Town of Corinth Selectboard
PO Box 461
Corinth, VT 05039

Approved Minutes of Selectboard Meeting
Tuesday January 7, 2025

Attending for the Board: Carl Demrow, Stephen Devoto, and Holly Groschner. Anne Rosten, Selectboard Clerk. Lee Porter, Road Commissioner; Joe Blodgett, Road Foreman; Brad Wheeler, Town Health Officer; Kelly Ann Donahue, Head Lister; Gary Apfel, Town Meeting Moderator; Andrew Alexander, Jim Guyer, Mike Tagliavia, Jon Ruggles, and Jennifer Locke. Via Zoom: Kerry Dewolfe, Planning Commission Chair and Anne McKinsey.

Acting Board Chair Carl Demrow called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Welcome and Agenda Approval
Groschner added 2 items to the agenda: Approval of the Town Hall flooring bid and Health Officer Wheeler's 625 Young Rd concerns. Devoto made a motion to approve the agenda with changes. Groschner seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of 12/3/24 Selectboard Minutes
Groschner noted a couple of changes to the December minutes. Devoto made a motion to approve the December 3, 2024 minutes with the added changes. Groschner seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Concerns
Jim Guyer asked why the new Casella contract requires payment for recycling. He suggested it was illegal and that the town of Randolph's trash costs are less than Corinth. Holly Groschner assured him that it was legal. Lee Porter, who has been working with Casella over many months negotiating the contract, explained that the ultimate goal is for all VT towns to be charged equally but some town's older contracts have not expired yet. He said that it was explained at the 12/18 public meeting with Casella that the $2.50 recycling fee will cover the cost of separating the recyclables at their plant. Demrow stated that because residents pay with cash that there is no record to show what the town's actual costs have been. Porter related that in two years the town will have a record of actual costs. Andrew Alexander expressed his concern that the fee for recycling will cause more littering on the roadsides. Porter also said that he is researching whether aluminum soda cans may go in the metal dumpster free of charge.

Health Officer Brad Wheeler summarized the ongoing trash problem at 625 Young Rd which involves a rat population; the board had previously decided to not have the town pay for a cleanup at the residence. Wheeler said he's been going over the health ordinance and the Health Officer Handbook to find the best option for a solution. He suggested the board enforce the Solid Waste Ordinance. Groschner read Article XIII, which pertains to public health and safety, and expressed concern for children living at the premises. Groschner also stated her concerns for any public officials and delivery personnel visiting the premises in the line of duty, i.e. the health officer, listers, utility personnel, Postal, UPS, Fedex, etc. Groschner then made a motion to issue a violation of the solid waste ordinance under Article XIV. A (first violation letter and $75 penalty). Devoto seconded. Discussion: Devoto expressed his opinion that it would be better for the community to issue a letter of concern as the first step. Groschner said that the selectboard has been asked to enforce the ordinance by the health officer and neighbors, and the residents have had notice of the reported violation, a problem that the health officer has discussed with them for over 6 months, having multiple conversations with the residents, and noted that the actions of the health officer and selectboard have been reported in the minutes during that time. Demrow asked Wheeler if he's had any recent communication with the homeowner. Wheeler answered that the owner of the property has been bitten by a rat, that he, Wheeler, does not feel safe entering the property due to the rat infestation, and the owners have told him they have no money to take care of the trash accumulation. Groshner and Demrow voted "Aye" and Devoto voted "Opposed." Motion carried.

Jim Guyer asked about the proposed changes to the subdivision regulations that were noted in the agenda. Groschner said the board received the document from the Planning Commission and it is on tonight's agenda for discussion of the review process. Andrew Alexander asked if the document will be available to the public. Demrow said it should be in the Planning Commission minutes. Devoto assured the public that the document is available upon request of the Town Clerk, and will be available in Town Hall and on the town's web site.

Road Commissioner's Report / Highway Dept.
Commissioner Porter said that the new Transfer Station contract will begin approximately at the beginning of February. It may change due to weather issues. They are waiting for the electrician who is busy with another job in town.

Road Foreman Blodgett said the road crew has been busy keeping the roads in good shape in spite of the snow and ice. Blodgett and board member Demrow will get together to go over the BGS (Building and General Services) requirements for the MERP grant for the Town Garage Addition. Groschner added that the board needs to approve the project amount.

Approval of FY 26 Budget

Groschner made a motion to approve the budget for expenses and revenues for FY 26 as provided by the Treasurer to the Selectboard on December 27, 2024 (draft dated 12/26/24) and approved by the Budget Committee. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Town Meeting Warrant Review and Approval

Groschner made a motion to approve the Warrant for the March 4, 2025 Town Meeting as presented at tonight's meeting. Groschner then asked Town Meeting Moderator Gary Apfel for his thoughts on the warrant. Apfel noticed that the highway department "big ticket" items were later than usual on the warrant but expressed no opinion on the matter. Apfel then asked about the use of the OWL for Town Meeting and possibly a microphone for the Zoom attendees to hear audience questions. Kelly Ann Donahue volunteered to help Apfel with setting up the OWL up for the Town Meeting. Apfel then asked about enlisting school students to be "mic" runners for the audience. Devoto volunteered to contact the High School Social Studies Teacher at Oxbow for suggestions. Devoto seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. The board then signed the Warrant.

Subdivision regulation changes

The board received a document from the Planning Commision with proposed subdivision regulation changes and the statutorily required description of the changes. The board will discuss the proposed changes at February's selectboard meeting. The board then explained the process of approving or disapproving the changes. The board can choose to approve the changes, send it to the voters, or deny it. If, after the selectboard votes to approve or deny the regulation changes, a petition is signed by 5% of the town's voters then it will be voted on by the town using the Australian Ballot method. Groschner stated that public documents presented to the selectboard need to be posted on the town website and are available to the public.

MERP and VHPD grants /RFP

Demrow talked with Norm Collette about the two grants for the Town Hall Renovation. Demrow said we are not in a place yet for RFP's since we don't have construction documents yet. The next deadline is acceptance of the VHPD grant by making the required filings- Collette will take care of that and have it in by the deadline of February 8th. The architect is working on the plan for the Town Hall Porch which the VHP needs and the town hall renovation committee needs to create estimates and construction documents.

Authorization of Anne McKinsey for $70 for website backup service

Groschner made a motion to approve the amount of $70 to Updraft for data backup on the town website. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Authorization of VT flags on EC Village utility poles

Groschner made a motion for the selectboard to authorize a volunteer committee to put Vermont State flags on Green Mountain Power utility poles in the East Corinth Village with GMP approval and each homeowner's permission from May 1st to October 1st. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Groschner read an email from EC resident Carol Freeman stating her concerns about the flags and urged the board to understand that not all residents are in favor of the flags.

Correspondence

Groschner made a motion to approve the expenditure of $2700 to Lackey Flooring for the repair and refinishing of the floor in the Town Hall Meeting Room. Devoto seconded and the motion passed unanimously. The board then expressed their appreciation to Norm Collette, Town Hall Facilities Manager, for finding the vendor and moving forward to secure their services.

The board received the results of the Equalization Study from the state which informed them that the CLA dropped to 70%.

Next two Meeting Dates Confirmed

The board confirmed the next SBF is Monday January 13, 2025. Due to two SB members' absence on February 4th the next SB meeting will take place on February 11, 2025.

Adjournment: Groschner made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Devoto seconded and the meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.