position is not required. Denise Wheeler will follow up with the person currently listed as such.

• Approve Minutes:

April 20, 2017: Rose Pelchuck had taken these minutes. Denise Wheeler moved to approve these minutes. Seconded by Rob Richert, this motion carried unanimously.

April 27, 2017: Rose Pelchuck had taken these minutes. Denise Wheeler moved to approve these minutes. Seconded by Rob Richert, this motion carried unanimously.

April 24, 2017: Denise Wheeler moved to approve these minutes. Seconded by Rob Richert. A correction was noted, for clarification. This motion carried unanimously.

• Road Commissioner update

• Hennessey Curb Cut application: The Board considered this application. Denise Wheeler asked Alfred Larrabee for some clarification on this application; he stated that he is aware of this application and that it seems to be in order. Rob Richert moved to approve this application. Seconded by Rose Pelchuck, this motion carried unanimously. Board members signed this document

• Road side mowing: Alfred Larrabee stated that an ad has been placed for this, and he is

waiting to receive bids. Judith Robert stated that one arrived today in the mail. Toby Talbot stated that in Middlesex, the job of road side mowing is done twice yearly. He suggested that the board might want to consider this. Doug Grout does this for Middlesex, and he had also submitted a bid for the Calais job. Board members stated that next year might be the time to discuss budgeting for twice yearly road side mowing. Denise Wheeler asked whether the Board has any interest in having an Invasive Species training, such as the one East Montpelier recently held. Board members agreed that this would be worthwhile.

● **Culvert installation agreement:** Alfred Larrabee and the Selectboard had considered this agreement document. The SB reviewed this agreement whereby residents can pay for a new culvert at their driveway entrance with complimentary installation by the town. The agreement identifies the process that residents will be asked for payment at the initial meeting/discussion with them. Toby would like to see how it works out with this approach rather than asking for payment in advance. Some discussion followed around payment for this service. Denise Wheeler suggested asking for payment in advance. Toby Talbot suggested leaving the agreement as it is, for now, without asking for payment in advance. He suggested that he can ask for payment in advance at the initial meeting/ discussion with residents; he would like to see how it works out using that approach. Rob Richert moved to approve the culvert installment agreement. Seconded by Denise Wheeler, this motion carried unanimously.

● **Discuss summer work hours (4 - 10 hour days):** Alfred Larrabee discussed with the Board moving to summer work hours; the Board agreed to designate a time period for this change: the first full week in May until the first full week in November. Mr. Larrabee noted that the summer work depends on the weather. The Board stated that they can check in later, in October, if needed. The Board agreed to try this for the summer season, 2017. John Brabant moved to go to summer hours (4x 10 hour day/ week, Monday through Thursday) commencing first full week in May, ending last full week in October. Seconded by Rob Richert. Discussion - the Board will revisit this after this summer. This motion carried unanimously.

Rose Pelchuck asked for an explanation of overtime hours for road work. Mr. Larrabee explained that GreenUp Day falls during this pay period – that accounts for some overtime work. Ms. Pelchuck asked about a pattern of one-hour overtime each day for one road crew member, and other overtime details as reported. Some discussion followed.

● **Operations Manager update:** Mr. Larrabee stated that the bucket loader is having some mechanical issues; he is anticipating some expenses related to repair. His estimate is approximately \$5000 (this would come from equipment maintenance). He expects the repair to take approximately a week. Toby Talbot shared an updated record of the equipment maintenance fund.

● **Class 4 roads erosion grant update:** Toby Talbot clarified that the work under this grant will not be to improve a Class 4 to a Class 3 Road; the work is meant to improve the erosion issues. Mr. Talbot shared that some of the roads, which had been identified for this project, do not meet the requirement for the grant (which is for Class 4 Roads to be in very bad shape.) Apple Hill (both sides) still meets the criteria for this grant. Mr. Talbot stated that he has looked at other sites and that he intends to consider other sites. Woodbury Mountain Road (the first section) is identified as one that would be appropriate for this program.

● **Better Roads grant approval for road inventory:** Toby Talbot shared a diagram by Vermont Natural Resources Atlas, showing connected roads. Toby Talbot explained that this diagram is generated using an algorithm. He explained that it is not generated by on-the-ground inventory. He will review each road in person – to identify roads that have identifiable erosion issues. The grant for the inventory is to “ground truth it.” Toby Talbot expects this road inventory to result in a list of potential road work for the Board to consider.

John Brabant spoke about the difficulty when some of the Class 4 roads get lots of rain, and then “mudders” take trucks and jeeps and tear up the roads further for entertainment. Toby Talbot reiterated that the erosion grant projects will be to deal with sections of roads, and focus on erosion (and sediment getting into streams.)

Toby Talbot reviewed the Class 4 Roads maintenance policy, which states that the Town will do occasional maintenance.

Rob Richert stated that there are some “mudders” that recreate responsibly, and in fact have contacted him in the past to remove junk vehicles.

John Brabant moved to approve and sign the Grant Agreement for Agency of Transportation to perform an Inventory of the Highway System in Calais, in connection with Central Vermont Planning Commission. Seconded by Rob Richert, this motion carried unanimously. Denise Wheeler asked Mr. Talbot to put a copy of this document in the Operations Folder.

Toby Talbot shared that the following projects are at the forefront for the road crew:

- Hayden Road Bridge
- Apple Hill (Better Roads grant from last year)
- Road Inventory grant
- Erosions grant

● **Town Clerk update**

● **Review and sign Dog Warrant:** Judith Robert had prepared a Dog Warrant for the Board to review and sign. She shared that the Town Office is currently investigating using a credit card system for payments to the town. She expects this system to be up and running within a month. Ms. Robert stated that this credit card system will not have fees associated (that are the town’s responsibility to pay). Ms. Wheeler explained to new Board members that the Board reviews the dog warrant document every year at this time.

Denise Wheeler moved to approve and sign the Dog Warrant, to be forwarded to Wilson Hughes, Constable. Seconded by Rose Pelchuck, this motion carried unanimously.

● **Town Treasurer update**

● **Budget update and review:** Donna Fitch shared that she is keeping a spreadsheet for legal fees. She reviewed the budget update document: *Budget vs. Actual 5-8-17*. She stated that she can meet with Alfred Larrabee to create a budget projection if the Board wants; she is not prepared to share numbers around projections tonight. Alfred Larrabee stated that sand, salt, and repairs to the bucket loader are projected expenses. Donna Fitch stated that she has projections

from Toby Talbot from April 18, however, she needs some explanation from him to be able to understand his document.

Donna Fitch asked Larry Smith for some clarification about liability for, e.g, lawn mowing jobs. Some discussion followed around the differences between liability and workers' compensation insurance.

Larry Smith suggested that for a lawn mower, the Board can required that he at least carry liability insurance; workers comp insurance is not required of sole proprietors; he suggests having the lawn mower hire sign a document as such. Donna Fitch will follow up.

John Brabant wondered if this would be considered a contractual relationship – if so, then is the town liable in the case of an accident. The Board will discuss this later.

Donna Fitch had shared a document from WCSU explaining school ed funding; she will use Line of Credit to pay what is required before the end of this year. She will update the Board when she procures the Line of Credit.

Board of Abatement: Donna Fitch stated that the Board of Abatement will have to have a hearing before the end of the fiscal year, in order to attend to some tax abatement issues.

- **Dental Insurance open enrollment:** no changes

- **Scott Bassage request for reimbursement to attend Preservation Trust of Vermont trainings (\$225) for Historic Preservation Commission:**

Rose Pelchuck moved to approve Scott Bassage to attend training and be reimbursed up to \$225 by the Town. Seconded by Denise Wheeler, this motion carried unanimously.

- **Life and disability insurance review and discussion (Larry Smith, VLCT):** Mr. Smith reviewed the document: *Life and Disability Proposal, May 8, 2017, prepared for Town of Calais*. Board members considered this comparison document. The current insurance is paid through July 31, 2017. The Board considered changing insurance carriers after that date. The Board would like to consider “voluntary” life coverage options for employees; Mr. Smith will provide information about this for the Board to consider. Denise Wheeler asked Board members to consider this document, and to consider the information Mr. Smith will provide about “voluntary” products, to possibly take action at the next Selectboard meeting.

Mr. Smith will follow up to be sure the quoted rates on this document are good for 60 days. He suggested that Donna Fitch check with the current insurance provider to find out if there is an advance notice requirement to drop coverage.

- **Update on Cemetery Commission workers:** Denise Wheeler shared the history of this issue; Jim Barlow, Esq., suggests that Cemetery Commission workers are considered “non-exempt seasonal employees.” Letters of employment and job descriptions have been created, and the Cemetery Commissioners will provide these to the workers. Denise Wheeler noted that, for instance, Worcester contracts out cemetery work, and that this costs them less than hiring non-exempt seasonal employees. Some discussion followed of grave digging and the requirement for a “trench box” for safety.

Denise Wheeler noted that she and Donna Fitch have spent many hours trying to manage

some of these Cemetery Commission administrative issues. Additionally, Jim Barlow has spent at least six hours on this. Ms. Wheeler and Ms. Fitch stated that the Selectboard Administrator position might be able to help with some of these issues.

Some discussion followed around Alfred Larrabee being a town employee but also working for the Cemetery Commission.

John Brabant asked about the Swim Program – do the teachers in this program fall under the same category as “non-exempt seasonal employees”? Donna Fitch does not think that they do.

Larry Smith asked the Board to consider, from an insurance perspective, regarding the swim program and the cemetery and lawn mowing work - the Town is taking the risk; he recommends trying to transfer the risk. Contracting out the jobs such as cemetery maintenance and grave digging, would be transferring the risk.

The Board discussed that at some point it might be time to discuss contracting out the cemetery maintenance and grave digging jobs.

Donna Fitch is going to double check with the Labor Department to update and try to settle the Cemetery Commission workers issues as discussed above.

- **Review and sign Watershed Grant letter of support:**

The Selectboard reviewed this document. Rob Richert moved to approve and sign this letter of support for the Watershed Grant. Seconded by John Brabant, this motion carried unanimously.

- **Charter update – discussion of Selectboard Administrator job description:**

The Board discussed this draft document. Donna Fitch and Judy Robert will draft an ad - and share with Selectboard members - to begin the job search process. Judy Robert suggested creating a timeline starting at July 1st start date, and working backwards, to organize/ plan the process of hiring for this position.

Adjourn/continue meeting: The Board adjourned by consensus at 9:36.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Stoudt, Board Recording Secretary

<http://calaisvermont.gov/>