

Town of Corinth
Board of Selectmen
PO Box 461
Corinth, VT 05039

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
October 14, 2019

Attending for the Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley
Catherine Tudish, select board clerk
Others attending: Joe Blodgett, road foreman; Allegra Shumway, Dick Kelley, Chris Preston, Jeff Spiegel, Ken Arkind, Glynn Pellagrino, Todd Mower

The meeting was called to order at 7PM.
Minutes of the select board meeting of September 9, 2019 and the financial meeting of October 1, 2019 were approved.

Public Concerns

Shumway presented a letter expressing concern about trees cut down along the right of way on Hutchinson Road and Taplin Hill Road under the oversight of the town. In her opinion, many of these trees did not impact road conditions or safety. Groschner said the select board has begun the process of working on a policy regarding tree removal that will promote better communication with affected landowners.

Long said there was a lot of good information in Shumway's letter. He emphasized that there always has to be a balance between the needs of the road maintenance crew and the wishes of landowners.

Mower asked what concrete steps have been taken to address the issue so far. Groschner replied that there would from now on be a written agreement that landowners would have to sign, indicating their understanding of trees to be cut and their agreement.

Cawley clarified that there will probably be situations when there will not be agreement, but it will be necessary to remove trees from the right of way for safety and road access.

Preston asked what constitutes the right of way.

Blodgett replied that on some paved roads the right of way is 33 feet on either side of the center line; on other town roads it is 25 feet.

Spiegel asked what was done with the trees.

Blodgett said the trees were chipped and taken away by Limlaw, the contractor that cut the trees.

Mower asked if the landowners could keep the trees.

Blodgett said landowners could keep them; the trees would be cut and left on the ground for the owners to clear away.

Groschner confirmed that landowners would in the future be given the option of keeping trees.

Illegal Dumping

Spiegel said he had to call the game warden because someone had left a bear carcass in a plastic bag on Hayward Road. Subsequently, a pig carcass was dumped on the road, along with two bags of garbage. When Spiegel called state police about the pig and the trash, he was told to call the town health officer and the game warden.

Eventually, the pig and garbage were taken away by the game warden. Later on, four truck tires and two ATV tires were left on the road, along with beer cans hung on tree branches near the tires. Spiegel said there was a long history of dumping on that road. He asked if something could be done to deter the practice, such as posting a sign or putting up a game camera. Spiegel said he knows that such dumping is a statewide problem.

Groschner asked if Spiegel was requesting a town ordinance, which would be hard to enforce, given that Corinth doesn't have a constable with law enforcement authority.

Cawley pointed out that dumping along roadways is against the law statewide, so an ordinance would not be required, but enforcement would be the problem.

Blodgett said illegal dumping is a problem in other areas of town, noting that he found about 20 paint cans dumped over the side of Turkey Hill Road.

Long said he was in favor of setting up a game camera on Hayward Road.

Blodgett said legally there would have to be a sign to indicate that the spot is under surveillance.

Cawley suggested that the state commissioner of public safety could be approached to make illegal dumping more of an issue. Perhaps that would get more attention down the line in law enforcement.

Groschner said the Orange County sheriff should be contacted.

Spiegel suggested that the board present a procedure for residents to follow if they experience a problem with illegal dumping.

Groschner said the board would be happy to invite the sheriff's department in to discuss the issue. He offered to put a notice in the town quarterly and on the web site. Further, the town should be willing to put up a game camera and a surveillance sign.

Long asked Blodgett to get No Dumping signs placed on roadways.

Spiegel said he would also talk to Carl Demrow and will call the Orange County sheriff in the event of more dumping.

Groschner said he would loan Blodgett his game camera.

Highway Report

Blodgett said the new transfer station would open on Saturday, October 19.

Groschner asked Blodgett to call Casella to confirm that the recycling dumpsters will be in place by the 19th. He also asked Blodgett to move the town's notice boards.

Blodgett presented a salt contract with Cargill for the winter; signed by Groschner.

Public Hearing on Proposed Town Plan

Preston noted that there is only a quarter of a page devoted to the schools in the town plan and pointed out a number of errors in that short section.

Kelley said he is aware of the problems, but does not know how the errors got into the plan.

Preston said he found the maps section confusing, because there was not a legend with each map.

Preston added that Current Use should be addressed in the town plan.

Pellagrino asked what the hard deadline is for accepting a town plan.

Groschner said there is no deadline, but the plan needs to be adopted in order for the town to apply for grants.

Preston expressed concern about the definition of the river corridor, stating that it has unforeseen implications for landowners.

Groschner asked if the plan was ready to be accepted, given the errors and matters of confusion.

Long said he wasn't comfortable approving the plan as presented, given that it contains errors.

Kelley suggested postponing deliberation until the board receives a corrected copy of the plan.

Cawley moved to close the public hearing and table the vote on the document; Long seconded; the motion passed.

Arkind asked if the intention was to get the plan approved through the Regional Planning Commission.

Kelley said yes, and he would also ask the RPC to delay its review until the town plan has been approved by the select board.

Fire Station Update

Long reported that the structural engineer has requested more test holes to assess the extent of the bedrock.

Other Business

Broadband draft proposal:

Kelley presented a draft of the grant proposal and asked for a member of the select board to approve it. The proposal, which goes to the Department of Public Service, is due next week.

Cawley moved that Groschner sign the grant proposal next week if there are no substantial revisions to the draft presented; Long seconded; the motion passed.

EC Fiber has requested to bury 511 feet of fiber optic cable in a section ending on Hillside Drive. Groschner moved to approve the request; Long seconded; the motion passed.

Groschner presented a brochure from Strafford titled "Are you ready to serve your local government?" that describes options for town service. Groschner suggested making a similar brochure for Corinth to pass out at town meeting.

Additions to the October Warrant

Groschner moved to approve payment of three invoices presented by the town treasurer; Cawley seconded; the motion passed.

Facility Manager

Groschner said he has spoken with Will Sandberg about the position and is waiting to hear back from him.

Long has spoken with Greg Thurston about his responsibilities as former facility manager, in order to write up a job description.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 PM.

Long and Cawley tested emergency lighting and fire extinguishers.