

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting  
January 11, 2021

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; Gary Apfel, town moderator; Dick Kelley, town treasurer; Michael Pittman, fire department treasurer; Raymond Moulton and Norm Collette, cemetery commission; Alex Nuti-de-Biasi, editor, Journal Opinion

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 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 regular Select Board meeting of December 14, 2020 and the financial meeting of January 7, 2021 were unanimously approved

Road Report

Porter said there had been a few issues with snow plowed across town roadways and vehicles parked too close to the roadway, and those had been addressed.

Porter noted that the hood of one town truck had been damaged because a welded connection gave way. The vehicle insurance will cover the cost of \$6,000 to replace the hood, Porter added.

Groschner asked if there was a possibility of hiring a new member of the road crew, in light of Billy Eastman's approaching retirement.

Porter said they would be looking for a capable person who could be trained as part of the crew.

Fire Station Update

Long said he was still waiting for the final bill from Hazen Hill Construction.

Pittman said the company that installed the bay doors still has to replace a damaged door panel, but the replacement panel has not yet arrived.

Pittman reported that he had repaired and repositioned the clothes washer and that it should be up and running by the weekend.

Pittman noted that there were a few minor problems with interior finishing work, such as sagging framework of the ceiling grid in the meeting room and trim around the shower stall. He said John Haney would present these issues to Hazen Hill for repairs.

Pittman said the door facing Fairground Road needs a panic bar/pin pad system. He reported that he got an estimate of \$4500 for installation of the system. He noted that each individual who uses the door will choose their own four-digit code and that the system will keep track of who enters and leaves.

Groschner asked how the door could be opened in the event of both a power and generator failure.

Pittman said the door would still be accessible with a key.

Pittman asked if the town would be willing to contribute to the cost of the door opener system.

Long replied that there may be funds left for a contribution, depending on the amount of the final Hazen Hill invoice.

Long thanked Pittman for all the work he has been doing at the fire station.

Annual Meeting Format

Groschner said that the state legislature may allow postponement of annual town meetings in 2021 due to the COVID pandemic, and/or authorize use of Australian ballot.

Groschner noted that the select board has favored postponement of the meeting in previous discussions.

In the event of postponement, Cawley proposed the second Tuesday of May, given that the school meeting will be held on the first Monday of May.

Apfel asked if the meeting would be outdoors.

Groschner said the meeting could be held outdoor by tenting an area on the ball field.

Apfel expressed concern that the weather might not be comfortably warm by May 11.

Cawley asked how an Australian ballot vote could be conducted if the meeting were held on the ball field.

Moulton suggested that the Australian ballot could happen in March, even if the rest of the meeting was postponed. Cawley noted that the terms of town officers would hold until the annual meeting. Collette suggested that voting booths could be set up outside Town Hall. Groschner asked if some towns hold voting and the floor meeting on separate days. Apfel said his understanding is that separate meetings are informational, not voting meetings. Groschner suggested having the floor meeting during the day and voting at night. Long proposed May 18 as the day for the meeting. Apfel said he would not be available to moderate on the 18<sup>th</sup>, but would be available on May 4 and May 25. Long moved to postpone the meeting until May 25, if the legislature authorizes postponing. Cawley added to the motion that the meeting would be held outdoors. Long seconded the motion with Cawley's addition. Moulton asked if the select board would consider an early evening meeting to achieve more participation. Apfel said a long-term objective is to increase participation. Groschner called the vote on a May 25 outdoor meeting, and the board voted unanimously to approve. Long pointed out that the select board still needs to prepare the warning by February 1. He noted that there has been one new request for an appropriation that has to go on the warning: a request from the Vermont Family Network for \$250. Long said he will draft the warning and send it to other members of the board. Cawley said the board could delay printing of the report and would have to consider how to warn about time and location.

#### History books, plates and negatives

Collette reported that he is in possession of the original photographic plates and negatives of the *History of Corinth, Vermont, 1764-1964*. All are in good shape, Collette said, and have been valued at \$1200. Collette suggested that these items be placed in the Town Hall vault for safekeeping. Cawley said he was in favor of moving them to the vault. Groschner said they were certainly worth protecting and asked if Collette was going to add to the town history past 1964. Collette said there was no plan at the moment for the historical society to do that. Groschner said it was up to town clerk Nancy Ertle to decide if she wanted to place the materials in the vault and that Collette should let the select board know if she declines to do so.

#### Washington Electric Company right of way on Goose Green Road

Groschner said he has received a request from Washington Electric Company to change the position of a service line in the area near Bear Notch Road. Groschner asked if the select board would sign off on the permit. Cawley made a motion to approve the permit, which could be signed by Groschner for the select board. Long seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

#### Committees

Kelley reported that the internet committee has set up an informational web blog with an email address and links. Kelley said the blog would be accessible through a separate internet entry to be added to the town web site.

#### Correspondence

Cawley said the sheriff's department had sent a request seeking an appropriation for a special victims unit, but that it had come too late, as the budget for the next fiscal year has already been finalized.

#### Other business

Cawley said Karen Galayda has requested approval for payment of employee state tax withholding, which is due by the end of the month. Cawley made a motion to approve the expenditure and Long seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The select board received a notice from Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District as a reminder that their budget is voted on a separate ballot. Long asked if the timing would matter if the annual meeting were delayed until May. Cawley said NEKWMD should propose a separate path if the meeting date affects them. Groschner said he would call Paul Tomasi of NEKWMD to him inform of the later date of the annual meeting. Long said he received an email from the stewardship director at Upper Valley Land Trust responding to a request for a Zoom call the week of January 18, regarding green burials in the Town Forest. Long said he would suggest January 20 at 9AM for the call and would notify both town forester Ginny Barlow and cemetery commission member Geoffrey Hoots. Collette said he would like to be included on the call. Moulton said the cemetery commission has no objections to green burials in the Town Forest, and Collette agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.