

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

Unapproved Minutes Of Selectboard Meeting
Meeting
Monday August 9, 2021

Attending for the Board: Rick Cawley, Carl Demrow, Nick Kramer (via Zoom). Anne Rosten, select board clerk.
Others attending: Dick Kelley, Treasurer; Lee Porter, Road Commissioner; Joe Blodgett, Road Foreman; Chris and Holly Groschner, Jon Spanier and Brad Wheeler. Gary Apfel attended via Zoom.

Meeting conducted in person and on Zoom. Rick Cawley called the meeting to order at 7:03

Approval of minutes of regular meeting of July 12, 2021, and financial meeting of August 3, 2021

Kramer made a motion to accept the minutes of the regular meeting from July 12, 2021 and the financial meeting from August 3, 2021. Demrow seconded. Discussion followed. Treasurer Kelley informed the board that a few corrections needed to be made on the warrant in the minutes from the Financial meeting of August 3, 2021. First the marriage licenses from the state were \$100 not \$500. The audit status was recorded as saying it would be completed in one month but actually will be completed one month prior to the visit from the Sullivan and Powers representative in the third week of October. Cawley asked for a motion to approve the warrant as corrected. Kramer made the motion and Demrow seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Next was a discussion about the refused request for a refund of \$75 for the unused town hall reservation by a community member. Apparently the requested refund of \$75 was actually a damages deposit and not the actual rental fee. Cawley made a motion to refund the \$75 and Kramer seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Public concerns

Chris Groschner opened discussion with suggestions for the town's use of ARPA funds such as having electric charging stations in East Corinth and Cookeville and a few other thoughts. Cawley said that those discussions will take place with public participation in the near future.

Holly Groschner has been part of the Corinth Fiber Initiative since May of 2020 and was appointed to be the town representative to the EC Fiber board by the selectmen on May 6, 2021 with Ed Childs as first alternate and Tim O'Dell as second delegate. Holly announced tonight that the Vermont legislature has appointed her to the Vermont Community Broadband Board and so she handed in her resignation as town representative to the select board as required by statute. She explained all that is required of her replacement as the representative including going to meetings once a month for both EC Fiber and the Corinth Fiber Initiative. She also recommended communication with town residents about realistic expectations of how soon to expect service; probably not until 2023. She also gave the board an update on the status of Topsham Telephone and the difficulties of service with their customers including the termination of cable tv and no rebate to customers for the balance of service. The VT dept of Public Service has required that Topsham Telephone rescind the termination. Discussion continued about the proposed different options for the near future.

Demrow made a motion to accept Holly Groschner's resignation from Corinth Fiber Initiative and as town rep for EC Fiber and to appoint Ed Childs as the new representative and Tim O'Dell as first alternate leaving an opening for the second delegate. Kramer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Parking proposal for town forest

Jon Spanier from the Corinth Conservation Commission presented a proposal to approve and construct a parking lot on town forest property that would allow enough room for a school bus to turn around. The proposed size is 40 x 60 feet.

The existing parking area is not on the town forest property and is not particularly inviting. Susan Shea deeded the property of 93 acres to the town under a conservation easement with the Upper Valley Land Trust. Spanier requested that the board communicate with the UVLT to acknowledge the town's approval. Cawley inquired as to the cost of the project and how it would be funded. Spanier replied it would be between \$15,000 and \$20,000 with all permits, fees, material, grading, etc and that the Conservation Commission was seeking funding from organizations, not from the town. He stressed the need to move forward now to get things going as just the wetlands permit will take 6 months. Demrow asked about maintenance and Spanier replied that all maintenance is provided by the Conservation Commission. Cawley offered to contact the representative from the UVLT and ask what is needed to move forward. Demrow made a motion to authorize the board chair to enter into a discussion with UVLT to approve the proposal to build a parking lot at the Town forest. Kramer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Service officer job description

Jeff Spiegel sent a job description of the service officer duties and Demrow revised it. Kramer made a motion to accept the job description of the service officer as revised. Demrow seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Health Officer introduction

The board welcomed and thanked Brad Wheeler as the newly appointed health officer of Corinth. Wheeler had a question as to what his authority is to handle calls independently. The board informed him that he had independent authority and to keep communication open. Chris Groschner offered the fact that the select board acts as the board of health for the town. Wheeler informed the board that West Fairlee is having an Old Home Day on August 28th and that Steve Atwood, the health officer from Vershire, requested that Corinth advertise on the LRN to let people know that the Dept of Health will be there to offer vaccinations, blood pressure checks, and other health services.

Road Commissioner's report / Hwy. concerns

Groschner asked about having a permanent digital speed sign reinstated in Cookeville to discourage speeding. Blodgett reported that the crew would get to it soon. Groschner also had concerns about the gully by which his driveway washes out often and what could the town do about it. Blodgett said they'd work on it.

Waits River Bridge: Blodgett gave an account of the current status of the Waits River bridge project. Corinth will lend the spare grader but not fix up the road. He's in contact with Brad Calhoun and other Topsham select board members about it. Topsham has announced it will take only 2 weeks; starting on September 15th and ending on October 1st as only the deck and guardrails are being replaced. Blodgett said Corinth's crew will keep Claflin and Richardson Roads mowed back. He's also heard concerns from some of the affected residents about access. He suggested Topsham put up signs soon to alert people in the area.

Personnel matter (executive session): The board moved to go into executive session with the road commissioner and the road foreman at 8:10 PM. The board came out of executive session at 8:30. Demrow made a motion to raise the rates of pay for the road foreman to \$27 an hour and highway crew to \$23 an hour. Kramer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Porter and Blodgett attended the latest Planning Commission meeting to review the Commission's new 3 page change to the driveway permit that the Planning Commission wants installed in the highway ordinance. They both felt it was too cumbersome and complicated to understand. Porter and Blodgett would like to see it more simple and user friendly. The Planning Commission will have to present it to the select board before being finalized.

Porter reported that the vehicle that had been in the town's right of way near Corinth Corner has been moved. Next was the continuing problem of the derelict military vehicle at the former East Corinth Village Store. It was decided that Cawley will send a letter to the property owner to have it removed in a reasonable amount of time or the board will take action to remove it.

Set tax rate

Treasurer Kelley reported that the new tax rate for residential properties is 2.1160 which is down from last year's rate and the new rate for non residential properties is 2.2355 which is also a decrease from last year. Demrow moved to accept the new annual tax rates for FY 2022. Kramer seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Chair Cawley will sign for Kramer who was attending on Zoom.

The board agreed to move item 9 about the assistant treasurer to the end of the meeting as it was requested by Kelley to go into executive session.

Committees:

None

Correspondence

Cawley reported that he sent the letter to the abutter of the town South Road property but it was returned by the Post Office as "not deliverable as addressed". He re-sent today with the correct address. He also opened a letter from the census bureau that was unclear which he will look into. Also had a letter from the TROC thanking the town for the payment of dues. The sheriff's dept sent a revised report and bill for 9 hours of patrol with corrected road names.

Other business

Kelley reported that a fault was found in the Yankee Generator. It is supposed to be tested each month and the test did not happen last month and suggested finding a handyman to look at it. Josiah Sewell was suggested and Kelley offered to contact him.

Assistant for treasurer's office

The board moved to go into executive session with treasurer Kelley to discuss a personnel matter at 9:08 PM.

The board came out of executive session at 9:19 PM. No action taken and moved to adjourn.