

Town of Corinth Selectboard
PO Box 461 Corinth, VT 05039

Approved Minutes of Selectboard Meeting
Tuesday April 2, 2024

Attending for the board: Holly Groschner; Carl Demrow, and Stephen Devoto. Anne Rosten Selectboard Clerk. Joe Blodgett, Road Foreman; Kelly Ann Donahue, Lister; Mike Tagliavia, Andrew Alexander, Jim Guyer, Anne McKinsey, Susan Russell, and Jeff and Sandy Spiegel. Attending via Zoom: Town Meeting Moderator Gary Apfel.

Board chair Holly Groschner called the meeting to order at 7:01PM.

Welcome – Board Code of Conduct

Groschner summarized the Code of Conduct Ordinance adopted by the selectboard in June 2018, focusing on the conflict of interest provisions. She advised the other members to read it and noted that it applies to all appointed committees.

Approval of agenda: minutes of regular meetings of February 12, 2024 and March 19, 2024.

Demrow made a motion to approve the agenda. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Demrow made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2024 meeting. Groschner seconded. Devoto abstained. The motion passed. Demrow made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 19, 2024 meeting. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Road Commissioner's report / Highway Dept. concerns (Porter/Blodgett)

Commissioner Porter was not in attendance. Road Foreman Blodgett asked the Chair to sign a document approving a grant proposal from the Grants and Aid Program for \$21,187.50. He said the dollar amount may go up. Groschner signed. He then stated that the road crew is all set with sand and salt for further storms but is low on gravel due to the elongated mud season. He reported that work is ready to start on the town garage addition this Spring. Groschner asked for documentation on expenses paid so far and expected for the project and asked that Blodgett let Treasurer Kelley know before the April 8 financial meeting. Blodgett asked to have an account number for each ARPA project. The ARPA report is due at the end of April which Demrow is working on. Blodgett said most of the FEMA smaller projects are done and looking now to the three major ones: Turkey Hill Rd, Joe Lord Rd, and Johnson Rd. He then discussed the Hedgehog Brook Bridge project scheduled for later this Summer. His concern is for proper signage warning drivers of alternate routes to and from East Topsham and suggested posting it on the LRN. He has spoken with the Topsham selectboard about it. The project will take one week starting August 19th.

Public concerns

Susan Russell brought up her concern about the Delinquent Tax Collector receiving checks at her home address and thought the checks should be delivered to the Town POB. Groschner explained that the Delinquent Tax Collector has independent legal authority to conduct her job as she deems necessary.

Russell then brought up the noise level, crowded conditions, and commotion at Town Meeting and stated that to hear anyone speaking was difficult due largely to having the meeting and voting in the same space. She suggested changing the meeting location to a larger meeting place. Town Meeting Moderator Apfel noted the noise level and had some suggestions to help i.e. installing speakers around the meeting room and putting up curtains to separate the meeting room and voting area. Devoto agreed to speak with the Town Clerk about the voting issues. Groschner noted her concerns and thanked her for her input.

Anne McKinsey asked about progress on the updated Dilapidated Building Ordinance concerning the former East Corinth Village Store. There is a \$3800 lien on the property and under the revised ordinance the updated fines can now be up to \$100 a day. Groschner said the board has had a conversation with the Building Safety Officer about revising the citation under the revised ordinance.

Andrew Alexander stated his concerns about how the public is treated at Planning Commission meetings. He feels the commission chair is dismissive of the public and shuts down unwanted discussion. He said the minutes do not reflect the conversations and is concerned they are violating the Open Meeting Law. Groschner replied that people present at the

meeting and “ actions taken” are the only requirements for the content of the minutes. Devoto said he intends to attend the Planning Commission meetings. Another of Alexander’s concerns is the possibility of losing control of his property if it is in fact part of the wildlife corridor on the conservation map. Devoto assured him that even if zoning was adopted in Corinth, his use of his property is grandfathered. Demrow offered to go over the conservation map with him after the meeting, which he did.

Jim Guyer stated he was told that he was not included in the Planning Commission survey because he did not have a mailing address and showed the board proof of his mailing address on his tax bill.

Jeff and Sandy Spiegel updated the board on problems they’ve been having with neighbors’ aggressive dogs. Jeff said that at the Boone property on Hayward Road there are at least five dogs and two households, one household has brought their dogs under control behind an invisible fence. The other neighbor, Jeff Boone, has 3 dogs which are currently challenging residents using the road, of which one (the smallest) is particularly aggressive and does not respond to its owner. The Selectboard has served a complaint notice and the dogs are not registered. Jeff asked the selectboard to take action. Groschner will speak with the Town Clerk about the registration of the dogs, and Demrow will contact the Game Warden about impounding the dog(s) after reviewing the ordinance.

Grant Updates: MTAP and BRIC21 LHMP

The board reported Selectboard Financial Clerk Shirley Henry is finishing up the LHMP (Local Hazard Mitigation Plan) grant application. Carl Demrow heard from Jackson Evans from the Preservation Trust who will help Demrow manage an application process at the Preservation Trust for the Town Hall renovation grant. Demrow will also check this out with MTAP to ensure that the Board has one point of contact for the grant. Guyer informed the board that the Barre Probation Board would be a good option to get free help on some aspects of the project. Demrow said he would inquire into it. Groschner relayed that the board has asked Treasurer Kelley to have prepared the ARPA documentation to present at Monday’s financial meeting via Zoom.

Appointments to office – follow up

Demrow confirmed that Joe Truss agreed to serve again as Upper Valley Ambulance Service Rep and Catherine Haley agreed to serve again as Service Officer, both for one year. Appointments still unfilled are Fence Viewers, Emergency Management Committee, TRORC Commissioner, and Revolving Loan Fund. Groschner will contact Catherine Tudish and Demrow will contact Gary Bicknell and Bob Fortunati about serving as Fence Viewers for one year. Groschner will contact Nick Kramer and Raymond Moulton about serving again on the Revolving Loan Fund for 3 years. Demrow made a motion to approve Joe Truss as the Upper Valley Ambulance Service Rep and Catherine Haley as the Service Officer, both for one year. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Schedule and Warn Special Town Meeting for Tax Exemptions (4 renewals)

Groschner and Lister Donahue worked on a warning for a special town meeting to discuss the approval of four properties up for tax exempt renewal: The East Corinth Ballfield, Northeast Slopes, The Cookeville Fire Station, and the Historical Society Corliss site in East Corinth. The warning lists the meeting date as Tuesday May 7, 2024 at 7:00 PM and scheduled for twenty minutes before the regular selectboard meeting begins. Devoto made a motion to approve the Warning as read. Demrow seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Model Investment Policy – update Groschner

Groschner discussed the revision of the investment policy which restates the order of priority: security, liquidity, and return. It will be sent to VLCT for review and up for approval in June.

ECFiber license agreement – update Groschner

Groschner will have more on this subject at the May regular selectboard meeting.

March 27 Tax Sale; March 26 Abatement hearing

Groschner provided a report on the tax sale: Eight properties were listed, five paid the delinquent taxes and were removed, two sold for over the assessed value, and the Albrecht property went on a payment plan.

Vendor Contract: Webmaster (Anne McKinsey)

The town's current webmaster Anne McKinsey wants to retire as website host by July but agreed to continue until October 1st if needed. She has agreed to work two hours at \$50 an hour to put together a list of potential hosts for the board's review at the May meeting. Demrow made a motion to pay McKinsey \$50 an hour for two hours to come up with a list. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously. McKinsey said there are 13 official email accounts. Lister Donahue asked about changing the format for email hosting as she can not read any emails on her cellphone. McKinsey will meet with Donahue to assess the problem.

McKinsey asked about finding a backup for the website in case she is incapacitated at some point. She noted that Brian Carroll was suggested at one time. The board will also ask the town clerk and assistant town clerk to consider it.

Animal Control Officer – RFP Discussion – update Devoto

Devoto reported that former Animal Control Officer Michelle Boyer is still willing to offer kennel services but also does so for Orange and Topsham. He will contact CVHS (Central VT Humane Society) and Bradford Veterinarians for more kennel information. Anne McKinsey said she read in the Topsham selectboard minutes that they were looking at two people who have applied for their Animal Control Officer position. Devoto will find and read the Topsham minutes. Groschner suggested posting the position on the LRN with the job description. The board discussed the hourly pay for the position; \$15 or \$20 per hour. Devoto will contact the Game Warden regarding the dog nuisance on Hayward Rd. The Spiegels will submit in writing their complaint to the selectboard.

Correspondence

None

Other business to come before the board

Groschner received a message from Town Hall Facilities Manager Norm Collette regarding the \$12,500 for maintenance. She asked Demrow as chair of the Town Hall Committee to put the item on the agenda for their next meeting on April 15th and to come up with a list of start dates, expenses, and other details for the board to review.

The Town Clerk asked if the board would waive the town hall rental fee to allow the Window Dressers, a nonprofit, to meet for training. Demrow made a motion to waive the fee for the Window Dresser training. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Tagliavia asked questions about the Budget Committee; when they meet, how often, etc. which were answered. Demrow offered to provide a guide to the budget process for him.

Confirmation of Meeting Dates: 4/8 Financial and 5/7 Regular

The board confirmed the next meeting dates of 4/8 Financial and 5/7 Regular.

Adjournment

Demrow made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.