Town of Corinth Selectboard
PO Box 461 Corinth, VT 05039

Approved Minutes of Selectboard Meeting
Tuesday June 4, 2024

Attending for the board: Holly Groschner; Carl Demrow, and Stephen Devoto; Anne Rosten Selectboard Clerk; Lee Porter, Road Commissioner; Joe Blodgett, Road Foreman; Kelly Ann Donahue, Head Lister; Ed Hathaway and Nico Blometh, EPA Representatives; Amber Vecchiarelli and Renee Francis, Casella Sales Representatives; Zach Bryan, Upper Valley Ambulance Director; Nate Lumsden, Game Warden; Mike Tagliavia, Brett Kay, Larry Hart, Forbes Morrell, Rob Herrick, Nancy Olivet, and Mike Pittman. . Attending via Zoom: Town Meeting Moderator Gary Apfel; Dick Kelley, Treasurer; Alex-Nuti de Biasi, Journal Opinion Editor; Paul Tomasi, NEKSWD Representative; Ed Childs, Dave and Wendy Wieland-Alter, Paula LaValley, and Dina DuBois.

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

Welcome – Agenda Approval

Agenda approved. Chair Groschner added an item; approve the appointment of Ruth Atkinson Adams as Lister. Demrow made a motion to approve Ruth Atkinson Adams as Lister. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of SB minutes 5/7/24

Demrow made a motion to approve the minutes from the regular SB meeting of May 7, 2024. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Road Commissioner/Road Foreman Reports

Commissioner Porter showed the board photos of the Town Garage Project progress. The board discussed the financing of the new Western Star dump truck with Treasurer Kelley, Porter, and Blodgett, including the terms offered by Community Bank and through the dealer, Charlebois. M-T Bank has offered a lower finance rate of 5.846% for a six year municipal lease for the total amount of $204,302. At the end of six years the town will hold clear title to the truck for $1.00.

Groschner moved a resolution that the town approve and execute the Lease Purchase Agreement for the Western Star Dump Truck and authorize Treasurer Kelley to sign the agreement and to take all actions, including signing closing documents, in order to secure the lease. Demrow seconded the motion to adopt the resolution as read. Vote on the resolution as moved was unanimous. Groschner proposed that the treasurer sign the term sheet from M-T Bank and make the first payment by June 25, 2024 with FY24 funds.

Treasurer Kelley said he would prefer to read over the documents and have legal counsel to look it over before signing. Groschner reminded him that the town is properly authorized to enter into the lease and Kelley is authorized to sign it. Kelley would still like to read over the documents. Groschner asked for Porter and Blodgett's opinion. They both agreed that to sign with M-T Bank would be the best deal for the town. Kelley asked why M-T Bank waited to offer this deal.

Groschner then made a second motion to authorize Kelley to spend up to $1000 from the Highway Dept. to cover costs for any accrued bank expenses and legal fees. Devoto seconded and the motions passed unanimously.

Blodgett presented the Highway Dept Financial Plan for the board to sign for FY25 which shows how road expenses are paid, i.e. maintenance, planned updates and projects. The board members signed the document which will go to the state.

Public Concerns

Mike Pittman stated his concern that the Fire Dept needs the bi-annual payments of $30,000 from the General Fund. Groschner then introduced Ned Lumsden, the new Game Warden. Lumsden explained his duties which include fish and game issues, ATV infractions, animal cruelty assists, etc. He then said the bear population has grown and that there have been instances of trash cans and bird feeders being destroyed by them. He stressed the need for residents to take in feeders and secure trash.

Pike Hill Copper Mine Update/ Ed Hathaway

Ed Hathaway from the EPA said there will be an informational meeting for the public on June 25th. He reported that so far they've been clearing trees and preparing the site. He stated that the plan has been updated from 5000 trucks to 900 which significantly lessens expected damage to the roads. Hathaway will work with the road crew as to where roadbed upgrades and culverts are needed for the project. He said there should not be more than 15 trucks going over the roads each day. There was more discussion as Hathaway answered questions from the board and the audience. The June 25th informational meeting will cover more details and residents are encouraged to attend and state their concerns and opinions. The board thanked Mr. Hathaway for his time.

NEKSWD/ Paul Tomasi, Executive Director

Tomasi explained that the waste district (NEKSWD) acts as a consultant with each of the 49 towns covered. He said they help towns decide how to deal with waste and assist with developing the documents. They also send trucks at certain times each year to haul away tires, hardcover books, and electronics among other things. Road Commissioner Porter received a list of possible carriers for hauling trash and recycles from Tomasi. Devoto asked about differences between NEKSWD and CVWD (Central VT Waste District). Tomasi replied that NEKSWD offers a lower rate. Forbes Morrell asked about household hazardous waste i.e. antifreeze, old crankcase oil, paint, and pesticides. Porter said the town garage will take the oil for heating fuel. Around the first of the year certain towns will schedule a day for hazardous waste pickup where other towns are invited to bring theirs.

Casella Waste Management Contract

Casella Sales representative Amber Vecchiarelli visited the town transfer station on Saturday to observe how it operates, talked with Joanne Hayward, Rick, the truck driver, and visited the "Free" shop. She explained the different options available for the town to consider; whether to continue with the rear load truck or rent compactors. Having compactors would require cement pads at the town's expense. Tomasi said most towns use compactors and the compacted trash goes to a facility where it is weighed and the town receives the weight slip. Groschner explained that the town's procurement policy requires considering more than one contractor. Porter stated that with the use of compactors the trash is hauled not as often as the rear load trucks. Morrell asked how much tonnage is generated by Corinth. There were many questions to consider and more research into cost calculations needed. Gary Apfel asked if the town could look into how recycling is done. All agreed to keep looking at all the options and come up with what would best serve Corinth. Groschner received an email from the Topsham Town Clerk requesting to partner with Corinth for tire disposal. Devoto said if Corinth has the space then it would be a good will gesture to help out Topsham. The consensus among the board was that there were lots of things to consider first but the request was not refused tonight.

Upper Valley Ambulance (UVA)

Groschner asked the new UVA director, Zach Bryan, how exactly the ambulance services the town. Bryan explained that each town is charged $54 per capita. The cost has gone up $3 from $51 for the last two quarters of FY 25. The UPA services 8 towns in VT and NH and received 107 calls from Corinth last year. The per call rate is $655 and projected to go up to $720. The UVA charged the town $74,000 which is $4000 over the budget. Devoto did the math which showed the calls adding up to $70,000. Chair Groschner asked why the town was being charged the extra $4000. Bryan said that the per capita rate is going up due to wage and insurance increases and new equipment purchases. Bryan said a letter was sent out in October explaining that rates were going up for FY 25 quarters three and four. Demrow asked about the Donation Appeal letter the UVA sent to residents which many found offensive. The wording was confusing causing some to deduce that if no donation is made they would be refused emergency service. Bryan assured the board that is not the case but the intent was solely for fundraising. Donors would have subscriptions which would cover any costs for ambulance service that insurance doesn't pay for. Groschner stated that the board needs to understand the UVA's revenue streams and asked how they can present this information to the townspeople and would they send a representative to a budget meeting in the Fall. Bryan said he would send a letter out to residents explaining the fee structure. The town's UVA rep is Joe Truss who needs to be heard from. The $4000 budget discrepancy will be on the June 10th financial agenda.

The Animal Control Officer item is tabled for a future meeting.

Town Hall Key Policy

Chair Groschner explained that there are two levels of discussion; one for the Town Hall Building and the other for the Town Clerk's office. The board needs to know the number of keys currently issued and to whom. Tonight the need is for a policy to secure the doors of the office. People allocated to hold office keys are: Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk, Three Selectboard members, 3 Listers, Delinquent Tax Collector, Building Facilities Manager, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Facility Cleaning Person which amounts to thirteen (13). Demrow made a motion to authorize the amount of not more than $300 for the office lock to be changed and keys available for the office-holders stated on the policy. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Porter specified that all the keys should be numbered. The Town Hall Facilities Manager will be in charge of the keys to the building and the Town Clerk will control the Town Hall Office keys.

OCSD

The FY 25 contract from the OCSD will be received within the week with proposals for service.

Correspondence and Other Business

Demrow stated that the VT Preservation Trust has assigned an architect for the proposed Town Hall Renovation Plan design.

The dates of Monday June 10th for SBF and Tuesday July 2nd for SB meetings were confirmed.

Groschner made a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss a Personnel Matter. Demrow seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45PM.

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