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

Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
January 13, 2020

Attending for the Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley
Virginia Barlow, substitute select board clerk
Others attending: Lee Porter, road commissioner; Dennis Tatro; John Haney

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.
The minutes of the regular meeting of December 9, 2019 and the financial meeting of January, 2020 were approved.

Public Concerns
None

Town Hall Facilities Manager
There have been no applications for this position so far. Dennis Tatro attended the meeting to introduce himself and to express his interest in the job. He has done carpentry all his life. Now he works for a contractor, has a 40-hours job but he'd have weekends and nights available.
Chris Groschner described the position. "Occasionally something comes up. Sometimes it's something that needs to be dealt with quickly." Formerly, the pay was $20/hour. Dennis said he would need at least $30/hour. Projects or project oversight may be part of the job, but that's not a given. The rear entrance will be modified, for instance, and maybe overseeing that work would be needed. The select board will put together a job description. Dennis will email his resume to Steve Long.

Fire Station Update
John Haney had a meeting with the architect about heating possibilities. The two options are radiant floor heat through the whole building or heat pumps. In each case there would be supplemental heat to bring the building temperature back up when the doors have been open and maybe for the meeting room as well.

Floor drains are kind of a big issue, especially in Vermont. Usually an oil/water separation system is required but there are exceptions if vehicles are not being

worked on in the building , in which case the drains can be daylighted. John has received an exemption letter to daylight the floor drains without installing a separator. The town has been urged to think about installing something at a later time in case a bunch of oil is leaked.

With input from the fire department, the select board, and others, John has been developing a list of subcontractors to send to Jason at Hazen Hill. He will send the complete list to the board, so the board can make recommendations on who Jason seeks bids from.

Chris Groschner: We will need something fairly definitive by town meeting. But all agree that the cost is fixed whatever route is taken.
The current design includes a hip roof. There won't be significant heat loss through the roof and therefore there won't be melting snow falling from the roof. Snow won't slide on the asphalt roof, so that's not a concern.
The select board expressed their appreciation of John Haney's help.

Road Report
Transfer station: The trailers plug into the electric pedestal, so they can be moved without needing to change the wiring.
There is now power there and Joanne has an electric heater.
Safety cones are not always put out because they are in the way if the road is being plowed. Joanne knows they are a good idea and will put them up when there's no expectation of plowing. On the whole, traffic at the transfer station is working well.
Lee Porter reported that we are doing well with salt and sand. Still a little problem about people who leave snow in the road when they plow their driveways but Lee will talk to them.
Lee requested signatures from select board members on requests for reimbursement for paving grants for the current year and for next year and for a Better Back Roads grant. Those documents were signed by all the select board members.

Budget
Kerry Claffey, the town treasurer, has pointed out four items that need modification: two related to health insurance for office and highway employees and two for office and highway retirement plans. The budget is now more accurate and Rick moved that the board accept Kerry's revisions. All in favor.

Warning for Town Meeting

The select board reviewed the items on the warning. The numbers in the town report should be reviewed to be sure they correspond to those in the budget. The select board will call a special meeting to sign the warning when it has been spruced up.

Other business

Library Renovation Grant. The select board has been asked about the town's policies with regard to a renovation project grant that the library has sought with help from the town. The terms of the grant stipulate that municipalities comply with a list of eight policies and codes that are consistent with the Vermont Community Development Program and federal law. The select board has been asked to abide by the following eight policies and codes: Equal Employment Opportunity, Fair Housing, Use of Excessive Force, Use of VCDP funds for federal lobbying, compliance with a code of ethics, with the Drug-Free Workplace Act, subrecipient oversight monitoring, and whistleblower protection.

Steve Long moved to adopt the eight policies as presented. Rick Cawley moved to amend the motion to add a requirement that the library board provide the select board with verification that all of the provisions in the document will be complied with. All voted in favor of the motion as amended.

One copy of the document will be provided to the library board and one will be kept at the town office.

School Choice. The board made a decision not to act on a request to adopt a proclamation about school choice.

Correspondence

A VTrans certificate of highway mileage was signed but was put aside for Lee Porter to review before returning it, pending his verification.

A letter stating that the TRORC board has unanimously approved the Corinth Town Plan has been received.

At 8:45 pm the select board voted to go into executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

Report on Executive Session

After exiting the executive session, the board tentatively scheduled a performance review with the treasurer for Wednesday, 1/15/20 at 10:00 am.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Town of Corinth
Board of Selectmen
P.O. Box 461
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Minutes of Special Meeting
January 27, 2020 11:00 a.m.

Attending for the Board: Rick Cawley, Chris Groschner, Steve Long.
Others Attending: Kerry Claffey, treasurer.

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m.

The board discussed the warning for the upcoming annual meeting. The members signed the warning and gave it to the Town Clerk.

Long agreed to send an electronic version of the warning to the Clerk and to Anne McKinsey, who is producing the town report.

The board met with Claffey to hear about progress on the audit and on the budget. Claffey was scheduled to meet one last time with the auditors on January 28. The board outlined the process for Claffey to produce the version of the budget that would appear in the annual report. Claffey said he would produce it by the end of the day.

The board discussed the Corinth Fiber Initiative and agreed to place it on the agenda for the next meeting.

Groschner said he had received a request from an interested party to be appointed as the town's emergency coordinator. The board agreed to discuss it in its organizational meeting after town meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00.

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
February 10, 2020

Attending for the Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley
Catherine Tudish, select board clerk
Others attending: Lee Porter, road commissioner; Ginny Barlow, tree warden; Jeff Spiegel, Nick Kramer, Allegra Shumway, Todd Mower

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.
Minutes of the regular meeting of January 13, 2020 and the financial meeting of February 4, 2020 were approved.

Public Concerns
Jeff Spiegel and Nick Kramer attended to present information on the newly formed Corinth Resilience Coalition. Spiegel said he gathered data on eleven social service agencies in the area—including the Clara Martin Center, Safeline, the Bradford Food Shelf, and the Haven—concerning the number of Corinth residents who received services from these agencies. Based on the level of use and the perceived need, he proposed establishing the Corinth Resilience Coalition. Several community members have already expressed interest in participating. Spiegel said the group is planning to hold four interactive forums over the next few months to acquaint Corinth residents with the problems and challenges and to allocate resources. Spiegel asked the Select Board to support the effort. "It's about us becoming more knowledgeable and more capable of providing assistance," Spiegel said.
Cawley said he wasn't clear about what they were asking from the Board.
Kramer replied that they were asking for a municipal endorsement.
The Select Board thanked them for their efforts thus far and agreed to review the written materials presented.

Fire Station Update
Long said he and Cawley met with the contractor and John Haney on February 10 to discuss the heating system. The three options on the table were a propane boiler, heat pumps, or a wood pellet boiler. The contractor had priced out the systems and reported that the pellet boiler would be $20,000 more expensive than the other two. The contractor said he will do further research on the costs of installing heat pumps. Cawley said that the architect and the person who did a heat loss analysis both preferred heat pumps.
Long said they were aiming toward breaking ground for the building in the spring.

Road Report

Porter requested signatures for a paving grant, which is for a higher amount than the original grant the town requested.
Porter asked for Board approval to post the roads for mud season, beginning March 15 and ending May 15.
Long moved to approve the posting, Cawley seconded, and the motion passed.

Notification of Cutting Roadside Trees

Barlow presented a draft letter to inform residents of planned roadside cuttings on their property. The letter will inform residents that they can request a hearing with the tree warden if they wish.
Addressing the question of whether residents have the right to request a public hearing if a public shade tree is slated for cutting, Barlow noted that in current statutes, the definition of "shade tree" is ambiguous. She said that new statutes should clarify the definition.
Groschner said his understanding of a pending House bill is that it would give greater authority to oversee roadside tree cuttings to town tree wardens.
Shumway asked what cutting is planned for the summer.
Porter replied that a cutting plan has not been finalized.
Barlow said she should be contacted two to three weeks in advance of any planned cutting. She added that she should be the person to contact the land owners involved.
Groschner asked if Porter could come up with a time line for roadside cutting.
Porter assured Barlow she would get adequate advance notice.
Cawley said the Select Board would like to be kept informed of planned cuttings and hearings.
Groschner suggested the letter to landowners should be a Certified Letter.
Barlow said she prefers a more personal approach, such as following up a regular letter with a phone call.
Cawley said a Certified Letter would be a benefit for out-of-town owners.
Long said Barlow's draft letter provided a good template, and details should be tailored to each case.
Shumway said she thought a public hearing should be held for each planned cutting.
Cawley suggested adding any planned cutting to the Select Board agenda. That way, concerned citizens could attend the meeting to be involved in discussions.
Long asked if the highway department would remove trees, rather than having a commercial operation do the work.
Porter said the road crew could handle smaller cuttings, but with larger cuttings, it is more efficient and safer to use a feller buncher.
Shumway said the use of a feller buncher takes out trees that don't need to be cut.
Shumway asked if every tree has to be cut along the right of way.
Barlow said she believes taking out hazard trees is different from clearing the entire roadway.
Cawley recommended taking up the issue on a case by case basis at future Select Board meetings.

Establish Fiber Optic Committee

Long said he had received an email from Dick Kelley, of the Corinth Fiber Committee (CoFI), asking the Select Board to form an ad hoc advisory committee to study the options for improving fiber optic service. Kelley provided a list of people who would serve on the committee. The list includes Ed Childs, Holly Groschner, Dick Kelley, Nick Kramer, Kenya Lazuli, and Tim O'Dell.

Long made a motion to establish the ad hoc committee and appoint the people on the list provided, Groschner seconded, and the motion passed.

Town Hall Facilities Manager

Long said he had received an application for the position from Dennis Tatro.

Long asked if there would be a short list of things for him to do.

Cawley suggested hiring him on an as-needed basis.

Groschner offered to call Tatro to tell him the Select Board is interested in hiring him.

Groschner said Tatro should be notified that he would be on call when problems arise.

Cawley asked if the manager would be expected to shovel the steps and perform other routine maintenance.

Porter said he might know someone who would shovel the steps on a regular basis.

Cawley suggested Porter contact him and ask what he would charge. Porter agreed to do so.

Other Business

Town Treasurer Kerry Claffey had asked the Select Board to approve the expense for mailing out the Town Report and to add the motion to the Warrant. The Board approved the request.

Groschner noted that a brochure outlining volunteer opportunities in the town had been printed and would be available at Town Meeting and also for distribution at Town Hall.

Groschner said he will proof the Town Report and will ask Anne McKinsey to look at it and approve it once a proof is received.

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 PM.

Long and Cawley checked fire extinguishers and emergency lighting.

Town of Corinth
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Minutes of the Special Meeting
February 21, 2020

Attending for the Board: Steve Long, Rick Cawley, Chris Groschner
Others Attending: Susan Fortunati.

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m.

Executive Session
The Board agreed to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter. The board invited Susan Fortunati to attend.

At 12:40, board voted to come out of executive session, having taken no action.

Other business

The board approved the renewal and purchase of the bulk mailing permit at the Cookeville Post Office.

The meeting adjourned at 12:50.

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
March 9, 2020

Attending for the Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley
Catherine Tudish, select board clerk
Others attending: Lee Porter, road commissioner; Joe Blodgett, road foreman; Zach McNeal, Corinth-Topsham Emergency Response Team; Raymond Moulton

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.
The minutes of the regular meeting of February 10, 2020 and the financial meeting of March 4, 2020 were approved.

Fire Station Update
Cawley reiterated the plan for heating presented at Town Meeting on March 3: a combination of heat pumps, Modine overhead heaters, and electric resistance units. Cawley noted that the plan needs to be finalized with Washington Electric.
Long added that the building would be very well insulated.

Road Report
Porter said he received a notice from the new drug testing company, DISA Global Solutions Inc., requesting the serial numbers of the trucks driven by CDL certified drivers. Blodgett confirmed that this was standard practice.
Groschner asked if there had been discussion of what might happen if any of the road crew contracts corona virus.
Blodgett said he was providing hand sanitizer for drivers of the trucks.
Blodgett said one of the town graders should be replaced soon, as it will be needing expensive repairs in the near future. He presented numbers for a new grader. On a 10-year lease, the cost would be $32,000 a year for a John Deere grader that he and others on the road crew had test-driven. Blodgett added that he is leaning toward a John Deere because their service is superior. One of the current two graders would be traded in.
Porter explained that it would be a municipal lease, meaning that the town would be committed for the full ten years.
Cawley wondered how many years out the town could be committed before a town-wide vote is needed to approve a lease.
Long said he wanted to know when the first payment would be due.
Blodgett suggested using part of the highway fund's surplus to make the first payment.
Long pointed out that the surplus is in the general highway fund rather than the capital fund.

Porter suggested investigating municipal leasing sources other than the manufacturers' leases.
The Board agreed to take up the purchase of a new grader at the April meeting, when they will have more information about lease options and funding.
Cawley asked Blodgett to send the roadside cutting plan so that the Select Board could publish a warning as an agenda item for the April meeting.

Appointments of Volunteer Positions
Long nominated Groschner as chair of the select board; Cawley seconded; the motion passed.
The Select Board also made the following appointments.
Administrative Officer: Karen Galayda
Budget Committee: Irene Mann, Raymond Moulton, Amy Peberdy, Mike Pittman, Lee Porter
Conservation Commission: Ken Arkind, Kevin Eaton
E911 Coordinator: Karen Galayda
Emergency Management Coordinator: Tabled to next meeting.
Energy Coordinator: Tim O'Dell
Fence Viewers: Gary Bicknell, Robert Fortunati, Catherine Tudish
Health Officer: Chris Groschner (1 year)
Planning Commission (3 years) & Zoning Board of Adjustment (1 year): Dick Kelley, Patricia Rizzo
Surveyor of Wood & Timber: Virginia Barlow
Tree Warden: Virginia Barlow
TRORC Commissioner: Tim O'Dell
Upper Valley Ambulance Service Rep. : Joe Truss
NEKWMD Board of Supervisors: Bob Sandberg, Marian Cawley (alternate)

Long moved to approve the list of appointments; Groschner seconded; the motion passed.

Following the tabling of appointment of the Emergency Management Coordinator, the Board entered a discussion of the town's emergency management systems. Groschner reported that when he called 911 for an emergency at his house a few weeks ago, it took 25 minutes for a fire truck to show up and that truck was from West Fairlee. He expressed concern that the town is spending a great deal of money to build a new fire station, and yet it appears that Corinth's firefighters are not able to answer a call in a timely way.
Raymond Moulton acknowledged that this was a problem. He pointed out that members of the volunteer fire department have full-time jobs at a distance from the town. If a fire emergency arises during the day on a weekday, it is unlikely that the town's fire crew will be able to respond. Moulton noted that it used to be the case that members of the fire department were farmers and others who worked in Corinth, but that is no longer the case.
Select Board members speculated that it could become necessary to have some paid firefighters who would be available on a regular basis.

Town Response to Corona Virus

Zach McNeal will provide a fact sheet about the virus and what to do if an infection is suspected. The Board will distribute by mail to households, and it will also be posted on the web site and boards at the East Corinth post office and general store.

Establish Corinth Resilience Committee as an Advisory Committee

Cawley moved to so establish, with the provision that they are not authorized to act on behalf of the town. Long seconded, and the motion passed.

Correspondence

The Board received a letter from Karen Galayda notifying the Board that she has sent letters to three property owners informing them that they have accessory buildings in the river corridor. The warning letters advise them that they have until May 1 to cure the violation.

In response to a query by Nancy Ertle, Long moved to amend the purchasing policy adopted on August 18, 2018 to add the following positions as purchasing agents: chair of the conservation commission, chair of the cemetery commission, and the town hall manager. Groschner seconded, and the motion passed.

The Board reviewed a letter from Joe Truss, concerning a number of two-way radios currently in the possession of the fire department that Truss wants returned to him. Cawley will reply to Truss in writing on behalf of the Select Board.

Other Business

Cawley reviewed provisions of Vermont's Open Meeting Law:

Regular meeting agendas must be posted 48 hours in advance of the meeting; agendas for special meetings must be posted 24 hours in advance. In addition to posting on the Corinth town web site, agendas are posted at the Town Hall, East Corinth General Store, and the East Corinth post office.

Meeting minutes must be available within 5 days of the meeting. Select Board minutes are posted on the town web site and are available in the Town Clerk's office.

At 9:15 PM, the Select Board went into executive session with Zach McNeal to discuss a personnel matter. The Board came out of executive session at 9:45 PM. No action was taken.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 PM.

Town of Corinth
Board of Selectmen
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Unapproved Minutes of an Emergency Meeting of the Select Board
March 16, 2020

By teleconference, beginning at 9:00 AM.
Present for the Board: Chris Groschner, Rick Cawley, Steve Long
Catherine Tudish, Select Board clerk
Others present: Annie Dolan, Richard Dolan, Zach McNeal, Robert Rinaldi, Jeff Spiegel

This meeting was held to discuss the town response to the spread of the new coronavirus and COVID-19.
Groschner expressed a major concern about the spread of the virus based on scientific modeling, explaining that the way it grows in the population creates a spike in cases that will overwhelm the medical system. We need to "flatten the curve" by trying to slow the progression of the virus so that fewer people are sick at the same time.
Groschner said the best way is for people to isolate themselves as much as they can, because a lot of affected people are walking around without symptoms.
"We will need some way for people to communicate their needs for help," Groschner added.
Robert Rinaldi, coordinator of the Vital Communities list serve, said the list serve could help by posting urgent messages at times other than the regular morning posting. There is a work-around, Rinaldi said, to have messages sent out during the day, although not necessarily going out just to Corinth. It would also be possible to create another list, not through Vital Communities, but perhaps through a Google group.
Long asked Jeff Spiegel if he had a list of volunteers through the recently formed Corinth Community Coalition.
Spiegel said not at present. We need a list of people willing to volunteer, he said, adding, "A challenge is to identify people who need support." He suggested sending out a questionnaire requesting volunteers and also a questionnaire asking if people need help.
Groschner mentioned that in the past the fire department wanted to create a list of people who might need help, but received only three returns. He said waiting for paper returns might be too slow a process.
Annie Dolan and Zach McNeal both agreed.
Dolan added that it is important to watch out for neighbors to see if they might need assistance.
Long said he had talked with Nancy Ertle earlier in the morning about printing copies of an informational letter to be sent out to town residents by the select board.

In addition to information about the coronavirus, the letter would give residents who need help a way to request it.
The select board approved payment of postage for the mailing.
Spiegel noted that the state capital has shut down. He asked if town offices should be accessed on line or by phone.
Cawley said he had received an email from the West Fairlee town clerk, stating that their office will be closed for the week.
McNeal stated that the group currently meeting constituted an emergency management department.
Long said that as part of an emergency management department they could order the town offices to close.
Cawley suggested closing it to public traffic, but allowing the town clerk, treasurer, and others who work there to continue using the offices.
Groschner said the select board agrees to close Town Hall to the public for this week, and to decide when to re-open on a week-by-week basis.
Cawley said Nancy Ertle would be able to get the word out to those who use the Town Hall and let them know they could conduct business on line or by phone.
Annie Dolan said that Michelle Brock, a paramedic who lives in Corinth, should be included on the emergency management team.
Cawley recommended that Mike Pittman of the fire department be added.
Spiegel suggested including Carlotta Peratoni, principal of Waits River School, who would have a good understanding of student needs while the schools are closed.
Long asked who answers the emergency number 439-5155.
McNeal replied that the number goes directly to Hanover dispatch.
Long asked if that number was for medical emergencies.
Annie Dolan said only if 911 goes down, and also for fires if 911 goes down.
Long then asked who should be called if someone needs help of a non-emergency nature.
Spiegel said using one person's number could overwhelm that person.
Long said he would call Topsham Telephone Company to see if they could open a voice mail account for the specific purpose of having a help line to take calls from anyone affected by the coronavirus who needs assistance such as having food delivered. Long said it would be a phone line that more than one person could access to get voicemail messages remotely.

The meeting ended at 10:05 AM.

Town of Corinth
Board of Selectmen
PO Box 461
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Unapproved Minutes of an Emergency Meeting of the Select Board
March 23, 2020

By teleconference, beginning at 10:10 AM.
Present for the board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley
Catherine Tudish, select board clerk
Others present: Christiane Carroll, Christopher Diaz, Carole Freeman, Nick Kramer, Anne McKinsey, Zach McNeal, Jeff Spiegel

This meeting was held to address the resources and personnel available to meet the needs of the town as the spread of COVID-19 continues to progress.
Groschner began by calling on the select board to appoint an emergency management director.
Cawley made a motion to appoint Groschner to that position.
Long seconded, and the motion passed.
Groschner said the select board is organizing teams to manage the various tasks as needed to ensure that town residents have vital information and services. He noted that the select board is, at the same time, responsible for carrying on with its regular jobs.
Groschner said that Long will be in charge of assigning volunteers to specific tasks as required, and Kramer will be chair of the group for communication.
Kramer said he is already linked to communication networks.
Groschner said the first task is to create a weekly Zoom conference on one of the two weekend days.
Kramer said he would send out an on-line poll to determine availability of volunteers for Zoom conferences. These will be weekly gatherings to check in about the activities and needs of the various groups.
Long asked about communication to the outside world.
Groschner replied that the purpose will be to keep the select board and all group chairs in the loop and will address both internal and external functions.
McNeal asked if there would be a deputy emergency management position.
Groschner replies that there may be, but not at this point.
McKinsey asked if the weekly Zoom conference would be for the team leaders to come together.
Groschner replied yes, but others will be included if necessary.
Cawley pointed out that any regular meetings involving the select board have to be posted.
Groschner recommended announcing the regular meeting time once to cover all future meetings.
Groschner said there would be seven groups: food, medical, technical, transportation, communication, volunteers, and state aid support.

Spiegel asked if mental health was included with medical.
Groschner replied that mental health is included.
Groschner said that for some areas, such as transportation, the group members and a manager still have to be decided on.
Groschner noted that the town has a way for people to ask for help by calling 439-3500.
Spiegel said that people are already asking for food help, although not yet through the emergency number.
Groschner said the number should be advertised more widely.
McKinsey suggested putting a notice of the number in the upcoming town newsletter.
Groschner said a poster advertising the 439-3500 number could be included in the newsletter.
Spiegel said Carlotta Peratoni was creating a 30-second message to read out to school families. He suggested she could use the text of the poster and include the number for Topsham, as well.
Long said a lot of people have volunteered to provide transportation.
Spiegel said those involved in transportation should be given safety protection.
Groschner asked McNeal about the availability of gloves, masks, and hand sanitizer.
McNeal replied that they were available, although the N95 masks are limited to first responders.
Long moved to adjourn; Groschner seconded.
The meeting adjourned at 10:55 AM.

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
April 13, 2020

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; Joe Blodgett, road foreman; Joe Truss, John Haney

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 Select Board meeting of March 9, 2020 and the financial meeting of April 2, 2020 were approved.

Review of Emergency Communications System and Radio Placement
Joe Truss explained that he had been trying to get four radios back from the fire department. Truss intended that the radios would be put on the fire department rescue truck, to be used by the rapid response team, but said they were never used for that purpose. The rescue truck had no regular parking place, Truss said, and he was concerned that the radios might be stolen. Truss said he asked the fire department repeatedly to return the radios, but he still doesn't have them.
Groschner said the Fire Department had returned the radios to him and they are now stored at the Town Hall. He added that there is only one charger for the four units.
Cawley asked who should have the radios going forward and how they could be made operative again.
Truss said that chargers are replaceable and that he can re-program the radios to be compatible with State Police radios.
Joe Blodgett suggested that when the radios go back out for use there should be receipts that note the serial number of the radio and the name of the person taking it.
Long asked if the town garage should have a radio.
Blodgett said it would be good to have one fire department band radio.
Cawley suggested that Groschner, as select board chair, should have one radio at home.
Truss recommended a system that would keep radio traffic to a minimum, with one person manning the command center during an emergency.

Groschner noted that there would not be space to have a specific room designated as a command center at the new fire station.
Blodgett offered to pick up the radios and take them to the town garage, where Truss could pick them up and assess them.
Cawley asked about the radio tower on Truss's property.
Truss explained that it works like an old-fashioned telephone party line that provides access for a few different radio frequencies.
Truss recommended that the town consider purchasing Knox boxes, secure lock boxes that contain keys to exterior and interior doors, for the Town Hall and the new fire station. In case of a fire, responders would not have to break down doors or windows to get inside. He estimated a purchase price of $500 per box.
Truss asked who is currently the town's emergency management coordinator.
Groschner said he [Groschner] was appointed emergency management director by the select board, adding that deputy coordinators might be appointed as needed.

EC Fiber
Cawley made a motion for Groschner to sign a letter to EC Fiber on behalf of the town to proceed with consideration of admitting Corinth as a member town. Long seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
Cawley noted that Washington Electric Co-Op recently got a $60,000 planning grant to look into becoming a broadband service provider.

Road Commissioner's Report/Highway Concerns
Blodgett said mud season has not been a serious problem so far.
Regarding the purchase of a new grader, Blodgett said he was leaning toward a Caterpillar, which would be $26,000 less than the John Deere, and Caterpillar would have the best trade-in value. The town could go with an 8-year lease that would require $28,000 down, with payments of $31,840 per year. The other option would be a 9-year lease, with no down payment and $34,697 per year.
Groschner said he is now more concerned about the town making large-scale purchases, given the present financial uncertainties. He asked if the road crew could make the current grader last another year.
Blodgett said yes, but it would require repairs, as well a new set of tires for the winter.
Groschner asked Blodgett to have an estimate of how much would be needed to spend on the current grader by the May select board meeting.
Long said he agreed that the town should avoid big expenditures now.
Cawley then asked Blodgett to talk about the right of way clearing plan for the summer.
Blodgett said Ginny Barlow, town tree warden, has sent out letters to the affected property owners to advise them of the planned cutting along Cookeville Road. He has reviewed the plan with Barlow, and she has approved cutting of trees leaning over the roadway. There will also be cutting of ash trees. More right of way clearing may happen as time allows, potentially on Rollie Day Road.
Long asked who would do the work.

Blodgett said he would probably use Limlaw again, and he confirmed that land owners would have the option of keeping the wood.
Cawley asked how extensive the right of way clearing would be.
Blodgett said they would be cutting trees over the road and ash trees.

Fire Station Update

Long and Cawley reported that they were satisfied with the amended contract with Hazen Hill Construction, and the select board voted unanimously that Groschner could sign the contract on behalf of the board.
Haney reported that the next steps would be getting the subcontractor bids in, deciding who would be awarded the work and finalizing the budget.
Haney said Hazen Hill expects to begin work on May 5, as stated in the contract.
Groschner asked how the world of COVID-19 was affecting building practices.
Haney said he doesn't know if the fire station would be affected, but would ask Jason Yehle of Hazen Hill.
Long asked if the state fire marshal's office would need to get an update on the plans.
Haney said the few things to be revised were not significant enough to require an update.

Humane Society Contract and Invoice

The town has received a bill from the Central Vermont Humane Society for spaying and neutering and boarding of several feral cats captured and brought in by a Corinth resident.
Cawley asked if the town should enter into a contract with the Humane Society.
Groschner said he would discuss with Michelle Boyer, the animal control officer for Corinth.

Other Business

Long said the board should be thinking about how the town could be putting money into the local economy by going ahead with projects already budgeted for, such as renovations to the Town Hall. Other board members agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

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

Minutes of the Emergency Select Board Meeting
April 27, 2020 2:00 p.m.

Meeting conducted on Zoom.

Present for the Select Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley

Groschner called the meeting to order at 2:03. The board agreed to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

At 2:35, the board voted to come out of executive session, having taken no action.

The meeting adjourned at 2:36.

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
May 11, 2020

Meeting conducted on Zoom.

Present for the Select Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley
Catherine Tudish, select board clerk
Others present: Joe Blodgett, road foreman; John Haney, Dina DuBois, Daniel Wing, Michael Bancroft

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 Select Board meeting of April 13, 2020 and the financial meeting of May 7, 2020 were approved.

Public Concerns
DuBois and Wing were seeking advice from the select board concerning their wish to build a garage near their house that would abut town property and might overlap slightly on town property.
Wing explained that they were considering two possible sites, one adjacent to Tenney Road and the other adjacent to the field behind Town Hall. If they chose the latter, they would at least need to do some grading to control water flow, and they did not want to go forward without input from the select board.
Groschner pointed out that they were not yet making a clear request.
DuBois replied: "Can we step over the boundary line, and can we grade?"
Blodgett said that, in his opinion, if the building were 15 feet from the center line of Tenney Road it would be fine since it is a Class 4 road.
Long said he agreed with Blodgett.
Cawley noted that each option was different and said the board would need more specificity.
Blodgett asked if the garage were built on the property adjacent to Town Hall where new septic tanks are located whether the runoff would affect them.
Wing said the runoff would go onto their property, not directly to the septic tanks.
Groschner concluded that it would help the board if DuBois and Wing came back with a more specific plan.
Blodgett agreed to take a look at the proposed sites and make an assessment.
DuBois then brought up the idea of the town buying a digital projector to use for town-related presentations.

Groschner said that would be something to bring up in November for the budget meeting.
DuBois said she appreciated the posting of signs prohibiting ATVs on Tenney Road and asked if more signs could be posted around town, such as on Magoon Hill Road.
Blodgett said the select board needs to talk to whoever is patrolling the roads and request that tickets be given to violators. Every entrance road to Corinth is posted, he noted.
Groschner said the signs often disappear quickly after going up. Since the town constable can't issue a ticket, the best bet would be to talk to the Orange County sheriff. He suggested inviting the sheriff to come in and talk to the select board about the situation.

Road Report

Blodgett said he had received two paving quotes, from Blaktop and Pike, for paving a portion of Goose Green Road this summer. He recommended going with Blaktop, as their price was $15,000 lower.
Cawley moved to authorize Blodgett to sign a contract with Blaktop. Long seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
Blodgett presented an estimate for repairs and maintenance on the current Caterpillar grader. He said the tires would have to be replaced by winter, at a cost of $9,600, and estimated another $10,000 for repairs. Keeping it for another year would lower its eventual trade-in value, he added.
Long said he preferred holding off on the purchase of a new grader.
Blodgett said he agreed and that they could probably make the current grader work for another couple of years.
Blodgett said he had received an email from Ginny Barlow, the town tree warden, confirming that they had the required permissions from landowners along Cookeville Road for tree cutting.
Blodgett said he still had to speak with two of the landowners to determine whether they wanted to keep the wood, and then he would make arrangements with Limlaw.
Long asked when the affected trees would be painted.
Blodgett said later this week. He agreed to email the select board when he was finished so that they could look over the affected area.
The select board unanimously approved Blodgett's plan.

Fire Station Update

Haney reported that the grading work has begun at the site and that the cement work was on schedule to follow.
Cawley asked if the town's insurance covers a partially constructed building and construction site. He suggested checking with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.
Groschner said he would make the call to inquire about insurance coverage.
Haney said he would arrange semi-weekly visits to the construction site for the select board.

Fire Department Update
No members of the fire department attended the meeting.
Groschner said he would send the fire department another invitation to attend a select board meeting.

Town Hall/public records access
Cawley reported that town clerk Nancy Ertle is providing requested information by phone and electronically.
Cawley said that Ertle is moving toward allowing public access by appointment. She has ordered protective equipment, such as masks, and expects to receive it soon.
Groschner asked if there were any immediate problems with access.
Cawley said there were not. People should call Ertle and make arrangement to access public records.
Groschner brought up the issue of mowing at Town Hall. He said it should be the responsibility of Dennis Tatro, the new facilities manager.
Groschner said other projects, such as repair of the gutters, should be moved along.

Treasurer's Position
The select board has accepted Kerry Claffey's resignation, effective May 31, 2020.
Groschner said he had a conversation with Chad Hewitt, the town accountant, and that Hewitt wanted to get a sense of how many hours would be involved in the position.
Cawley said he spoke with Becky Buchanan, formerly assistant treasurer of Thetford, and asked her to explain the difference between fund accounting and regular bookkeeping.
Groschner said he was in favor of advertising the position.
Long said the board first needs to clarify what exactly they are looking for in a treasurer. He noted that Karen Galayda is now handling some of the work of a treasurer.
Groschner proposed a meeting with Hewitt and the entire select board.
The board unanimously agreed to such a meeting.

Correspondence
Groschner said he received a report of a dog bite in East Corinth village. He checked with animal control officer Michelle Boyer, and the situation is under control.
Ertle notified the board that renewal of the maintenance contract for the generator was due, in the amount of $400.
Long moved to have Groschner sign the contract renewal, Cawley second, and the motion passed unanimously.

Other business
Cawley suggested having a back-up person for Anne McKinsey, in the event that she would not be available for updates to the web site, such as posting meeting agendas.
Long said he is familiar with the WordPress program and might be able to do it. He agreed to contact McKinsey to discuss.

Regarding a letter going out to Corinth's 300 second-home owners, reminding them of the 14-day quarantine period when they arrive and letting them know of services available to them, Long moved that the select board cover the cost of postage. Groschner seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
Groschner volunteered to sign the letters, scheduled to be mailed on May 12, and suggested that a copy also be posted on the town web site.

At 8:21 PM, the board voted to go into executive session to discuss a personnel matter..
The board came out of executive session at 8:45 PM, having taken no action.

Emergency Management Coordinator
The select board voted unanimously to appoint Wade Pierson as emergency management coordinator.
Chris Groschner will remain emergency management director.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

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

Minutes of the Special Select Board Meeting
May 21, 2020 5:00 p.m.

Meeting conducted on Zoom.

Present for the Select Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley. Also present: Dick Kelley.

Groschner called the meeting to order at 5:05. The board decided to go into executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

At 5:55, the board voted to come out of executive session, having taken no action.

The board discussed the Builders Risk Insurance Policy for the construction of the fire station. No action taken.

At 6:05, the board voted to adjourn.

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

Minutes of the Special Select Board Meeting
May 22, 2020 10:00 a.m.

Meeting conducted on Zoom.

Present for the Select Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley. Also present: Chad Hewitt, auditor for Sullivan & Powers; Karen Galayda, assistant treasurer.

Groschner called the meeting to order at 10:10.

Treasurer transition

Hewitt informed the board that treasurer Claffey had not yet provided the required details on the cemetery funds. He will call him after the meeting to obtain this information.

Hewitt recommended that the change of signature on all accounts be taken care of as soon as possible.

Galayda reported that computers would be updated on Thursday, May 28. That means that the treasurer will not have access to his computer all day. In light of that, the board agreed that Kerry Claffey's last day as treasurer will be Wednesday, May 27. Groschner will discuss this with Claffey.

During the transition period to a new treasurer, Galayda said she will be available to work Monday through Thursday. Galayda exited the meeting.

After answering further questions on fund accounting and the builders risk insurance, Hewitt exited the meeting.

The board discussed its interview with Dick Kelley for the treasurer's position, and agreed to offer Kelley the job with the same terms as are currently in the budget. Rick Cawley will call Kelley to make the offer.

Builders Risk Insurance

The board discussed the two proposals for the policy and authorized Long to call VLCT to secure the insurance effective Monday, May 25.

EC Fiber

The board authorized Groschner to sign the EC Fiber resolution to join the EC Fiber Communication Union District. The town's delegate will be Holly Groschner, with alternates Tim O'Dell and Ed Childs.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00.

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
June 8, 2020

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; Joe Blodgett, road foreman; Dick Kelley, treasurer

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 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 Select Board meeting of May 11, 2020 and the financial meeting of June 2, 2020 were unanimously approved.

Public Concerns
None.

Road Report
Porter said the highway department has seen an influx of weight permits recently.
Porter noted that he has heard complaints about ATVs, including ones where two or more people were riding on ATVs.
Groschner asked Porter if he was aware of ATV activity in Cookeville, specifically groups of riders on Friday nights on roads closed to ATV traffic.
Porter said he was aware.
Blodgett added that he has been hearing concerns about ATV traffic on posted roads.
Blodgett said he wanted to let the select board know that the highway department would begin spending on necessary repairs and maintenance for the grader, such as buying a new set of tires.
Groschner said the board has already approved the expenditures, and Blodgett should proceed as he sees fit.
Long said he would like to continue the ATV discussion, especially in light of the recent fatality resulting from an ATV accident in Orange. Long said he had spoken with Representative Carl Demrow about the situation, and Demrow would like to organize a meeting with relevant parties to work on solutions. According to Long, Demrow thinks many of the riders are not local residents.
There has been "a tremendous amount of damage to property" by ATVs, Long said.
Cawley suggested having the sheriff's department on call Friday nights, so that a sheriff could respond to disruptive groups of ATV riders if needed.
Porter said he was told that one of a group of 15 ATV riders had been stopped by a game warden, who told them Corinth class 4 roads were legal to ride on at a low rate of speed.
Long said he had a conversation with Mike Scott, the game warden who patrols Corinth, and that Scott would not have made such a statement about class 4 roads.
Groschner noted that Tenney Road is clearly signed, but riders ignore the signs.

Groschner said the Orange County sheriff has promised to issue tickets, but Groschner is not aware of tickets being issued.
Blodgett said Mike Scott might be better at enforcement, as he seems determined to get the situation under control.
Long said Scott's ATV duties are a small part of his job, and that they are specifically to police ATV trails, and Corinth has no ATV trails. If he comes upon illegal ATVs while dong other game warden business, he will issue tickets.
Blodgett said in light of the fatality he is hoping other towns will stop allowing ATVs on their roads.
Porter said the ATV club is defunct in Corinth and that there are no ATV trails in town.
Long said ATV clubs in adjacent towns seem to think there is no problem.

Fire Station Update
Long reported that things are moving along well and that the foundation walls are up.
Groschner asked if those walls are insulated.
Cawley said the concrete slab would have rugged, high R-value foam underneath.
Long said the project manager is always on site.
Groschner received confirmation that there is a meeting at the site every two weeks for select board members to get updates on progress.

Banking/credit card resolutions
Kelley reported that there were two Peoples Bank resolutions for the select board to pass, one giving him access to the cash account and one supporting the application for a credit card. Once approved by the board, the resolutions need to be signed by the select board chair and the select board clerk.
Long made a motion to approve both resolutions; Cawley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Vermont League of Cities and Towns proposed resolution
VLCT has asked the town to adopt a resolution stating: "All cities, towns and villages in Vermont are essential, and Vermont local officials support fair and direct federal emergency aid to reopen and rebuild local American economies."
Cawley said the resolution might not apply to Corinth, as the town has few retail businesses.
Groschner agreed that it was probably not applicable to Corinth.
Cawley said he saw it as more of a philosophical statement, to make sure that small towns are funded and not just larger towns and cities.
Long said he was in favor of standing with small towns, to show solidarity.
Long made a motion that the select board approve the resolution to advocate funding for small towns; Cawley seconded. The motion passed unanimously.
Board members agreed that Groschner could sign on behalf of the select board.

Correspondence
Long reported that he had picked up mail, was lavishly praised by Groschner and Cawley.
Nancy Ertle sent a request to include Dennis Tatro on the purchasing policy authorizing him to make purchases required for building maintenance.
Groschner noted there were 11 or 12 items Tatro could be working on.
Long made a motion that Tatro could spend up to $250 without prior authorization; Groschner seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Long said the board had received the contract renewal from the Orange County sheriff's department. According to the current contract, the town pays $48 per hour, not to exceed the amount of $11,000 within the fiscal year.
Porter asked if there was room for specific requests, such as enforcement of ATV regulations.
Cawley suggested at least sending a letter to the sheriff's department stating the problem.
Porter said the town is supposed to be getting ATV surveillance, but that isn't happening. He suggested a meeting with Bill Bohniak to discuss the situation.
Groschner said he had met with Bohniak recently, but is not sure if the sheriff's stated concern translates into action.
Porter suggested asking Bohniak what plans the sheriff's department has for the coming year concerning ATVs.
Long pointed out that the new contract would be effective July 1.
Cawley said if the town is signing a contract, we want assurances of a more aggressive attempt to solve the problem.
Porter recommended getting something in writing regarding intentions for enforcement of ATV regulations.

Other business

The select board discussed concerns raised by several town residents about a lack of COVID-19 safety precautions, such as wearing face masks and practicing social distancing, by Casella employees at the transfer station. While residents praised the employees, they wondered if there could be less direct contact, such as when handing over trash bags and exchanging money.
Long said he would call Casella to ask about their COVID-19 policies.
Cawley said he had taken a call on the 439-3500 number from a resident regarding a child custody situation. The concern was lack of social distancing and other precautions during visitations.
Cawley said he advised the resident to adhere to best practice guidelines for the safety of the child.

The meeting adjourned at 8:14 PM.

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
July 13, 2020

Meeting conducted on Zoom.

Present for the Select Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley
Catherine Tudish, select board clerk
Others present: Dick Kelley, treasurer; Norm Collette and Raymond Moulton, cemetery commission; Levar Cole, Kate Maclean, Samantha Lefebvre

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 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 Select Board meeting of June 8, 2020 and the financial meeting of July 7, 2020 were unanimously approved.

Public Concerns
Three candidates for State Representative from Orange-1—Kate Maclean and Levar Cole of Chelsea and Samantha Lefebvre of Orange—introduced themselves and thanked the select board for welcoming them to sit in on the meeting.

Sheriff/ATVs
Orange County Sheriff Bill Bohnyak had indicated to Groschner that he would attend the meeting to discuss enforcement of the town's ATV ordinance. He was not present at the meeting's start, and the select board unanimously voted to move this agenda item to the end, hoping Bohnyak would come in later. He did not join the meeting, however, and Groschner said he would contact the sheriff again and invite him to the next meeting.

Road Report
Long reported that a few residents have pointed out the misspelling of the name on the sign at one end of Abe Jacobs Road, with the name spelled "Abes Jacob" Road.
Groschner said he would speak with road foreman Joe Blodgett about correcting the sign when Blodgett returns from vacation.

Fire Station Update
Long said he had visited the site recently and reported that "they're making pretty amazing progress" on construction.
Long noted that a check had gone out to the contractor on July 13 to cover current billing.
Kelley asked how long it takes to get reimbursement from the bond bank, and Long said usually just a few days. Long will sign the reimbursement form for the town on July 14.
Groschner confirmed that there would be a meeting at the fire station site on Wednesday, July 15, for select board members to get an update on progress.

Cemetery Commission Concerns

Kelley noted that there is $6,800 in the town budget for the cemetery commission. He recommended that the funds be transferred to the commission by the select board so that the commission can pay outstanding warrants.

Long asked how the warrants are normally paid.

Moulton said they usually get the full budgeted amount transferred to their account and that they need to get the end of fiscal year payments.

Collette and Moulton explained that $6,000 is budgeted for cemetery upkeep, $300 for flags, and $500 for the annual audit.

Long made a motion to transfer $6,300 to the cemetery commission account, as $500 will go directly to the auditor and will be paid by the town.

Cawley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Collette asked about liability in case a person was injured in a cemetery.

Cawley said there were no special exceptions for graveyards; all are covered by the town's liability insurance.

Groschner asked if there has ever been a claim for injury in a cemetery.

Moulton said not that he knows of.

Collette and Moulton raised concerns related to green burials, in which cases the grave would not be reinforced with a cement vault and might be more prone to subsidence.

Cawley reiterated that the town has liability coverage for all town property, noting that if there is a danger, such as an opening in the ground, it should be posted with a warning.

Collette said they are studying policies and fees in different towns regarding alternate forms of burial.

Collette said he would contact Joe Blodgett about providing topsoil for holes in the Corinth Corners cemetery.

Town Agent Appointment

Cawley noted that the town has two open positions, town agent and town moderator.

Groschner asked if Cawley would ask Gary Apfel to accept the positions.

Cawley agreed.

Other business

Cawley made a motion to authorize funds for the postage meter in the town offices in the amount of $1,000. Groschner seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Cawley brought up a situation at the transfer station involving an unknown person who insisted on sorting through the trash looking for redeemable items after the station was closed. The person claimed that Joe Blodgett had given him permission. Cawley agreed to speak to Blodgett to verify whether he had given permission and then to discuss the policy of entering the transfer station after hours.

Long reported that he had talked to a Casella administrator about COVID precautions, noting that the biggest problem was people congregating at the truck and not social distancing.

Long said the Casella representative said they would provide signage against gathering at the truck, but they have not done so.

Groschner asked if Long had raised the question of Casella employees wearing masks.

Long said no, because he thought it was unnecessary, given that they are outdoors, which mitigates risk, and also working in the heat.

Groschner asked Long to contact Casella again to request signage against congregating at the truck.

Cawley asked Cole and Maclean—both members of the Chelsea select board—how they are addressing safety measures at their transfer station. They said they are promoting social distancing and encouraging the use of correct change.
Board members agreed that it would be useful to post similar safety precautions on the list serve and the town web site. Long agreed to draft a statement for posting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 PM.

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
August 10, 2020

Meeting conducted on Zoom.

Present for the Select Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley
Catherine Tudish, select board clerk
Others present: Dick Kelley, treasurer; Lee Porter, road commissioner; Joe Blodgett, road foreman; Geoffrey Hoots and Norm Collette, cemetery commission; Kenya Lazuli; Tom Mathews

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 Select Board meeting of July 13, 2020 and the financial meeting of August 4, 2020 were unanimously approved.

Public Concerns
Geoffrey Hoots was seeking approval from the select board to revise the management plan of the Shea Town Forest to allow for green burials within the forest. He noted that the Upper Valley Land Trust holds an easement on the forest property and asked the select board to submit the revised plan to the UVLT. As holder of the easement, UVLT needs to approve uses of the forest.
Hoots also brought up a prohibition against the use of flat markers on graves within the forest in the management plan. He said that many opting for green burial might want a commemorative marker.
Cawley recommended removing the prohibition against flat markers from the management plan.
Hoots and Cawley agreed it would be best to keep the language broad to avoid going back to UVLT for every change.
Cawley pointed out that the conservation commission, rather than the Town Forest committee, now has oversight over the town forest and that the language of any revised management plan should reflect that.
Long said the cemetery commission should update the management plan in collaboration with the conservation commission and submit the revised documents to the select board in time for action at the September meeting.
Kenya Lazuli had emailed the select board asking them to consider approval of the town making a statement in support of Black Lives Matter. Her email suggested a statement on the town web site, as well as a sign at Town Hall and included possible wording.
Cawley said he was totally supportive of the idea and recommended getting the request on the agenda in time for the next select board meeting.
Groschner suggested getting in touch with other area towns to see what they are doing in support of Black Lives Matter.
Long agreed that it would be good to see what other towns are doing and said he was in favor of having a statement on the web site.
Cawley noted that Lazuli's request had not come in time to get on the agenda for the August meeting, and in order to comply with the open meeting law, subjects for discussion had to be warned on the agenda.

IT proposal by Tom Mathews of TechGroup

A representative of an IT service company in South Burlington, Mathews said they reach out to all towns in Vermont twice a year to present information. He said the company offers a variety of service and support options to municipal organizations, such as remote monitoring of electronic devices. If there is a problem with any device in the network, TechGroup will notify the organization and take care of it.

Mathews recommended an on-site tech visit by a company representative to assess the need. This "mini assessment" would result in a detailed report regarding the town's computer network and suggest needed upgrades.

Long said the town works with an IT service that we are happy with. He asked what TechGroup would charge for a mini assessment.

Mathews replied that they would charge $1,250 for the assessment and report.

The board thanked him for attending the meeting.

Road Report

In response to the select board's request that the public notice board be moved from the old transfer station to the new site, Porter said the board needs to be repaired before it is moved.

Groschner said there are two notice boards to be moved. The board outside the gate, used for posting official town notices, would have to be relocated outside the gates of the new transfer station in order to provide 24-hour access to notices.

Collette noted that the locks on the official notice board are no longer working and need to be replaced.

Groschner said he would contact a locksmith to replace the locks.

Blodgett reported that the town is receiving a planning grant for erosion control and culvert installation. He arranged to meet with Groschner to get his signature on the required paperwork.

Blodgett said the road crew is currently working on a big project on Maplewood Road that involves installation of a new culvert.

Groschner asked about trees on Cookeville Road to the west of Magoon Hill Road that had been marked for cutting but are still standing.

Blodgett replied that the wood market is not good right now and advised waiting until wood prices increase.

Collette said he would add four or five trees from the West Corinth cemetery when the Cookeville Road trees are cut.

Porter said there have been two recent complaints from residents involving roadway interference. One concerns a person on Young Road with debris in the roadway; the other concerns a person digging ditches on South America Road and claiming they are speed bumps. Porter said he and Blodgett have not yet been able to speak directly with either person, but will continue to work on resolving both situations.

Set tax rate for FY 21

Kelley reported that the new tax rate would be 2.1553 for residential properties, an increase of .15 over the previous year. The rate for non-residential properties will be 2.2502, an increase of .10.

Long said the increases are due to the education rates set by the state.

Long moved to accept the new rate; Cawley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Long moved that Kelley could sign the required paperwork with board members' names and initial the signatures. Cawley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Kelley said he would get the tax bills out this week.

Fire Station update

Long reported that the builders are making good progress, noting that a crew worked over the weekend insulating walls and ceilings.

Long said he has purchased a generator for the fire station, which will arrive in about six weeks.
Long noted that members of the fire department had attended a meeting at the site and recommended a few small changes in the electrical plan, such as installing ceiling fans. The changes required a change order in the amount of about $1,000, Long said.
Long confirmed that the next site meeting for the select board would be Friday, August 14, at 1PM.

Fire Department update
Cawley said he had received an email from Fire Chief Ed Pospisil, declining to attend the meeting and raising some concerns, which Cawley did not specify.
Groschner said he would reply to Pospisil's concerns.

Town Agent appointment
Cawley moved to appoint Gary Apfel as town agent; Long seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Other business
Collette asked if the cemetery commission had to send notice of all meetings to the town email list to comply with the open meeting law.
Cawley replied that meetings need to be posted if they will involve discussion of matters affecting the town.
Regarding green burials, Collette said he wants to look ahead, to spare future taxpayers the expense of creating another cemetery. He added that shroud burials would be the most cost-effective in terms of cemetery maintenance.

Correspondence
Long reminded board members that the contract with the Orange County Sheriff for FY 21 still needs to be signed. He pointed out that the board wanted to have the sheriff come to a meeting before signing a new contract, noting that the sheriff had not attended the July meeting.
Groschner said he would work on having the sheriff at the September meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
September 14, 2020

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; Joe Blodgett, road foreman; Geoffrey Hoots, Norm Collette, and Raymond Moulton cemetery commission; Ed Pospisil, Fire Chief; Michael Pittman, Fire Captain; Zach McNeal, West Fairlee Fire Department

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 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 financial meeting of September 1, 2020 were unanimously approved. Minutes of the Select Board meeting of August 10, 2020 were unanimously approved, with this correction: Norm Collette did not request a town email list for notification of cemetery commission meetings.

Road Report
Blodgett said that two requests for road signs had been made: one for a Dead End sign on Jewell Lane and one for a No Dumping sign at the Meadow Meeting House.
Blodgett said there were a lot of tourists on Jewell Lane, especially when Beetlejuice posters were up, but he did not believe a Dead End sign would be effective.
Long agreed that a Dead End sign would not be effective.
For the Meadow Meeting House, Blodgett recommended a sign stating that the property was under surveillance and dumping was illegal.
Cawley said he was in favor of such a sign.
Long said he favored a surveillance sign, as long as it was not right in front of the church.
Groschner noted that the town has had fewer problems with dumping recently. "Somehow, we've made progress," he stated.
The select board unanimously approved the surveillance sign at Meadow Meeting House, and Blodgett agreed to install it.
Groschner complimented Blodgett and the road crew on the scope and quality of the major culvert project on Maplewood Road.
Blodgett said he has approached Ricker Excavation about seeding the grounds at the fire station, offering them use of the road crew's hydro-seeder, which would make the job much easier and produce better results.
Long asked if Ricker could take the value of seeding off his invoice for excavation work at the station.
Porter stated that he believed that would be in the best interest of the town and all parties involved.
Blodgett reported that he got an estimate from Limlaw to cut trees on Cookeville Road for $4,550. The highway fund would pay $2,550 of that amount, and the ash borer removal fund would pay the remainder.
Long said he was on board with Joe's tree cutting plan, which was also approved by Groschner and Cawley.
Blodgett said he wanted to add a little more to the road crew's uniform budget, as work on the Maplewood culvert had destroyed boots and safety vests. He suggested adding $600 a year.
Groschner replied that he was in favor of providing good safety equipment for the road crew.
Blodgett noted that there would be a surplus of money coming from the culvert grant.
Long said that if money is available in the grant, he was fine with using it to purchase work boots.
Cawley asked how a mechanism could be set up for grant money to go directly into the highway fund.
Porter said that currently excess funds from highway grants go into the general fund.
Long said the grant money should really go into the highway fund.
The select board agreed to speak with the town treasurer about allocating funds for the road crew's safety equipment.
Porter said he has spoken with a landowner on Young Road about removing debris and vehicles from the roadway and that the situation is being resolved. He added that he and Blodgett are still working on property owner issues on both Backway and South America Roads.

Cemetery Commission

a. Forestry plan and revisions to conservation easement:

Hoots reported that the forestry management plan for the town forest has been updated to be sent to the Upper Valley Land Trust. The update includes a provision for green burials within the town forest.

Hoots noted that the updated plan requires approval by the select board.

Cawley said he is fine with the new form of the plan.

Long said now that the plan includes a provision for natural burial, the board can adopt it.

Long made a motion to approve the forest management plan for the town forest.

Groschner seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Cawley said the board needs to make sure they print out the plan and get it to the UV Land Trust.

Long said he would print it out, adding that he would compose a cover letter to go with it, and that all board members should review the letter before it goes out.

Long said he had a conversation with Ginny Barlow, the town forester, concerning the UV Land Trust and that she reported some pushback about green burial.

Hoots said he had an email exchange with a representative from the Land Trust, concerning an easement that included "unforeseen uses in the future."

Long said he would like to see the emails, and Hoots agreed to send them.

Collette asked if providing information about green burials could be considered educational, and thus in line with the mission of the town forest.

Hoots said he believes that Barlow made a point about the educational value.

b. Possible expansion of East Corinth Cemetery

Collette reported that there was a possibility of buying land from the Tillotson property to expand the cemetery. He said that Tillotson had expressed interest in possibly selling 5 acres of pasture out of a 28-acre parcel.

Collette described the site as "on the knoll, a nice area," adding that would provide "a beautiful set-up for green burials up in the wooded area." He said the site would be easy to maintain.

Collette said the price was $25,000 for the 5 acres, and that Tillotson would be agreeable to a five-year note on the sale.

Groschner said the expenditure would have to go through a vote at Town Meeting. He suggested that it would be helpful for select board members to walk over the property.

Long agreed that it was important to look at the property to see what the access would be.

Moulton said the property is directly behind the new section of the cemetery and would need a right of way from the other property owner (buyer of the remainder of the 28-acre parcel).

Moulton said, "I don't know if we will need an expansion anytime in the next 15 years. We might not need to spend the money now."

Collette said they would have to run a road up from the existing cemetery. He suggested selling green burial lots in the wooded area as a way of raising money for the purchase.

Groschner said he would like to arrange a property viewing as the select board's next step.

Long said he would circulate an email to set up a date for next week.

Groschner concluded, "This will be a process, and nothing will happen fast."

Fire Station update

Long and Cawley reported that they had met at the fire station recently and that the project is coming along well.

Long said he needed approval for the purchase of a generator transfer switch in the amount of $690.

Cawley made a motion to approve, Long seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Long noted that Pittman and other firefighters have been painting the interior. "It looks great," Long said. "And we're still within budget."

Fire Department lease

Groschner expressed concern about the response time of the fire department when a call goes out. He asked Pospisil how many volunteers the department has and whether they are all certified.

Pospisil requested an executive session, stating that he preferred not to discuss the matter in open session.

Cawley noted that the law on executive session is limited to five categories.

Moulton said the request would fall under "personnel."

Groschner said it did not involve town personnel, as the fire department is not a municipal entity as such.

Cawley said if it is a sensitive issue, involving one or more individuals, it could be handled in executive session rather than general fire department business.

Long asked who would be involved.

Pospisil said the select board and fire chief only.

Groschner said the board would table the executive session to the end of the meeting and proceed with other agenda items.
Long said that with other members of the fire department present, the board could begin discussion of the lease arrangement.
Long said the lease would be between the Town of Corinth and the Fire Department and asked who the town would be dealing with.
Pittman said the town has a copy of the fire department's current bylaws. He explained that the department has a board of trustees, made up of two community members and three elected from the department.
Long asked if, in the interest of transparency, the fire department would be open to having a select board member as a trustee.
Pittman replied that such a change would have to go before the fire department's board for a vote.
Cawley suggested that a select board member could attend meetings as a guest.
Pittman said the fire department board usually meets quarterly and that he would notify the select board of future meetings.
Groschner asked how many members the fire department has.
Pittman replied approximately 20, with 4 certified at level two.
Groschner: "Does that mean 16 members can't go to a fire?"
Pittman: "No. It just means different levels of state training. Any member can answer a fire call."
Pospisil said the state is increasing the requirements for training hours and that training occurs in Pittsfield, a two-hour drive away.
Pospisil added that the department is trying to do a lot of in-house training, which will be easier with the new fire house.
Long asked if the department has a plan for recruiting more people.
Pospisil replied that they are trying to bring back former members. "This is a problem everywhere with volunteer fire companies," he said.
Cawley asked if the current volunteer model is running its course.
Pospisil said a lot of departments are moving to paid personnel.
Cawley asked about the relationship with the Vershire fire department.
Pospisil said that Vershire has teamed up with West Fairlee.
McNeal, a lieutenant in the West Fairlee fire department, said, "We go to everything together." He said West Fairlee has 13 members in its department, 8 of them certified for interior firefighting.
McNeal noted that Corinth has teamed up with Tri-Village.
McNeal said that some areas are regionalizing, rather than having separate departments, or else going to paid calls.
Long asked if non-certified Corinth members are working toward certification.
Pittman said training has been delayed because of COVID.
Cawley pointed out that the select board needed to talk about specifics of the lease.
Long asked if there are models to consult.
Groschner said the only one he knows of is the Historical Society's lease agreement for use of the Academy building.
Cawley said he would be willing to put a leasing document together. Essentially, the fire department gets to use the building in return for providing fire protection to the town, he said.
Cawley said he would be in favor of an automatically renewing one-year lease, with the option to renegotiate if conditions change significantly.
Pospisil asked what the department's responsibilities are regarding the building.
Pittman said the department gets the town rates for electricity, propane, and oil. Those bills are paid by the fire department and reimbursed by the town. The insurance payment would be a line item under the town's general fund, and the town treasurer would make insurance on the building part of the town's policy.
Cawley said there could be no alterations to the building without approval of the select board.
Cawley said he would circulate a draft lease contract and people would have a chance to comment.
Cawley asked who owns the Cookeville fire station.
Pittman replied that the town owns the land, and the department owns the building.
Pittman asked for the insurance amount in order to get it into the budget.
Groschner said he would get an appraiser to view the building and come up with a number.

<u>Library attorney's engagement letter</u>
Cawley made a motion to approve the appointment of Andrea Gallitano of Barre as the library's attorney.
Long seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

<u>Anti-racism resolution</u>

Cawley made a motion for the select board to adopt the following resolution, which he read aloud.

Resolved that we, the select board for the Town of Corinth, stand in solidarity with Blacks and all people of color. This year racial tension in the United States again reached a tipping point in the wake of the murders of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and George Floyd, and more recently the shooting of Jacob Blake. These horrific events caused an uprising against the long-standing racial violence, senseless murder, incarceration and disenfranchisement of Black people. As the town select board, we join the efforts of people around the world in the process of dismantling systemic racism and working toward true equality.
The residents of Corinth are predominately white, and we are aware that making this kind of statement is largely a gesture and that there is actual work to be done in the fight against racism here and around the world. We are committed to educating ourselves and encouraging the inhabitants of our town and society at large about the hows and whys of this work. This is the beginning of a larger conversation, and we strongly encourage the residents and neighbors of our town to support each other in doing this vital work.

Long seconded the motion, and the resolution was unanimously adopted.
Cawley thanked Kenya Lazuli for her significant contribution to the resolution's language.

Janitor's position
Groschner reported that he has had two inquiries about the position of building cleaner for the Town Hall. He said he advised both to contact the current cleaner for a fuller job description and to look over the building. Groschner noted that the current cleaner's position ends on September 25.

Posting locations
After discussion, the select board agreed that the town notice board at the new transfer station is not ideally situated.
Two alternates were suggested: moving the official notice board to the Blake Memorial Library lawn, adjacent to the parking lot, or moving it to the East Corinth post office property.
Tudish agreed to talk with someone from each location to determine their willingness to accommodate the notice board.
Porter asked about the public notice board that remains at the old transfer station.
Long suggested moving it to the new station and placing it by the redeemable bins.
Porter said he would contact the Conservation Commission about repairing the board and moving it.

Sheriff's contract
Cawley pointed out that the select board still has not signed the annual contract with the Orange County Sheriff's Department.
Long said they had been holding off until they had a discussion with Sheriff Bill Bohnyak.
Groschner said he would invite the sheriff to the next meeting.
Cawley noted that the Sheriff's Department has been sending invoices and the town has been paying.

Other business
Groschner said he had spoken with Karen Galayda, who reported that property tax revenues had been coming in better than expected. "Maybe we won't have such a bad year, after all," Groschner said.

Groschner made a motion for the select board to go into executive session to discuss a personnel matter and to invite Chief Pospisil to join them.
Long seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The board went into executive session at 9:45 PM. They came out at 10:02, with no action taken.

The meeting adjourned at 10:04 PM.

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
October 12, 2020

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; Joe Blodgett, road foreman; Dick Kelley, Treasurer; Kenya Lazuli; Paula Lavallee; Michael Pittman, Fire Captain; Bill Bohnyak, Orange County Sheriff; Scott Clouatre, Orange County Deputy Sheriff

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 September 14, 2020 and the financial meeting of October 6, 2020 were unanimously approved

Public Concerns
Kenya Lazuli requested that the history page of the town web site include an entry on Alexander Twilight, who was born in Corinth. A Middlebury graduate, Twilight was the first Black person to graduate from an American college.
Cawley said his only concern is that there is essentially no history on the site. He asked if the town should start building history on the site.
Groschner suggested contacting the historical society to ask about including more town history on the site.
Long agreed that going to the historical society would be the best approach. He said he was in favor of including Twilight.
Groschner said he would be happy to open the line of communication with the historical society.
Cawley noted that the town would have a valuable resource if the historical information were to be expanded.

Sheriff's Department Contract
Groschner said he wanted to touch base with the Sheriff's Department, particularly on the subject of ATVs. He noted that, in reviewing recent bills from the department, one was for an ATV patrol.
Bohnyak said he had received three recent ATV complaints.
Clouatre reported that on a three-hour patrol, he saw little to no ATV traffic.
Bohnyak said his department has issued 30 tickets in Corinth, mostly for speeding.
Bohnyak mentioned a Corinth resident, Laura Wilson, who is currently attending the police academy and said that when she graduates she will be patrolling the east side of the county. He stated that there would be a faster response time to ATV violations when she is on duty.
Groschner said he often gets complaints about speeders in town and is glad the department is issuing tickets. He said he hopes they will do a speed check in Cookeville.
Bohnyak said they could get a radar cart out.
Long recommended placement near Town Hall in Cookeville.
Long asked when Laura Wilson would be out of the academy.

Bohnyak replied mid- to late November.
Bohnyak added that they are working with the Fish and Game Department on ATV enforcement.
Long noted that there is a lot of ATV traffic from Topsham down to East Corinth General Store.
Lavallee said she has not seen a lot of ATVs on Jewell Lane this year.
Groschner said the select board does request that citizens call sheriff's dispatch to report ATV activity.
Bohnyak said they could bypass dispatch if calls or emails were sent directly to him.
Lazuli noted that she has seen a lot of ATV traffic, as well as loud motorbikes, on Bear Notch Road on weekends between 11 AM and 3 PM.
Kelley said he has seen and heard large groups of motorcyclists riding past Town Hall.
Bohnyak said those riders belong to a club and that their vehicles are all registered. He said they are a well-maintained group and don't cause problems.
Long noted that the annual contract with the Sheriff's Department has not yet been signed.
Cawley made a motion to sign the contract for the current fiscal year.
Long seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.
Groschner thanked Bohnyak and Clouatre for attending the meeting.

Road Report

Porter said the problem of debris from residences moving into the roadway "seems to be increasing every year." He said he has been contacting residents, and people seem to be working on clearing the debris.
Long said there is now a U-Haul trailer attached to a pick-up at the old Martin Store property and that it is right in front of the church.
Porter said he would try to contact the people living at the property.
Blodgett said he has extra generators on hand at the town garage and asked if the select board wanted him to try to sell them.
Long advised him to go ahead and sell.
Blodgett noted that the highway department had received a request for a dead end sign on Jewell Lane.
Lavallee, who lives on Jewell Lane, said there has been an increasing amount of traffic on that road and that a lot of it ends up at Paula Jewell's house at the top of the road. "I think the dead end sign could help," she said. "It would help Mrs. Jewell feel more comfortable."
Groschner said they should give the sign a try.
Blodgett said he has a dead end sign on order, but the question is where to place it. He and Lavallee debated various spots near the beginning of Jewell Lane. "We'll make something work," Blodgett concluded.
Lazuli said she thought a speed limit sign on Hayward Road would be a good idea.
Blodgett said a speed study would have to be done first. It is possible, he said, but would have to be taken up with the Orange County Sheriff's Department.
Groschner thanked Blodgett for removing a large downed limb at Town Hall.
Blodgett said the limb was dead inside, and he wondered about the health of the tree.

Corinth Community Coalition Internship Program

Cawley said he had received a phone message from Jeff Spiegel notifying him that Spiegel could not attend the meeting because his internet service was down.
Cawley said Spiegel asked if the town could pick up half the cost of background checks for adults who would be taking part in the program, noting that the cost for a background check is $30.
Cawley raised the question of whether this would be a town program or a school program.
Lazuli said a school counselor is working to match students with mentors from town. Her understanding is that it is a town program.
Cawley said he was concerned about liability issues and not sure what the town's function would be.
Groschner said he shares the liability concerns.
Long asked if the Upper Valley Mentoring Project would be the one to take it on.

Cawley said this was a different type of program, one that matched students with mentors who were doing work the students were interested in.
Long said it was a great idea to encourage young people to enter the trades, adding that he was all in favor of the program if the liability issues could be covered.
Lazuli said it is possible that a tradesman's insurance could cover student participants.
Groschner said the select board needs to have Spiegel provide more information.
Cawley said he would put it on the agenda for the November meeting.

EC Fiber Update

Kelley said he learned three days ago that Topsham Telephone has received a federal connectivity grant of $1 million for Corinth and Topsham, but the money must be spent by the end of the year.
Kelley said the advisory board would meet on Thursday, October 15, to discuss. He is concerned that only households in the most densely populated areas of town show up on the map for connecting.
Kelley noted that Holly Groschner, chair of the advisory board, would be meeting with the Department of Public Service about the grant.
Kelley said it seems unlikely that the entire project could be completed by the deadline.
Lazuli commented that it is not easy to contact Topsham Telephone. She asked if the town could say "no thanks" to Topsham Telephone because they are already working with EC Fiber.
Kelley raised the possibility of putting a page on the town web site as a clearinghouse for broadband connectivity questions and issues.
Long said he has been trying to get a response from EC Fiber for months about connecting to his house.
Kelley said EC Fiber is currently working to reach households in Vershire.
Long noted that a neighbor a quarter mile away has an EC Fiber connection.
Lazuli said her understanding is that EC Fiber has more work than workers at this point.
Kelley said he has a major concern about "islands of non-service," because Topsham Telephone would connect only in the most populated areas.
Kelley said that EC Fiber might not want to take on more remote areas, either. He agreed to return to the November select board meeting to give an update.
Lazuli said Topsham Telephone's internet service is "astronomically priced for the service we're getting."
Kelley said he would develop a mock-up web page to present to the select board.

Fire Station Update

Cawley reported that work on the fire station is complete.
Long noted that he needed to get the select board's approval for payment of Hazen Hill's final bill. He moved to approve payment, based on John Haney signing off on it.
Groschner asked about the amount, and Long said it would be in the $190,000 range.
Groschner seconded Long's motion, and it passed unanimously.
Cawley said he had spoken with Efficiency Vermont in March, and they had just reached out on Monday to ask if the contractor had taken advantage of available incentives. Cawley said to his knowledge Hazen Hill had done so.

Fire Department lease

The select board discussed a draft lease that had been circulated by Cawley.
Groschner said he had questions about what services would be provided by the fire department. He did not think the lease was specific enough.
Cawley replied that the draft lease stated "fire protection for town inhabitants in lieu of rent."
Groschner noted that there was nothing about medical emergencies or whether they even have to answer a call. He said he would like to see more work in that particular area of the lease.
Pittman noted that the Fast Squad rents space within the fire station.
Groschner asked if the Fast Squad would have its own separate insurance.

Pittman replied that it was more of a “gentleman’s agreement” that the Fast Squad could store their equipment in the fire station.
Cawley said he would add a provision that the Fast Squad must comply with all terms of the lease agreement.
Pittman said that in 20 years the Fast Squad and the Fire Department would probably be the same organization. He noted that about a third of calls are for medical assistance.
Cawley said he would revise the “services” section and send out the draft again.
Pittman said the Fire Department has small generators to set up for residents during long power outages, for elderly people on oxygen, for example.
Pittman said the department also assists the road crew in assessing road damage following storms.

Other business
Kelley sought approval of payment to New England Municipal Resource Center in the amount of $5,000 for annual maintenance and support of the town IT services.
Groschner moved to approve the payment.
Long seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
November 9, 2020

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; Dick Kelley, treasurer; Michael Pittman, fire captain; Norm Collette, cemetery commission; Jeff Spiegel

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 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 October 12, 2020 and the financial meeting of November 3, 2020 were unanimously approved

Road Report
Porter said he had looked into apparent discrepancies between the number of gallons of gasoline purchased at the East Corinth Store and the amount indicated on the charge slips. The problem, Porter discovered, is that the store's computer is not printing the first digit of the gallon number; so that, for instance, the charge slip says 0.32 gallons when the actual number is 30.32 gallons. He said the town is paying for the correct amount of gas.
Porter suggested that from now on the road crew write the correct number of gallons on the slip.
Porter said he had talked with a resident of Chicken Farm Road regarding boats and trailers in the roadway and that the owner assured him they would be moved before plowing starts.
Porter said he had also spoken with the owner of the property at the former Martins Store, who told him two vehicles at the edge of the roadway would soon be moved.
Spiegel noted that the No Dumping signs on Hayward Road were effective and asked if there were other signs around town.
Long said that a new No Dumping sign at the Meadow Meeting House seemed to be working.
Groschner asked Porter about the sand pile at the town garage and other preparations for winter.
Porter assured him that the road crew is "easily on track" with an adequate supply of sand and that they have switched to winter tires on vehicles.
Porter said that Joe Blodgett had received a call from the White Farm regarding delivery of a large tank by S.D. Ireland, asking if the town bucket loader could be used if needed to help with the unloading. Ireland will bring a crane, so the bucket loader would be on stand-by only.
Cawley said "I'm not opposed to being neighborly, and this is an unusual situation." He suggested approval of the request if Ireland would provide and sign a release form, to avoid liability for the town.
Long agreed that it should be left up to the company to provide a form and sign off on liability.
Cawley said it should contain a hold-harmless clause and indemnify the town against loss.
Groschner stated that the board approved use of the town's bucket loader, with the condition of company insurance for personnel and equipment, as well as the hold-harmless and indemnification provisions.

Corinth Community Coalition Internship Program
Jeff Spiegel addressed two concerns about the program: liability insurance for apprentice teachers and financing of required background checks.
He noted that the statewide organization Mentor Vermont helps mentoring programs with expenditures. Further, Mentor Vermont is connected with the organization CLIC, which provides mentoring around career exploration.
Spiegel said that Nancy Jones, director of the Upper Valley Mentoring Project, suggested that Spiegel's program could operate under the umbrella of her organization. She will bring the idea before the Mentoring Project's board for approval at their meeting on November 18.
Spiegel said he has been working with staff at the Waits River School and that 7th and 8th graders there are taking surveys about their career interests.
The program is not likely to launch in the spring, Spiegel said, but they were getting the groundwork in place.

Spiegel added that he would eventually ask town treasurer Dick Kelley about funding from the town and said they are looking for internship teachers.
Groschner noted that budget hearings are starting for the next fiscal year and suggested getting in a request for funds to the budget committee.
Referring to the rising COVID-19 numbers and increases in food insecurity, Groschner asked Spiegel about the CCC's use of food resources.
Spiegel reported that a new grant for the Farmers to Families program would enable families to sign up to receive 30 pounds of food in a drive-through delivery.
Spiegel said they had seen an increase in use of the West Topsham food shelf, but that the freezer space there is limited. He said they could get more food if they could increase freezer space.
Spiegel said that Willing Hands has been delivering food to the Waits River School for delivery to 10 families in need.
Spiegel also commended Renee Salomaa and her helpers for continuing to prepare and deliver meals through the Pay It Forward program.
Groschner encouraged Spiegel to continue conducting CCC meetings by Zoom.
Long pointed out that the number of COVID cases in Orange County is increasing, a good reason not to hold meetings indoors.
Cawley asked if liability insurance for the mentorship program would be covered by the umbrella organization.
Spiegel replied that it would.

EC Fiber Update
Kelley reported that the board of governors' meeting would take place the evening of November 10. He expected to have more information after that.

Fire Station Update
Cawley said that the building is finished, and the town has the certificate of occupancy in hand.
Pittman said he had talked with the builder, Jason Yehle, who has agreed to replace a door damaged by one of the construction crew and to repair a faulty door mechanism.
Long asked about the progress on paving.
Pittman it was supposed to have been done two weeks ago.
Groschner asked who was doing the work.
Pittman said the fire department had hired BlakTop, but added, "We do have a contingency plan."
Pittman noted that members of the department are painting interior doors. He said he would keep the select board updated on progress.

Fire Department lease
Cawley said he has documents ready for signing, a copy for the town and one for the fire department. He asked Pittman to let him know who would be signing for the department.
Groschner said he would sign for the town.
Kelley asked who is responsible for utilities.
Pittman said utilities are billed to the town, but paid by the fire department.
Kelley noted that insurance would be switched from builder's liability to the town.
Long said the town should have a key to the building.
Groschner said the key should be on the key rack in the safe at Town Hall.
Cawley suggested that Long have a key, too, in case of emergency when the Town Hall is closed.
Pittman said the department would install a keypad to keep track of who enters the building and when.

Other business
Collette said the cemetery commission's new bylaws have been posted on the town web site. These cover policies regarding single burial, shroud burial, and green burial. "We can accommodate everyone now," he said.
He reported that there had recently been a natural burial in Corinth Corner cemetery, and that the commission is making preparations for winter.
Collette brought up the opportunity to purchase three to six acres from Nelson Tillotson to add to the East Corinth Cemetery, noting that the addition would provide space primarily for vault burials but also some green burials.
Collette suggested that the select board view the property in question.
The board members agreed to visit the property on November 12.
Collette asked if someone from the planning commission should be there, too.
Kelley said he would ask Kerry DeWolfe to go.
Groschner said he would also ask Karen Galayda.
Kelley requested select board approval for payment of an invoice in the amount of $83,444 for the renovation project at Blake Memorial Library once the town has received the funds from the state grant.

Groschner moved to approve the payment. Cawley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Annual meeting format

Cawley stated that in light of the pandemic worsening, he believed the meeting should be virtual. Groschner and Long agreed.

Cawley said the select board has the authority to conduct an Australian ballot vote, but that option requires a virtual information meeting. He asked if it was possible to hold a virtual meeting with 100 people.

Groschner said the board needed to do some research.

Long noted that the deadline for announcing the meeting format would be when the warning is due.

Cawley said deciding on an Australian ballot would change the warning significantly.

Long said the print deadline for the town report is important, too.

Treasurer's Office, financial assistant compensation

Groschner said that Karen Galayda has requested an increase in compensation from $15/hour to $20/hour, given her increased responsibilities as assistant treasurer.

Long asked Kelley if he and Galayda had worked out the division of responsibilities in the treasurer's office.

Kelley replied that he was seeking guidance from the select board. He said he would sit down to discuss with Galayda in terms of Susan Fortunati's job description.

Kelley said he supports Galayda's request for the increase.

Cawley asked about Suzanne Hansen's compensation as financial assistant to the select board.

Kelley said he believes that Hansen's compensation should be similar to Galayda's.

Long said he was impressed with the responsibilities both have taken on in the treasurer's office.

Long moved that compensation for Galayda as assistant treasurer and Hansen as financial assistant to the select board be increased to $20/hour. Cawley seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 PM.

Town of Corinth
Board of Selectmen
P.O. Box 461
Corinth, VT 05039

Minutes of Emergency Meeting
November 19, 2020

Attending for the Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley.

The meeting was held as a Zoom call. 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. It was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Groschner explained that we were holding the emergency meeting to respond to immediate concerns brought on by recent surge of Covid cases in Orange County.

Online access to land records

The board discussed providing an online option for people searching the Town's land records. This would reduce the need for visitors to seek entry to the Town Hall. Town Clerk Nancy Ertle had researched the possibilities and recommended that we use NEMRC to provide these services at a cost of $1200 a year. The one-time setup fee would be $800. They could get the town up and running very quickly.

The board agreed to enter into this contract with NEMRC.

Phone system

Long noted that staffing in the town office is reduced in response to Covid and the need for keeping all staff members safe. Given the reduced hours, he said that he thought it important that the town answering machine take messages from callers. Nancy Ertle has said that she just wanted an outgoing message and that people would call back if it was important. Treasurer Dick Kelley had expressed interest in having a phone with message-taking capability to provide for good customer service in the treasurer's office. The board directed Long to contact Kelley to have him assess whether the current phone system was capable of providing an option to have separate messages for the clerk and the treasurer. The treasurer's would take messages.

Communication with citizens

The board discussed various ways to convey the urgency of the Covid situation to citizens. The LRN list serve is one way that we have used in the past. Long offered to explore whether Front Porch Forum would be useful as well. Groschner said he would talk to Anne McKinsey to see whether the town could use Facebook.

The board agreed that Governor Scott's recent messaging about the need for precautions was particularly apt. Here is a transcript of the governor's message:
"I also want to speak to the skeptics again. Make no mistake, I understand that if you want to ignore the science or choose not to believe it for one reason or another, there's not much we can do to stop you.

"But I want to be clear: The number of people in hospitals is growing because some care more about what they want to do rather than what they need to do to help protect others, keep kids in school, keep people working and prevent the healthcare system from being overwhelmed to the point where care is being delivered in makeshift hospitals. It's a fact that the consequences of an overwhelmed healthcare system will have a far greater impact on our economy and our well-being than all the prevention and mitigation measures in place across the country.

"So, again, the skeptics are right. They can do what they want. But please don't call it patriotic or pretend it's about freedom. Because real patriots serve and sacrifice for all, whether they agree with them or not. Patriots also stand up and fight when our nation's health and security is threatened, and right now, our country and way of life is being attacked by this virus, not the protections we put in place."

Long also provided figures from the Agency of Human Services. Orange County had 68 cases for an incidence rate of 23.5 per 10,000 people – twice the state incidence rate of 12.6. The numbers continue to climb since that report on Monday, Nov. 16.

Groschner reported on a conversation with Peter McMurray, president of the Historical Society. McMurray said that a Cookeville resident had contacted him with an offer to pay for removing dead trees behind and to the side of the Academy Building in Cookeville. Matt Nola would do the work. Cawley and Long were in general support, but asked that the trees to be removed be marked with flagging tape so they could see the extent of the proposed work. Groschner said that he would flag the trees.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35.

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

Unapproved Minutes of the Select Board Meeting
December 14, 2020

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; Michael Pittman, fire department treasurer; Raymond Moulton and Geoffrey Hoots, cemetery commission; Holly Groschner, Corinth Fiber Initiative; Ginny Barlow, town forester

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 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 November 9, 2020 and the financial meeting of December 1, 2020 were unanimously approved

Road Report
Porter said Joe Blodgett had received a call from Topsham Telephone to inform him of the company's intention to run fiber optic line on portions of Center Road, Brook Road, and Richardson Road. Topsham Telephone told Blodgett they will contact affected landowners.
Holly Groschner reported that EC Fiber is building its plan for the town of Corinth for 2021, although the town may not get service in 2021.
Holly said she had a conversation with the president of Topsham Telephone, who informed her that although the company had received a grant to connect 350 houses in Corinth, Topsham, and Orange, it seemed likely they would connect only 55 households by the end of 2020.
Holly said there are many unknowns with Topsham Telephone's progress regarding the grant rollout. According to the original terms of the grant, the money had to be spent by the end of 2020.
Long asked if EC Fiber and Topsham Telephone would be cooperating, given that both are stringing lines.
Holly said there was a concern that Topsham Telephone would interfere with EC Fiber's build plan. The two companies are "not even close to collaboration as this point," she stated.
Holly noted that Washington Electric has decided to get into fiber service, keeping control of the poles and leasing to EC Fiber, which would keep costs down. This arrangement "should help insure that all households get fiber service," she said.
Holly said that it is hard to get crews to deploy fiber and that Topsham Telephone is using its own crews.
Chris Groschner asked Porter about mutual aid for road crews in nearby towns, should crews get sick with COVID.
Porter said a mutual aid agreement with surrounding towns has been in place since Hurricane Irene.

Ventilation System at Town Hall
Referring to studies done in China, Groschner said scientists had concluded that viruses can be transmitted long distances through airflow. He asked if having a ventilation system in Town Hall would be helpful.
Cawley said only if the system would bring in fresh air from outside.
Long said he had been in Town Hall this week and that the ventilation control in Nancy Ertle's work section is operational. Long added that it is hard to get the thermostat fans blowing. He said he was not certain if filters are in place, or if the system is bringing in outside air.
Groschner noted that current work schedules have been arranged so that Nancy Ertle, Karen Galayda, and Dick Kelley are in the building at different times or in different spaces.
Pittman said if the system hasn't been serviced in a while, people in the office would be breathing a lot of dust.
Groschner said he would make inquiries to find a heating contractor to assess the system.

Green Burial
Barlow reported that she had received a response from Upper Valley Land Trust regarding green burials in the town forest. UVLT presented three potential obstacles contained in the conservation easement: prohibitions against establishing new property rights, against dumping human waste, and against altering the topography.
Barlow said she doesn't believe green burial would violate any of the three.

Groschner asked Cawley to look into the property rights question.
Hoots said he does not believe a burial would require new property rights.
Barlow pointed out that green burials could also take place in a town cemetery.
Long noted that the UVLT stewardship director had expressed willingness to discuss the matter on a Zoom call with the select board, and Long recommended doing that.
Barlow said she doesn't think UVLT has serious objections to green burials in the town forest.
Hoots said the select board should initiate the meeting.
The board agreed to do so, and Groschner said he would like Barlow to be involved in the meeting.

Fire Station Update

Pittman reported that Hazen Hill Construction returned a week ago to install the washing machine. When the fire department ran the machine for the first time, there were severe problems with vibration. Pitman said members of the department would try to re-anchor the machine.
Pittman said they are waiting on a second quote for the pin-pad door of the handicapped accessible entrance. To keep the door accessible, Pittman they are expecting a cost of about $1200.
Pittman said he and other department members are working on remaining interior projects, such as installing fixtures in the two bathrooms.
On a recent fire call, Pittman reported, getting the trucks in and out of the station in a timely manner went smoothly. The first truck was out of the station in five minutes, he said.
Pittman said the company that installed the bay doors still has to replace a damaged door panel.
Groschner asked about the truck decorated with Christmas lights seen on Sunday night in Cookeville.
Pittman said that truck was a recent purchase and not in official use yet. He said the department wanted to do something celebratory for Corinth children and that Santa Claus has been riding on the truck, giving out candy canes. The department will take the truck out two or three more nights.
Cawley said there may be extra bond money left over from construction of the new fire station and suggested exploring the possibility of installing solar panels on the roof of the station.
Long said he was looking into a solar installation with Hazen Hill.
Groschner asked if some of the money could be used to make the handicapped access door operable.
Long said he would also talk about that with Hazen Hill.
Cawley noted that it would be good to shop around for pricing of a solar installation.

Annual Meeting

Groschner said the select board does not want to have an in-person meeting at Town Hall in March.
Cawley said there would be no way to have an in-person meeting and maintain social distancing.
One option, Cawley noted, would be to conduct the meeting by Australian ballot.
Cawley said the state legislature might approve a delay of Town Meeting for 2021. If the meeting could be held in May, for example, it could be held outdoors. He recommended waiting to see what options the legislature offers.
Long said the legislature will take the matter up immediately at the new session in January.
Apfel reported that the present options include proceeding by Australian ballot, in which case the select board would have to convene a virtual informational meeting to be held 10 days before voting by Australian ballot.
Cawley said that right now there is no authorization or funding to send out mail-in ballots. Otherwise, people would have to come to Town Hall to vote in person.
Apfel said a disadvantage of the Australian ballot system is that the vote is either up or down, without benefit of discussion.
Groschner asked how a vote would be tallied from the floor in a virtual meeting.
Apfel said there is a way to do that on Zoom.
Apfel added that Act 162 and Act 92 encourage participation by telephone. But he noted that if a person doesn't have an internet connection, calling into Zoom is a long-distance call, which could be expensive.
Groschner said he favored waiting to see if the legislature would authorize a delayed meeting, as an outdoor meeting seems like the simplest, best way to proceed.
Apfel asked if there could be a way to solicit comments from the community prior to the warrant.
Apfel said the select board should relay questions and concerns to the state representatives. He offered to contact the Secretary of State's Office to pass along questions related to Town Meeting.
Cawley asked if an anonymous vote could be conducted virtually. At an in-person meeting, he pointed out, voting can be done by paper ballot if seven participants request it.

Budget

Long said he has gone through the proposed 2021 fiscal year budget with treasurer Dick Kelley.
Cawley noted that the school budget is zeroed out, then asked why there was a revenue figure under the school for $5,000.
Long said that number should be on the line above, under the emerald ash borer project.

Cawley made a motion to approve the budget as presented, pending agreement on a couple of minor discrepancies. Long seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Other business

Moulton asked if invoices for bookkeeping services to the cemetery commission could be split with the select board.
Long stated that he has never fully understood the cemetery commission's financing.
Groschner said his understanding is that the select board has no oversight of cemetery commission finances.
Moulton said the town treasurer has always handled the books for the cemetery commission.
Moulton said the 2020 audit could not be completed because data was not entered by the town treasurer.
Groschner stated that cemetery commissioners have to maintain more financial oversight.
Moulton asked who determines the number of hours the town clerk and the treasurer work.
Groschner said their change of hours came about because of COVID safety concerns, and that they will probably change again when the situation changes. He added that the town is working with its third treasurer since Susan Fortunati retired.
Long noted that the job is very complex and that the most recent two treasurers did not get much training.
Cawley said that relative to the number of hours, neither the clerk nor the treasurer feel they have enough hours because of COVID concerns.
Groschner brought up a meeting of the Corinth Community Coalition held on December 13, at which there was a discussion of the East Corinth store providing meals to community members and a question of whether the town could contribute to the effort.
Long, who attended the meeting, said Jeff Spiegel said Renee Salomaa has been using the Pay It Forward program to fund preparation and delivery of meals. Spiegel said a contribution from the town would be helpful.
Cawley said the town budget does not have a discretionary fund.
Long said he would be in favor of donating $100 from the health officer's budget of $200.
Groschner said he would go back to Spiegel to find out more, then come back to the select board for approval of a donation.
The select board went into executive session at 9:10 PM to discuss a personnel matter.
The board came out of executive session at 9:18 PM, with no action taken.
The meeting adjourned immediately thereafter.

Town of Corinth
Board of Selectmen
P.O. Box 461
Corinth, VT 05039

Minutes of the Special Meeting
December 21, 2020

Attending for the Board: Chris Groschner, Steve Long, Rick Cawley.
Others Attending: Karen Galayda, administrative officer.

The meeting was held as a Zoom call. 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. It was called to order at 10:02 p.m.

Town Center Designation

Groschner and Galayda spoke about the application for Town Center designation for East Corinth and Cookeville. The application was started in 2019 but not completed. Representatives from the state (Richard Amore) and Two Rivers Ottauquecheee assisted and participated in site visits to the two potential centers. Boundaries were drawn up based on these site visits.

The benefits of the designation include the opportunities for grant funding from the state, and tax credits for businesses. Cawley asked if there were any downside to it, and Galayda and Groschner didn't see any. Cawley wondered if we were giving any rights away, and Galayda said that she didn't think so, and that if the town had later misgivings, the designation needed to be renewed every 8 years and we could not re-apply. Cawley said he could support the application. The board voted unanimously to pursue the Town Center designation for East Corinth and Cookeville. Galayda will contact Bob Haynes from Green Mountain Economic Development and Peter Gregory from Two Rivers Ottauqueechee to take the next steps.

Other Business

* Groschner reported that at the Covid response weekly meeting, it was again suggested by Jeff Spiegel that a donation from the town to the East Corinth General Store to support its Pay it Forward Program would be appreciated. The board agreed that there are no funds designated for such an expense in the budget. Any request for funds should come up at a warned selectboard meeting and be on the agenda. But the board also agreed that these are strange times, and given so, it was willing to make the exception. It approved Groschner using $100 of the health officer's budget if he determined through speaking with Renee at the store that there was a need for reimbursement for the charitable work that the store is doing to feed people in the time of Covid. The check should go with the memo line of Pay it Forward Program.

* Cawley said that he had fielded complaints from researchers who weren't able to get in to the Town Hall for research and hadn't been able to get access to older records that weren't available on the town's new online access to land records.

Cawley said he would check in with town clerk Nancy Ertle to confirm how far back the records had been scanned and were thus available on line. And he would ask that she make it possible for researchers to get older records that aren't available on line. Otherwise, it means that banks and title researchers will not be able to work on Corinth real estate transactions.

* Long asked the other members of the board for their opinions on whether we should continue to work with Hazen Hill to install solar, or to work directly with contractors. Hazen Hill knows the building inside and out and would be a valuable asset. On the other hand, their participation comes at a cost. The board decided to contact two contractors independently, and to compare their quotes with the preliminary quotes provided by Hazen Hill. This is still in the information gathering phase, and no decision was made.

The meeting adjourned at 10:52.