

Town of Corinth Selectboard  
PO Box 461  
Corinth, VT 05039

Unapproved Minutes of Financial Meeting  
Monday November 13, 2023

Attending for the Board: Nick Kramer, Carl Demrow, and Holly Groschner. Anne Rosten, Selectboard Clerk. Dick Kelley, Treasurer; Lee Porter, Road Commissioner; Joe Blodgett, Road Foreman; Kelly Ann Donahue, Lister; and Norm Collette, Town Hall Facilities Manager.

Board chair Nick Kramer called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Warrants and Bills

Warrant: Groschner made a motion to approve the warrant as presented. Demrow seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Payroll: Demrow moved to approve the payroll. Groschner seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Accounts Payable: There were a few questions about marriage and dog licenses and a payment to Sullivan and Powers which were cleared up by the treasurer. Demrow made a motion to approve the accounts payable report as presented. Groschner seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Groschner had some questions about the accounting of the cemetery accounts. Cemetery Commissioner Collette reported that Geoffrey Hoots was attempting to update the bookkeeping on the accounts when he passed away. Collette is currently working on it. Demrow suggested asking Selectboard Financial Clerk Shirley Montagne to take on the cemetery accounting. It was noted that she is currently working with NEMRC on the FY21 and FY22 town audits and the budget season is imminent. More discussion will take place at the December financial meeting.

Groschner then had questions as to the unreliability of the revenue report and why there are differences in the numbers. Kramer explained that the treasurer, the board, and Montagne have been working on condensing the report to a two page dashboard summary which will correctly reflect the accounting. It has been an ongoing issue. Some is due to the transitioning from all paper accounting to digital.

Monthly financial dashboard - Shirley Montagne

Selectboard Financial Clerk Montagne was not in attendance. To be discussed at December's financial meeting.

Town Hall / Town Garage / ARPA Discussion

The board is continually becoming aware of the different funding opportunities for the two major town projects: the Town Hall Renovation and the Town Garage Addition. There is grant money available from The Municipal Energy Resilience Plan (MERP), The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), The Vermont Department of Historic Preservation, and other sources. The grants are available at different times and for different purposes with differing requirements. Matching funding to pinning down project start dates and acquiring construction quotes is difficult. Kevin Geiger from Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission (TRORC) gave a presentation at the November regular selectboard meeting for the Municipal Technical Assistance Program (MTAP) which provides assistance with opportunity and community assessments, funding applications, project management and implementation, etc. Kramer will ask Geiger to attend the December financial meeting to discuss and identify priorities.

Road Commissioner Porter stated his concerns about moving the Town Garage Addition forward due to the delays caused by the application process to the state which can be time consuming and requested that the board approve the application fee for the project. Currently the cost for the project is \$266,000 which is \$16,000 over the budget; \$200,000 to come from the ARPA funds and the remainder to come out of the surplus. The concern is that delay may further increase the cost of the project. Both Porter and Road Foreman Blodgett testified that if construction stopped when the \$266,000 was spent, the addition would be functionable with a ground floor and the equipment undercover. Blodgett noted that use of the surplus would be subject to the approval of the budget by voters at Town Meeting. Demrow said that the item should be discussed at the upcoming budget meetings. Groschner asked about a two-phased approach. Kramer noted the time pressure to get the project in motion, at least the administrative work so construction can start in Spring 2024. Demrow made a motion to approve the payment of \$2112 for the application fee; to come from the ARPA funds to the State Fire Marshal. Groschner seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Porter related that he had a visit from Dina DuBois who volunteered to pay for an electronic speed limit sign to be put up by the Town Hall. He said there is a better option for the sign than the standard offered by Ms. DuBois. It would have the capacity to take pictures of violators license plates. He and Blodgett both said that a sign could not be set up until Spring due to the damage it would get from winter snow, plowing, etc. More discussion will take place at a later meeting.

Regional Emergency Management Committee Delegates

Blodgett stated that he is too busy to continue being a delegate and said he will inquire whether a member from the Fire Dept would be willing to volunteer.

#### FY22, FY23 Audit

Montagne contacted Batchelder Associates and after reviewing their credentials recommended contracting them for the town's FY22 and FY23 audits. Kramer made a motion to engage Batchelder Associates in accordance with their Request For Proposal (RFP) for the FY22 and FY23 audits and to delegate Montagne to meet with them to begin contract negotiations. Groschner seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

#### Town Hall Renovations

The board and Collette discussed the plan of the Town Hall Renovation project and the changing funding picture. Kramer said more time is needed to discuss it. Collette would like for the board to schedule a special meeting about the issue. The board wants the results of a MERP application before committing to any work. Demrow suggested not attempting a 2024 start date before looking at the scope of funding available. Collette stressed putting together a committee to work on coming up with a new plan. He stated for the record that he does not approve of the existing design of the porch roof and would like for the board to consider looking into other architects. The board expressed their approval for the idea of a committee and charged Demrow and Collette with putting together a Town Hall Renovation Plan Committee.

#### Potential Grants - Shirley Montagne

Discussion tabled until next financial meeting.

#### Reappraisal Update

Lister Donahue sent an RFP to three different agencies. The one with the soonest reappraisal date was for 2027. The town's deadline for engaging a firm is November 15th, 2023. The state deadline for a reappraisal plan is December 15, 2023.

She then reported that for the first fiscal quarter the office is more or less on budget. Debra Kingsbury is working as a consultant in the lister's office one day a week and Donahue will ask her to clarify her contract term. Lister Martha Brough will be encouraged to run for the office of lister at Town Meeting.

#### Other financial business

Nick Kramer, on behalf of the board, will contact the VLCT about the denied Workers Compensation Insurance claim.

#### Other business that comes before the board

None

#### Correspondence

The board received a postcard from VLCT.

Demrow made a motion to adjourn. Groschner seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:07 PM.