

**East Montpelier Selectboard Meeting APPROVED (07/09/18) MINUTES  
June 18, 2018 at the Town Office**

**Selectboard (SB) members present:** Carl Etnier (recording secretary), Seth Gardner, Kim Swasey, Gene Troia; Bruce Johnson (town and zoning administrator).

**Others present:** Ross Hazel, East Montpelier Senior Living Initiative (EMSLI); Paul Winters and Jack Zeilenga, Recreation Committee; Town Treasurer Don Welch; Town Clerk Rosie Laquerre; Renee Carpenter, Friends of Coburn Pond.

**A. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Gardner called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

*Additions to the Agenda*

Consideration of Transfer of Funds From General Fund to Capital Reserve Fund

Consideration of Letter in Support of EMSLI

*Review of Minutes*

**Motion: I move to approve the minutes of June 4, 2018 as submitted. Made: Ms. Swasey. Second: Mr. Etnier. 4-0.**

*Public Comment*

None

**B. DISCUSSION ON OPTIONS FOR IMPROVING THE RECREATION FIELD  
ENTRANCE/PARKING LOT AREA**

Paul Winters and Jack Zeilenga reported they presented the concept of improving the entrance and parking lot at Tech Night, June 12, at East Montpelier Elementary School, as requested by the Selectboard (SB). They received positive responses, but no volunteering of time or skills for design.

It was noted that cleaning up the brush etc. around the entrance and exit to the parking lot is not that expensive, does not need a detailed plan, and is a safety priority. However, further work to solve the drainage issues requires a designed plan.

July 28 is the deadline for a state grant from the Recreational Facilities Program. To apply, we need an estimate of the cost of the work. Robert Townsend at American Consulting Engineers & Surveyors in Williamstown has provided Mr. Winters with an estimate of \$2,900 to develop a base map and develop preliminary design proposals with cost estimates.

**Motion: I move to allocate \$2,900 from the Capital Reserve Fund to develop a preliminary design and cost estimate for the East Montpelier Recreation Field road frontage work. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Mr. Troia. 4-0.**

**C. TOWN TREASURER REPORT**

Town Treasurer Don Welch presented a detailed report on the current state of the FY 2018 budget and spending. Mr. Welch said the Town's finances are healthy, and we are on track to have a fund balance of \$35,000 or more at the end of the fiscal year.

**D. DISCUSSION ON OPTIONS FOR CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT**

The Town checking account now has over \$1.3 million. On the advice of Town Administrator Bruce Johnson and Mr. Welch, the SB decided to maintain a high degree of liquidity for the duration of the construction season. Grant-funded construction projects for which the town must pay the bills before receiving reimbursement total around \$700,000 this season.

However, the \$71,125 in the Cemetery CD is not expected to be drawn on for the foreseeable future. It has been getting 0.65% interest at People's United Bank. There is an opportunity to invest it at Vermont State Employees Credit Union (VSECU) in their Green Fund (for renewable energy loans) for 21 months at 2.50%. The SB directed Mr. Welch to move the investment to VSECU; he will return with the paperwork for the new account.

The checking account earns 1.05%, a rate which is tied to a Federal Reserve rate and will be re-evaluated in September.

Mr. Etnier asked about the history of having the first tax payment due November 15, which means the town has four and a half months of spending before payments are due. The answer was that it has "always" been that way, and it seems to work. (Prior to 2007 the fiscal year ran January 1 to December 31 and the single installment November 15 tax deadline was ten and a half months into the fiscal year, an even more challenging situation.)

#### **E. CONSIDERATION OF TRANSFER OF FUNDS FROM GENERAL FUND TO CAPITAL RESERVE FUND**

The FY2018 general fund budget included a line item of \$414,817 for the capital reserve fund. As this is a discretionary act on the part of the board, a formal motion needs to be made to shift the funds to the capital reserve fund.

**Motion: I move to transfer \$414,817 from the General Fund to the Capital Reserve Fund. Made: Ms. Swasey. Second: Mr. Troia. 4-0.**

#### **E. END-OF-FISCAL-YEAR FUND BALANCE POLICY DETERMINATIONS**

Mr. Welch expects the town to have a surplus of approximately \$35,000 when FY2018 is fully settled. The town's fund balance policy requires the board to commit funds by end of the fiscal year, June 30, if it wants to restrict use of the current budget surplus for specific purposes. This is also an opportunity to release previously restricted monies whose restrictions are no longer needed.

##### *Leave Payoff Responsibilities*

This is an audit "requirement" – essentially a fund to pay for allowable leave reimbursements at the time of employee termination; the fund sits at \$30,000 now. The actual need is difficult to assess, but adding an additional \$5,000 would be prudent.

##### *Reserve Fund Allocations*

The recommendation for the unallocated current year budget fund balance is to assign it to the Capital Reserve Fund. That fund has been in active use this year (unforeseen LaPerle Farm items, the Hudson house, the roadside mower, along with anticipated uses) and grant elements that are not currently projected (the sidewalk town match increase; potential exposure on the Quaker Road culvert) make an allocation to the fund prudent.

**Motion: I move to assign the current FY2018 budget surplus in the following manner:**

- **\$5,000 to be added to the funds set aside to cover the future costs of allowable leave reimbursements at the time of employee termination; and, any remaining audited FY2018 budget surplus to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund;**
- **Further, to release to the unrestricted fund balance the \$10,000 restricted in 2017 to cover the East Montpelier Fire District #1's now-paid loan; the unused \$25,000 set aside two years ago for the road foreman transition; and, to the extent it is unused, the \$75,000 committed to the FY2018 budget; and,**
- **\$100,000 of the unassigned current fund balance shall be assigned to reduce property taxes in FY2019.**

**Made: Ms. Swasey. Second: Mr. Troia. 4-0.**

#### **G. DISCUSSION ON FUTURE CAPITAL PROJECTS QUESTIONNAIRE**

The Capital Improvement Committee is once again requesting town boards provide information on potential

capital (value of \$5,000 or more) projects that should be included in the CIC's capital improvement program.

The SB will discuss possibilities further on July 9.

#### **H. DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTOR REPORT**

Mr. Johnson, in his capacity as delinquent tax collector, reported on current tax delinquencies. Overall, delinquencies are down compared to this date in the previous two years:

2018	\$173,201
2017	\$193,725
2016	\$204,839

Mr. Johnson identified a number of parcels whose taxes were sufficiently delinquent that he recommended starting the tax sale process. The SB authorized him to start the process for tax sales on all those he identified:

03-016-000  
02-053-000  
02-052-000  
04-016-000  
08-073-000

#### **I. CONSIDERATION OF WARRANT TO IMPOUND UNLICENSED DOGS**

Annually in June the board issues the statutorily-mandated warrant to the animal control officers.

Town Clerk Rosie Laquerre reported she has records of 24 possible or confirmed unlicensed dogs, belonging to 20 owners. Renewing by mail is working well. The list now goes to Animal Control Officer Sandy Conti. The recorded town dog population now stands at about 420.

**Motion: To approve the 2018 Warrant to Impound Unlicensed Dogs. Made: Mr. Troia. Second: Mr. Etnier. 4-0.**

Board members signed the warrant.

#### **J. CONSIDERATION OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY AND RECORDS RETENTION PLAN**

Ms. Laquerre has revised the policy since it was first presented to the SB on May 21. As the SB directed, the policy presented is now clear that any changes in records retention schedules must be approved by the SB. She also worked with municipal assistant Denise Sparrow to double-check that the minimum retention times in the plan correspond to those in the referenced General Records Schedule or Disposal Order.

Where state standards exist, East Montpelier records retention plans meet or exceed them.

Ms. Laquerre's plan is to track any changes the state makes in its General Records Schedules or Disposal Orders and, if necessary, come to the SB on an annual basis with recommendations for changes to the plan.

**Motion: I move to adopt the Records Management Policy and Records Retention Plan as presented. Made: Ms. Swasey. Second: Mr. Troia. 4-0.**

#### **K. CONSIDERATION OF LETTER IN SUPPORT OF EMSLI**

The Old LaPerle Farm Committee voted to let EMSLI look for funding for its senior living project on the Old LaPerle Farm, owned by the Town. Ross Hazel reported EMSLI wants a letter of the SB's support for the senior living project on the Old LaPerle Farm to take to a developer. Though the Committee's motion indicated the Committee would write the SB with a request for a letter of support, no letter has yet been received, so Mr. Hazel orally communicated the request.

The SB is willing to write in support of the EMSLI project being built in the village area and to note that the

Town purchased the Old LaPerle Farm property with the EMSLI project in mind as a possible use, as well as other factors that show the Town's support. The SB is not willing to commit to any development before seeing a detailed proposal.

Mr. Etnier volunteered to draft a letter for consideration at the July 9 SB meeting.

#### **L. DISCUSSION ON POTENTIAL ASBESTOS ABATEMENT PROJECT AT OLD LAPERLE FARM PROPERTY STRUCTURE**

Asbestos removal is required before the structure on the Old LaPerle Farm property may be removed. Crothers Environmental Group did an asbestos investigation of the farmhouse and found minor levels in the linoleum backing and a chimney flue. Crothers also gave an estimate for the remediation work: \$3,475.

**Motion: I move to authorize up to \$3,500 for work on asbestos remediation and permitting for the Old LaPerle farmhouse. Made: Mr. Troia. Second: Ms. Swasey. 4-0**

#### **M. DISCUSSION WITH FRIENDS OF COBURN POND**

Renée Carpenter, leader of Friends of Coburn Pond, presented a pair of concerns with VTrans actions/inactions regarding construction of the wetlands mitigation project on the Coburn Pond parcel. The group is encouraging a Natural Resources Board (Act 250) enforcement effort to require VTrans to honor the mediated settlement agreement reached during the project's Act 250 permit process. Ms. Carpenter asked for a letter of support from the board.

Ms. Carpenter said the purpose of the requested enforcement is to protect existing uses and water quality of the pond. She said there are two provable legal issues: 1) The snowmobile trail is in a different place than approved (and local snowmobile clubs are willing to have it moved to the approved location). 2) Excavation during construction created an unauthorized connection between the wetland and the adjacent pond, altering water quality.

Ms. Carpenter said she would draft a letter for the SB to consider July 9.

#### **N. CONSIDERATION OF EMPLOYEE PAY RATES FOR FY2019**

The Selectboard set the wages for town employees for FY2019.

**Motion: I move to approve the FY2019 wage schedule for municipal employees as presented. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Ms. Swasey. 4-0.**

#### **O. APPOINTMENTS**

**Motion: I move to appoint officers as detailed:**

**Don Welch as Town Treasurer for the term July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019;**

**Don Welch as Collector of Current Taxes for the term July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019;**

**Denise Sparrow as Assistant Town Clerk for the term July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019;**

**Denise Sparrow as Assistant Town Treasurer for the term July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019;**

**Bruce Johnson as Zoning Administrator for the term July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019;**

**Bruce Johnson as Collector of Delinquent Taxes for the term July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019;**

**Gene Troia as Acting Zoning Administrator for the term July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019;**

**Seth Gardner as Road Commissioner for the term July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019;**

**Bruce Johnson as Road Commissioner for the term July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019.**

**Made: Ms. Swasey. Second: Mr. Troia. 4-0.**

#### **P. ACCESS PERMITS**

18-019 Pearson, 513 Bliss Road

The Pearsons are requesting a shift to the south of their long-standing residential access at 513 Bliss Road. The intent is to eliminate a challenging curve in the driveway and improve drainage. Road Foreman Guthrie Perry

has been working with the Pearsons and recommends approval.

**Motion: I move to approve access permit 18-019. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Mr. Troia. 4-0.**

**Q. WARRANTS**

Signed.

**R. OTHER BUSINESS**

*Update on FEMA DR4356 (October 2017 wind event)*

The town's debris claim has been obligated (project accepted and federal funds released to the state). We'll eventually receive \$10,717 from FEMA plus an additional \$2,344 from the state.

*Meeting Schedule*

July 9th	6:30 pm	“Special” regular Selectboard meeting
July 19th	7:00 pm	Anticipated EMFD quarterly presentation at the ESF
July 23rd	6:30 pm	“Special” regular Selectboard meeting
August 6th	6:30 pm	Regular Selectboard meeting

*Zoning Administrator Report*

6 new applications since the June 4th SB meeting; 25 total so far this year.

The next Development Review Board meeting is scheduled for July 10, 2018; one hearing is set so far, for a setback variance request to construct a carport at 1420 North Street.

**S. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion: I move to adjourn. Made: Mr. Troia. Second: Ms. Swasey. 4-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.