Town of Corinth Selectboard
PO Box 461
Corinth, VT 05039

Approved Minutes of Financial Meeting
Monday December 9, 2024

Attending for the board: Holly Groschner, Chair; Carl Demrow, and Stephen Devoto. Anne Rosten, Selectboard Clerk; and Dick Kelley, Treasurer. Attending via Zoom: Shirley Montagne, Selectboard Financial Clerk.

Board Chair Groschner called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Approval of Agenda
Chair Groschner requested the agenda be amended to have the Warrant show the payment to the Fire Dept has been issued and a RFP has been received from Norm Collette for Town Hall repairs and paint. Demrow made a motion to accept the agenda as amended. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of November 18, 2024 Financial Minutes
Devoto made a motion to approve the minutes from the Financial meeting of November 18, 2024. Demrow seconded and motion passed unanimously..

Dashboard Review and Audit Update
Financial Clerk Montagne updated the board on the status of revenue and expenses. She said the surpluses have been carried over. Demrow asked about fund balances for offsetting the tax levy for the FY 26 budget. Groschner stated that some of the funds are designated for certain projects, i.e. $84,000 for Townwide Reappraisal, $150,000 for Town Hall Renovation, and $200,000 for Town Garage Addition. The board and Montagne discussed all this. Montagne assured the board that between the Highway Dept and the General Fund the town fund balances are in good shape and are available for consideration by the Budget Committee.

Montagne said she has not heard from the auditors recently but will contact them this week. Montagne stated that the Fund Balance Policy is 75% complete and she will provide a draft of it to the selectboard in January.

State Ethics Commission Appt
The board received an email from the VT State Ethics Commission informing them that municipalities are required to appoint a Liaison to serve as a point of contact with the Ethics Commission. Groschner made a motion to appoint board member Carl Demrow as Ethics Commission Liaison. Devoto seconded and the motion passed, Demrow abstained.

Error and Omission Approval
Devoto made a motion for the board to sign a revised Errors and Omission Certificate for 2024, omitting two properties for which abatements were approved by the Board of Abatement. Demrow seconded and the motion passed unanimously. It will go to Lister Kelly Ann Donahue.

Project Budgets: Surplus-funded Projects
It was noted that the Town Hall Building Committee needs to know the status of town funds expended so far for special projects approved by the selectboard: the breakdown of each project's expenses and the remaining project budget, by account item. The Budget Committee needs to see the FY 26 proposed expense budget and ensure that the projects are not going over budget. Groschner asked Montagne to initiate a Special Projects Dashboard to address this requirement. Kelley expressed the need to better review and track Grant Funds. Groschner noted that the board authorised $200,000 in surplus for the Town Garage Addition and another $50,000 to come from surplus from grants to the Highway Fund. Groschner previously asked Road Foreman Blodgett to clearly indicate where grant surplus is to come from before signing any further invoices and Blodgett submitted a list of grants that will yield surplus totalling $65,254.84: Better

Back Roads Program #1060 and Grants In Aid (GIA) #s 0289 and 0525. Groschner noted that the board has not authorized Blodgett to spend the $15,254 excess over the budget for the Garage Addition project.

Warrant and Expense Review

Warrant: Groschner asked the treasurer if the payroll reported in the warrant included payment to the treasurer for his salary as well as hourly amounts paid as "assistant treasurer." The treasurer indicated that it did, as he was authorized to do in prior years. A discussion ensued regarding the matter of also paying the treasurer as an Assistant Treasurer at a separate hourly rate. Kelley said he regularly bills as an assistant for three hours a week. Kelley stated he'd have to think about changing this practice. Groschner made a recommendation to move this discussion to the February 2025 Financial Meeting, at which time the treasurer's payroll for January would be reviewed.

The board requested to amend the warrant to pay an honorarium of $1250 to Susan Fortunati for all the work she has done to prepare for and lead the budget committee meetings. Groschner proposed that the warrant reflect the addition of $1250 to the payroll and $100 to the payroll taxes (including the childcare tax) which would bring the total to $165,675.23. Demrow made a motion to approve the warrant with an adjustment to total $165,675.23.

In revising the payments of payroll and payroll taxes, Devoto noticed the payroll tax ratio to payroll is approximately 50%. The calculation provided by financial clerk Montagne shows a more correct ratio of 15.3%. Treasurer Kelley indicated that he had received the payroll calculation from Financial Clerk Montagne. Montagne and Kelley will work to correct payroll tax (and childcare tax) calculations to ensure that the next warrant properly reflects payroll tax.

Payroll: Notwithstanding the discussion of the treasurer's aggregate salary and hourly wages, which was tabled until February, and the need to review the calculation of payroll tax, Demrow made a motion to approve the payroll so that town employees could be timely paid. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Accounts Payable: Demrow noted expenditures made associated with the MERP Grant and explained how the MERP Grant reimburses the town for expenses approved for energy efficient updates on the Town Hall and Town Garage Addition. Demrow made a motion to approve the Accounts Payable. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Financial Planning Updates

Lister Kelly Ann Donahue spoke with her district supervisor Barbara Schlesinger about the part-time employee of non-resident Debra Kingsbury. Donahue referred to 32 VSA 4041, which allows listers to "employ" non-resident assistants. Kingsbury requested increasing her pay to $5500 per year at a rate of $27.50/hour. The selectboard discussed that the budget committee had denied the payment of payroll taxes in FY 2025. Demrow made a motion to continue Kingsbury in employee status and recommend to the budget committee that payroll taxes be paid out of the total requested allocation. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Other Business that comes before the board

Town Hall Facilities Manager Norm Collette made a request for the board to approve the RFP draft that he submitted. Groschner made some changes to the draft: that the bid be awarded for 30 days and all work done and invoiced by May 31, 2025 and the need for the bidder to have an approved insurance policy for liability and auto. Demrow made a motion to approve the RFP with the changes. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session

Demrow made a motion for the board to go into Executive Session under 1 VSA 313(a)(3) (employee matters) and invited Treasurer Kelley. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.