

Town of Corinth Selectboard

PO Box 461
Corinth, VT 05039

Unapproved Minutes of Financial Meeting
December 7, 2021

Attending for the Board: Rick Cawley, Carl Demrow, and Nick Kramer. Anne Rosten, select board clerk (via Zoom). Others attending: Dick Kelley, treasurer; Raymond Moulton, Geoff Hoots, and Norm Collette, members of the cemetery commission; Suzanne Hansen, board financial assistant attended by Zoom call.

The meeting was conducted in person and on Zoom. Chair Cawley called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

Warrants and Bills

There were a few questions which were answered by treasurer Kelley and assistant financial clerk Hansen about the cash accounts. Also questions were raised about the Corinth Topsham Emergency Response Team's (CTERT) request for funds and who is actually in charge of the team. CTERT had requested an upgrade to \$7500 from \$7000 last year that was not approved. Demrow made a motion to approve October's warrants as corrected. Kramer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Accounts payable and payroll: There was a little discussion about the finished culverts on Taplin Hill and the blacktop job in West Corinth. Demrow motioned to accept the accounts payable. Kramer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Payroll: No discussion. Kramer made a motion to approve the payroll. Demrow seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Audit status

Kelley reported that he had worked with Chad Hewitt from Sullivan and Powers on the audit and that they are almost up to date.

ARPA funds

Demrow suggested the selectboard appoint a committee to help them come up with a plan for engaging the public in discussion about the allocation of funds. Cawley stated that there was quite a long list of suggestions. The board agreed to look into it and find a person or people who can understand the parameters to work through this. Kramer suggested finding good town wide representatives. It was also mentioned that one of the board members be involved with the committee. .

Cemetery commission finances

Kelley stated that there was not enough time to work on the cemetery commission's accounts and do the town's work too. Cawley supposed that maybe one of the members from the cemetery commission be appointed to be the assistant to the treasurer for setting up and working on the various accounts for the commission. He suggested Geoff Hoots for the appointment as he has working knowledge with Fidelity and understands it best. Moulton had no objections but to make sure it is legal within the state's conflict of interest statutes. Hoots offered to resign from the commission if it is a problem and then to run again for the commission in the Spring. There was some discussion about whether it would be a paid or volunteer position. Moulton said if paid it could come out of cemetery commission funds. Hoots stated that he would answer to the selectboard. Cawley made a motion to appoint an assistant treasurer limited to cemetery business to set up accounts with Fidelity and when the task is accomplished, take stock and see if there is still a need for this position. Kramer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Wage structure/pending wage increase request

Cawley noted that there were 2 or 3 paid town positions that were not at the \$15 an hour rate and suggested making the base rate \$15. Demrow mentioned meeting with the budget committee in a few days and will discuss it.

As to the head lister Karen Galayda's request for a raise, the board went over her pay history as a lister and the raises she has acquired over the past 10 years. The head lister in Bradford is currently paid just under \$20 an hour and is also short staffed. There was thoughtful discussion about the existing and forthcoming responsibilities of the position and how to come up with a fair wage. It was decided that with the circumstances of the job and the town she serves that \$20 an hour is good and fair. Kramer made a motion to raise the lister's pay to \$20 an hour. Demrow seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Cawley has had contact with the town clerk about hiring a handyman for town hall maintenance. Collette was asked if he would fill the position to the extent his time allows which entails checking pilot lights, changing light bulbs, etc. Norm accepted. Cawley made a motion to hire Norm Collette for general town hall maintenance at \$20 an hour. Demrow seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's office/assistant treasurer

The discussion began with rehashing the history of the treasurer's office from the time Fortunati retired in 2015 and the many changes that have taken place over the past 6 years. Kelley would like to come up with a fair accounting of time and pay to run the treasurer's office smoothly with an assistant treasurer. The questions pertain to how many hours for each position, what duties would the assistant perform, and hourly pay vs. salaries. Different figures were quoted and how to divide the work involved. Kelley also would like to take charge of finding the right candidate for the position of assistant treasurer. Kramer mentioned that he's put an ad in the LRN twice for open town positions. Kelley would like to advertise in the Journal Opinion. The board acknowledged how difficult it is to find qualified help and the need for competitive wages. Moulton agreed that the town needs to pay reasonable wages and that we should compare our pay scale to Bradford, not places like Norwich or Hanover. The board will bring these concerns to the budget committee.

Other business that comes before the board

Kelley mentioned that Chad Hewitt from Sullivan and Powers suggested financing the new grader. Cawley explained that the town can not do that without a town vote.

Cawley made a motion to go into executive session for a personnel matter. Demrow seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The board came out of executive session at 9:40 without any action taken.

Demrow made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kramer seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:43 PM.