

Minutes of the East Montpelier Selectboard

October 15, 2018 Selectboard Meeting

SB Attendance: Chair Seth Gardner, Gene Troia, Amy Willis, and Kim Swasey; Town Administrator Bruce Johnson

Public Attendance: EM Recreation Board members Jack Zeilenga and Paul Winters (by speakerphone); Rob Townsend, American Consulting Engineers & Surveyors; Road Foreman Guthrie Perry; VLCT's Larry Smith

Chair Gardner called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Additions to Agenda:

- **Discussion on Formation of a Committee to Handle Potential Upgrade Project at Town Garage Property**
- **Update on Old LaPerle Farm Property Committee &/or Consideration of Real Estate Proposal for Hodgeman Parcel**
- **Consideration of 2019 Employee Health Care Benefit Options**

Minutes:

Chair Gardner presented the draft minutes of the October 1, 2018 board meeting.

Motion: To approve the October 1, 2018 minutes as presented. Made by Mr. Troia; second by Ms. Swasey. Passed unanimously.

Public Comment: None

Discussion with Recreation Board on Rec Field Project

Prior to the meeting the board met with Road Foreman Guthrie Perry and consultant Rob Townsend at the town's recreation field on Vincent Flats Road, as part of the ongoing effort on the part of the SB and Recreation Board to evaluate options for both enhancing the recreation field's entrance area aesthetically and improving the traffic flow and general drainage.

The plans call for the driveway to be raised by as much as 18 inches to allow the drive to effectively shed water toward the road drainage ditch. The ditch will be lowered, with new culverts added, to better capture the water flow off both the road and the drive, and carry it south into the existing Vincent Flats Road drainage system. The original intent was to carefully remove the fence and much of the surrounding plant growth while protecting a few of the nicer trees, but it appears unlikely that any of the trees can be saved due to the extreme reworking of the surrounding ground. Much of the work will be handled by the town road crew, although elements of the project will be contracted out and volunteer personnel will be utilized when practical.

The Recreation Board will continue to perform outreach activities to keep the public engaged and informed on the project. That board will also work on a landscape plan and investigate fundraising options or donation opportunities for landscaping elements and new fencing. The intent is to integrate the existing granite posts into the landscape plan.

Motion: To authorize the expenditure of up to \$17,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund for the recreation field entrance rehabilitation project, which will be managed by Road Foreman Guthrie Perry. Made by Ms. Swasey; second by Ms. Willis. Passed unanimously.

Road Foreman Report:

- **Consideration of 2018/19 Winter Roads Policy**
 - No changes are proposed for the policy. **Motion: To adopt the 2018/19 winter roads policy as presented.** Made by Ms. Swasey; second by Mr. Troia. Passed unanimously.
- **Discussion on Winter Salt Options**
 - Salt costs are on the rise, with the state contract price up by nearly \$14/ton. RF Perry is investigating a bulk purchase of the salt brine product he tested out last winter. The brine both decreases the amount of rock salt used and increases its effectiveness.
- **Discussion on Town Pickup Truck**
 - The 5-year-old truck is currently in the shop for bodywork and undercoating. The desire is to get 2-3 more years out of the pickup.
- **Discussion on Potential Hydroseeder & Trailer Purchase**
 - Towns are mandated to minimize potential erosion during and as a result of roadwork. The increased emphasis on effective stormwater management requires more and better reseeding of disturbed ground. Towns in central Vermont are increasingly shifting to the use of hydroseeders in place of manual seeding methods. RF Perry recommends that the town follow this trend and proposes the purchase of a Finn T-30G hydroseeder along with a 16-foot, multi-purpose trailer.
 - **Motion: To authorize the expenditure of up to \$18,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of a Finn hydroseeder and a trailer.** Made by Ms. Swasey; second by Mr. Troia. Passed unanimously.

Consideration of 2019 Employee Health Care Benefit Option

VLCT's Member Relations Manager Larry Smith presented the town's 2019 options for employee health insurance. For the first time since the VT Health Connect era began in 2013, the town will be eligible to join an association plan, which often provides similar coverage at a lesser price. There is no association plan that perfectly matches the town's current default offering of the BCBS Platinum Plan. Mr. Smith recommended that the board compare the Platinum Plan with the Business Resource Services (BRS) association Option B BCBS plan including a health reimbursement account.

After working through a variety of plan payment variables, the board directly compared a continuation of the current scheme (Platinum Plan; town covers 90% of the premium) and the BRS Option B plan with the town paying 85% of the premium and fully funding the associated HRA. The 2019 Platinum Plan offering would cost the town, at current employee utilization, \$107,031. Employees would pay \$11,730 and be exposed to a maximum deductible total of \$27,000. The 2019 BRS Option B offering would cost the town at most, with full HRA coverage factored in, \$99,885. Employees would pay \$12,774 and not be exposed to any deductible.

Motion: To set the 2019 Employee Health Insurance option as the BRS Option B BCBS plan, funded 85% town and 15% employee, combined with a 100% town-funded Health Reimbursement Account. Made by Ms. Swasey; second by Ms. Willis. Passed unanimously.

Consideration of FY2020 Better Roads Grant Application

The town, with the assistance of CVRPC, has developed an application for a Category B (erosion control/stormwater management) FY2020 VTrans Better Roads grant. The project involves drainage improvements along about 1,200 feet of Horn of the Moon Road from the east side of the Bushey property to just west of the westerly Sanders Circle intersection. The grant would cover \$20,000 of the estimated \$50,000 project cost.

Motion: To authorize TA Johnson to sign and submit the application for a Category B FY2020 VTrans Better Roads grant. Made by Ms. Swasey; second by Mr. Troia. Passed unanimously.

Consideration of Reimbursement Requests to VTrans for:

- **Quaker Road Culvert Replacement Structures Grant**
 - The culvert replacement/upsizing project, funded under a 90/10 FY2017 VTrans structures grant, was completed in September at a cost of \$133,255.
 - **Motion: To authorize TA Johnson to submit the \$119,929.77 reimbursement request for VTrans grant BC 1773.** Made by Mr. Troia; second by Ms. Swasey. Passed unanimously.
 - Board members signed the TA 65 form required as part of the reimbursement request.
- **Snow Hill Road Stormwater Management Better Roads Grant**
 - The erosion control/stormwater management project on the north side of Snow Hill Road between Kelton and Guyette Roads was completed in August at a final cost of \$27,728. With all invoices now paid, the town is ready to submit a reimbursement request for the full \$20,000 in grant funding awarded by VTrans under the FY2019 Better Roads program. No board action is necessary.

Consideration of SAM.gov Entity Administrator Letter

The town, like any entity wanting to access federal funds through grants (and other reasons not usually associated with municipalities), has to keep its DUNS federal registration up to date. TA Johnson annually renews the registration, which usually is just a check to ensure that the town information is still accurate. This year a new set of security protocols were instituted. Among them was the requirement that the entity formally acknowledge that the person handling the renewal (which was completed last week) is authorized to do so. The town has 30 days post renewal to send in the mandated appointment of Entity Administrator form letter.

Motion: To authorize Chair Gardner to sign the letter designating TA Johnson as the Entity Administrator for the DUNS registration process. Made by Ms. Swasey; second by Mr. Troia. Passed unanimously.

Update on Smith Lawsuit Against Town

As part of the Smith response to the town's motion to dismiss (the judge has not yet ruled on the motion; Montpelier's prior dismissal motion was granted), the plaintiffs have requested leave to amend the complaint and add TA Johnson individually in his role as E-911 Coordinator. If the amendment is allowed and TA Johnson is added, he'll need separate legal counsel. The town will be responsible for the cost. VLCT, as the town's insurer, denied coverage for the original lawsuit due to

the absence of a specific damage claim. If the amended complaint is allowed, it appears VLCT will offer coverage.

Update on Old LaPerle Farm Property Committee Regarding A Real Estate Proposal for Hodgeman Parcel

Chair Gardner, who also chairs the LaPerle Committee, explained that the committee is continuing to investigate the parcel as a potential addition to the abutting town-owned LaPerle farm property.

Discussion on Formation of a Committee to Handle Potential Upgrade Project at Town Garage Property

It has become apparent that there are a number of concerns involving the town garage property that need examination. Among them are the dearth of cold or heated equipment storage space, an uncovered and somewhat uncontrolled sand pile, aging infrastructure elements, and potential drainage/erosion problems. Mr. Troia, wearing his “chair of the Capital Improvement Committee” hat, informed the board that the committee has ranked an undefined upgrade project at the garage parcel as one of top importance to the town. The board will schedule a longer agenda item for this issue during one of its November meetings.

Warrants

Members signed warrant.

Other Business

Town Administrator Report:

- Update on Recreation Board’s Soccer Jamboree Kerfuffle:
 - The big all-WCSU schools jamboree for grades 1 – 6 is being held at the EM fields on Saturday, October 20th. An athletic director that represents Berlin and Calais offered to run a separate end-of-year event for pre-K and K students. There were concerns raised about a same-day event in a different location, but ruffled feathers seem to have been smoothed out.
 - During the general discussion on the issue, one thing became clear: WCSU elementary schools Berlin, Calais, Rumney, & Doty have all reverted to the school-employed athletic director methodology for managing certain sports programs. This protocol was essentially abandoned a decade ago. East Montpelier/EMES is now somewhat out of sync. This issue will be revisited.
- Central VT Regional Planning Commission’s Latest Round of Transportation Planning Project Funding:
 - Last December the town’s request for a study of the Towne Hill Road/US Rte. 2 intersection area was rejected (landed third in the submitted project rankings). It is being considered again this year under the same program – unfortunately the #2 project is also in the running.
- Central VT Solid Waste Management District Annual Budget Process:
 - Public hearing will be held October 24th, 5:00 p.m. at the ARCC, 540 N. Main Street in Barre.

- Next Selectboard Meeting (November 6th):
 - CVSMD Executive Director Bruce Westcott will be here for the annual conversation about the district operations and solid waste issues in general.
 - Revolving Loan Advisory Committee will provide update on progress towards development of a town program for use of the Revolving Loan Fund.
 - Bob Klein will provide an update on the Central VT Internet communications union district.
- Meeting Schedule:
 - October 29th 6:30 pm Board of Tax Abatement meeting
 - October 26th 8:30 am 2018 State Government Municipal Day at National Life
 - November 5th 6:30 pm Regular Selectboard meeting
 - November 6th 7am – 7pm General election at EMES
 - November 19th 6:30 pm Regular Selectboard meeting

Zoning Administrator Report:

- 2 new zoning permit applications have been submitted since the October 1st board meeting. There have been 45 total applications so far this year.
- The next DRB meeting is tentatively set for November 6th; no applications have been received as yet.

Motion: To adjourn. Made by Ms. Willis; second by Mr. Troia. Passed unanimously.
Meeting adjourned 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Bruce Johnson, Town Administrator

Approved: November 5, 2018 East Montpelier Selectboard meeting