

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
June 8, 2020

Meeting conducted on Zoom.

Present for the Select Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley

Catherine Tudish, select board clerk

Others present: Lee Porter, road commissioner; Joe Blodgett, road foreman; Dick Kelley, treasurer

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM.

Groschner read a notice authorizing this public meeting to be conducted by remote access, in accordance with a special provision of Vermont's Open Meeting Law.

Minutes of the Select Board meeting of May 11, 2020 and the financial meeting of June 2, 2020 were unanimously approved.

Public Concerns

None.

Road Report

Porter said the highway department has seen an influx of weight permits recently.

Porter noted that he has heard complaints about ATVs, including ones where two or more people were riding on ATVs.

Groschner asked Porter if he was aware of ATV activity in Cookeville, specifically groups of riders on Friday nights on roads closed to ATV traffic.

Porter said he was aware.

Blodgett added that he has been hearing concerns about ATV traffic on posted roads.

Blodgett said he wanted to let the select board know that the highway department would begin spending on necessary repairs and maintenance for the grader, such as buying a new set of tires.

Groschner said the board has already approved the expenditures, and Blodgett should proceed as he sees fit.

Long said he would like to continue the ATV discussion, especially in light of the recent fatality resulting from an ATV accident in Orange. Long said he had spoken with Representative Carl Demrow about the situation, and Demrow would like to organize a meeting with relevant parties to work on solutions. According to Long, Demrow thinks many of the riders are not local residents.

There has been "a tremendous amount of damage to property" by ATVs, Long said.

Cawley suggested having the sheriff's department on call Friday nights, so that a sheriff could respond to disruptive groups of ATV riders if needed.

Porter said he was told that one of a group of 15 ATV riders had been stopped by a game warden, who told them Corinth class 4 roads were legal to ride on at a low rate of speed.

Long said he had a conversation with Mike Scott, the game warden who patrols Corinth, and that Scott would not have made such a statement about class 4 roads.

Groschner noted that Tenney Road is clearly signed, but riders ignore the signs.

Groschner said the Orange County sheriff has promised to issue tickets, but Groschner is not aware of tickets being issued.

Blodgett said Mike Scott might be better at enforcement, as he seems determined to get the situation under control.

Long said Scott's ATV duties are a small part of his job, and that they are specifically to police ATV trails, and Corinth has no ATV trails. If he comes upon illegal ATVs while doing other game warden business, he will issue tickets.

Blodgett said in light of the fatality he is hoping other towns will stop allowing ATVs on their roads.

Porter said the ATV club is defunct in Corinth and that there are no ATV trails in town.

Long said ATV clubs in adjacent towns seem to think there is no problem.

Fire Station Update

Long reported that things are moving along well and that the foundation walls are up.

Groschner asked if those walls are insulated.

Cawley said the concrete slab would have rugged, high R-value foam underneath.

Long said the project manager is always on site.

Groschner received confirmation that there is a meeting at the site every two weeks for select board members to get updates on progress.

Banking/credit card resolutions

Kelley reported that there were two Peoples Bank resolutions for the select board to pass, one giving him access to the cash account and one supporting the application for a credit card. Once approved by the board, the resolutions need to be signed by the select board chair and the select board clerk.

Long made a motion to approve both resolutions; Cawley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Vermont League of Cities and Towns proposed resolution

VLCT has asked the town to adopt a resolution stating: "All cities, towns and villages in Vermont are essential, and Vermont local officials support fair and direct federal emergency aid to reopen and rebuild local American economies."

Cawley said the resolution might not apply to Corinth, as the town has few retail businesses.

Groschner agreed that it was probably not applicable to Corinth.

Cawley said he saw it as more of a philosophical statement, to make sure that small towns are funded and not just larger towns and cities.

Long said he was in favor of standing with small towns, to show solidarity.

Long made a motion that the select board approve the resolution to advocate funding for small towns; Cawley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Board members agreed that Groschner could sign on behalf of the select board.

Correspondence

Long reported that he had picked up mail, was lavishly praised by Groschner and Cawley.

Nancy Ertle sent a request to include Dennis Tatro on the purchasing policy authorizing him to make purchases required for building maintenance.

Groschner noted there were 11 or 12 items Tatro could be working on.

Long made a motion that Tatro could spend up to \$250 without prior authorization; Groschner seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Long said the board had received the contract renewal from the Orange County sheriff's department. According to the current contract, the town pays \$48 per hour, not to exceed the amount of \$11,000 within the fiscal year.

Porter asked if there was room for specific requests, such as enforcement of ATV regulations. Cawley suggested at least sending a letter to the sheriff's department stating the problem.

Porter said the town is supposed to be getting ATV surveillance, but that isn't happening. He suggested a meeting with Bill Bohniak to discuss the situation.

Groschner said he had met with Bohniak recently, but is not sure if the sheriff's stated concern translates into action.

Porter suggested asking Bohniak what plans the sheriff's department has for the coming year concerning ATVs.

Long pointed out that the new contract would be effective July 1.

Cawley said if the town is signing a contract, we want assurances of a more aggressive attempt to solve the problem.

Porter recommended getting something in writing regarding intentions for enforcement of ATV regulations.

Other business

The select board discussed concerns raised by several town residents about a lack of COVID-19 safety precautions, such as wearing face masks and practicing social distancing, by Casella employees at the transfer station. While residents praised the employees, they wondered if there could be less direct contact, such as when handing over trash bags and exchanging money.

Long said he would call Casella to ask about their COVID-19 policies.

Cawley said he had taken a call on the 439-3500 number from a resident regarding a child custody situation. The concern was lack of social distancing and other precautions during visitations.

Cawley said he advised the resident to adhere to best practice guidelines for the safety of the child.

The meeting adjourned at 8:14 PM.