

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
February 10, 2020

Attending for the Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley
Catherine Tudish, select board clerk
Others attending: Lee Porter, road commissioner; Ginny Barlow, tree warden; Jeff Spiegel, Nick Kramer, Allegra Shumway, Todd Mower

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.
Minutes of the regular meeting of January 13, 2020 and the financial meeting of February 4, 2020 were approved.

Public Concerns

Jeff Spiegel and Nick Kramer attended to present information on the newly formed Corinth Resilience Coalition. Spiegel said he gathered data on eleven social service agencies in the area—including the Clara Martin Center, Safeline, the Bradford Food Shelf, and the Haven—concerning the number of Corinth residents who received services from these agencies. Based on the level of use and the perceived need, he proposed establishing the Corinth Resilience Coalition. Several community members have already expressed interest in participating. Spiegel said the group is planning to hold four interactive forums over the next few months to acquaint Corinth residents with the problems and challenges and to allocate resources. Spiegel asked the Select Board to support the effort. “It’s about us becoming more knowledgeable and more capable of providing assistance,” Spiegel said. Cawley said he wasn’t clear about what they were asking from the Board. Kramer replied that they were asking for a municipal endorsement. The Select Board thanked them for their efforts thus far and agreed to review the written materials presented.

Fire Station Update

Long said he and Cawley met with the contractor and John Haney on February 10 to discuss the heating system. The three options on the table were a propane boiler, heat pumps, or a wood pellet boiler. The contractor had priced out the systems and reported that the pellet boiler would be \$20,000 more expensive than the other two. The contractor said he will do further research on the costs of installing heat pumps. Cawley said that the architect and the person who did a heat loss analysis both preferred heat pumps. Long said they were aiming toward breaking ground for the building in the spring.

Road Report

Porter requested signatures for a paving grant, which is for a higher amount than the original grant the town requested.

Porter asked for Board approval to post the roads for mud season, beginning March 15 and ending May 15.

Long moved to approve the posting, Cawley seconded, and the motion passed.

Notification of Cutting Roadside Trees

Barlow presented a draft letter to inform residents of planned roadside cuttings on their property. The letter will inform residents that they can request a hearing with the tree warden if they wish.

Addressing the question of whether residents have the right to request a public hearing if a public shade tree is slated for cutting, Barlow noted that in current statutes, the definition of "shade tree" is ambiguous. She said that new statutes should clarify the definition.

Groschner said his understanding of a pending House bill is that it would give greater authority to oversee roadside tree cuttings to town tree wardens.

Shumway asked what cutting is planned for the summer.

Porter replied that a cutting plan has not been finalized.

Barlow said she should be contacted two to three weeks in advance of any planned cutting. She added that she should be the person to contact the land owners involved.

Groschner asked if Porter could come up with a time line for roadside cutting.

Porter assured Barlow she would get adequate advance notice.

Cawley said the Select Board would like to be kept informed of planned cuttings and hearings.

Groschner suggested the letter to landowners should be a Certified Letter.

Barlow said she prefers a more personal approach, such as following up a regular letter with a phone call.

Cawley said a Certified Letter would be a benefit for out-of-town owners.

Long said Barlow's draft letter provided a good template, and details should be tailored to each case.

Shumway said she thought a public hearing should be held for each planned cutting.

Cawley suggested adding any planned cutting to the Select Board agenda. That way, concerned citizens could attend the meeting to be involved in discussions.

Long asked if the highway department would remove trees, rather than having a commercial operation do the work.

Porter said the road crew could handle smaller cuttings, but with larger cuttings, it is more efficient and safer to use a feller buncher.

Shumway said the use of a feller buncher takes out trees that don't need to be cut.

Shumway asked if every tree has to be cut along the right of way.

Barlow said she believes taking out hazard trees is different from clearing the entire roadway.

Cawley recommended taking up the issue on a case by case basis at future Select Board meetings.

Establish Fiber Optic Committee

Long said he had received an email from Dick Kelley, of the Corinth Fiber Committee (CoFI), asking the Select Board to form an ad hoc advisory committee to study the options for improving fiber optic service. Kelley provided a list of people who would serve on the committee. The list includes Ed Childs, Holly Groschner, Dick Kelley, Nick Kramer, Kenya Lazuli, and Tim O'Dell.

Long made a motion to establish the ad hoc committee and appoint the people on the list provided, Groschner seconded, and the motion passed.

Town Hall Facilities Manager

Long said he had received an application for the position from Dennis Tatro.

Long asked if there would be a short list of things for him to do.

Cawley suggested hiring him on an as-needed basis.

Groschner offered to call Tatro to tell him the Select Board is interested in hiring him.

Groschner said Tatro should be notified that he would be on call when problems arise.

Cawley asked if the manager would be expected to shovel the steps and perform other routine maintenance.

Porter said he might know someone who would shovel the steps on a regular basis.

Cawley suggested Porter contact him and ask what he would charge. Porter agreed to do so.

Other Business

Town Treasurer Kerry Claffey had asked the Select Board to approve the expense for mailing out the Town Report and to add the motion to the Warrant. The Board approved the request.

Groschner noted that a brochure outlining volunteer opportunities in the town had been printed and would be available at Town Meeting and also for distribution at Town Hall.

Groschner said he will proof the Town Report and will ask Anne McKinsey to look at it and approve it once a proof is received.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Long and Cawley checked fire extinguishers and emergency lighting.