

**East Montpelier Selectboard Meeting APPROVED (03/04/19) MINUTES
February 18, 2019 at the Town Office**

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

Others present: Julie Potter, chair of the East Montpelier Planning Commission (PC) and Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC). Eric Blaisdell, *Times Argus*. Renée Carpenter, Gabrielle Malina, and Becca Schrader, Revolving Loan Advisory Committee. Soren Pfeiffer, prospective board member of the East Montpelier Senior Living Initiative (EMSLI); Ms. Carpenter also represents EMSLI.

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Seth Gardner called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Additions to the agenda

Discussion of the Intersection of Towne Hill Road and Gallison Hill Road

Review of Minutes

Motion: I move to approve the January 21, 2019 minutes as submitted. Made: Mr. Troia. Second: Ms. Willis. 5-0

Public comment

None

B. CONVERSATION WITH STATE REPRESENTATIVE KIMBERLY JESSUP

The discussion was cancelled at Ms. Jessup's request; we will try to reschedule.

C. DISCUSSION OF THE INTERSECTION OF TOWNE HILL ROAD AND GALLISON HILL ROAD

Ms. Swasey received an inquiry from a townspeople asking about what came of the study done on how to improve safety at this intersection. Of that study's recommendations, so far the town has implemented improved roadside mowing of the intersection corners so it's easier to see further on Towne Hill Road. And the snow banks are now pushed back so pedestrians don't need to be in the road. Mainly, the SB decided to review the study's conclusions at a later date, in conjunction with the repaving of Towne Hill Road.

D. CONVERSATION WITH PC AND CVRPC CHAIR JULIE POTTER

Ms. Potter provided an update on CVRPC activities, as she customarily does this time of year.

She followed up a previous discussion of CVRPC finances by noting the budget is \$1.3 million for the current fiscal year; 6% of that from municipal dues, and just over half from project-specific grants. The organization is stable financially now, she said, and is making slow but steady progress in replenishing reserves that were depleted a few years ago.

There has been some staff turnover. They have hired a new emergency management planner, Jonathan DeLaBruere. They are working on hiring an entry-level land-use planner. They've added a very capable office manager, and accounting functions are outsourced.

The regional plan was recently amended to incorporate new regional energy plan and forest integrity piece.

There's also current work on a stormwater master plan for three towns, including East Montpelier. This will help with creating the town's hazard mitigation plan.

There is renewed emphasis on education and training. For example, there has been some training this month on dealing with emerald ash borer. CVRPC is also resuming roundtable discussions on planning and zoning.

CVRPC executive director Bonnie Waninger is making an effort to get the board of commissioners engaged in commenting on policy proposed in state plans, e.g. river tactical basin plans.

CVRPC is also picking up project management for some town projects: hiring contractors, etc. This allows the projects to be managed by someone with expertise at the regional level.

Switching gears to the East Montpelier Planning Commission, Ms. Potter noted the PC had completed the town plan. They are now working on updating zoning. It will be a complete rewrite, changing the substance, clarifying some things, and making it easier to read. At the moment, they are working on districts, and that's hard. They want districts that better reflect what's on the ground. And they are wrestling with how to promote development in the village without precluding development elsewhere. They expect to issue a draft this spring for feedback.

There is turnover on the PC, too. Norman Hill is stepping off; Zach Sullivan is on ballot to replace him. Ray Stout is moving out of town and has resigned; the PC is looking for candidates to recommend to the SB for appointment, after town meeting day. They plan to interview candidates at the March 7 meeting.

E. UPDATE ON LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN DEVELOPMENT

For the town to be eligible for assistance from FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) for projects that can help East Montpelier's infrastructure become more sustainable and disaster-resistant, a FEMA-approved Hazard Mitigation Plan is required. FEMA says such a plan focuses "efforts on the hazards, disaster-prone areas and...appropriate mitigation actions."

Mr. Johnson presented a schedule for developing the town's plan with the assistance of CVRPC's Jonathan DeLaBruere. Mr. DeLaBruere is creating a survey for release at town forum. The SB will discuss survey results at a meeting with him.

The last time the town updated its hazard mitigation plan was six years ago, also with CVRPC's assistance. That time, due to a state grant to CVRPC, the assistance was provided free to the town. Now it will cost three to four thousand dollars for CVRPC's assistance.

An upcoming milestone is a "team meeting" on March 18 to identify priority hazards – this will be part of the Selectboard meeting.

F. DISCUSSION WITH REVOLVING LOAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (RLAC)

Committee Chair Gabrielle Malina presented a committee memo detailing suggestions for moving forward with use of the Sandy Pines Mobile Home Park block grant repayment funds (the Revolving Loan Fund). While the committee has not been able to achieve a quorum lately to vote on recommendation, she presented a new option, which is to disband the current committee and to have the SB take on the RLAC's functions, perhaps with the assistance of an advisor. Committee member Becca Schrader said she was willing to serve as the advisor, and her day job is doing similar work.

The SB was told, also, that the use of the available funds for the development of a lot as the proposed location of a Central Vermont Habitat for Humanity duplex build project in the village is now an option, based on communications with the Ann Kroll at the Agency of Commerce and Community Development.

The committee continues to recommend that the town adopt the draft Revolving Loan Fund Policies and Procedures document. The SB agreed to tweak the document to represent the new structure with the SB taking on the role of RLAC and to review it at the next meeting. The SB accepted Ms. Schrader's offer to serve as advisor.

G. DISCUSSION ON EMSLI'S PROPOSED USE OF GRANT FUNDING

EMSLI is proposing to use a portion of its town-provided grant, from the Revolving Loan Fund, for architectural

services as part of its evaluation of the Blueberry Hill Commons property. The grant language states: "The grant is for EMSLI permit and permit application processing costs for permitting a parcel of land in East Montpelier for a senior living facility. It is also for payment of professional services and advice."

Renée Carpenter said EMSLI, Twin Valley Senior Center, and Blueberry Hill Commons owners signed a Memorandum of Understanding that the groups intend to work on a project expanding the senior center complex and perhaps creating more housing there.

Soren Pfeffer, a prospective member of the EMSLI board, said he did a full walk-through of the Blueberry Hill Commons building with the owner and the director of the senior center. The proposal is to pay for someone to draft plans of the existing building, initially, so they have a better basis for discussing future options.

After some discussion, the SB came to a consensus that it views professional services to create drawings of the existing buildings at Blueberry Hill Common as an acceptable use of the EMSLI grant agreement. Other proposed professional services it considers an acceptable use of the grant include architectural design services, financial analysis, and engineering analysis for septic capacity.

H. DISCUSSION ON DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Recreation Board is evaluating the possibility of using Facebook, Twitter, etc. for communication to program users (not two-way communication). The board would like to know what guidelines it would be working under. The town has no such policy. The SB will review Vermont League of Cities and Towns' model policy and revisit it at a future meeting.

I. CONSIDERATION OF CAI TECHNOLOGIES TAX MAP UPDATE CONTRACT

This is the standard agreement for tax map updates. The \$1,500 cost is a significant decrease (from \$1,950 last year) to reflect the fact CAI will no longer do an owner index update, a determination made as part of the online mapping project last year.

Motion: I move to approve the CAI agreement for tax map updates for \$1,500. Made: Mr. Etnier. Second: Mr. Troia. 5-0.

J. CONSIDERATION OF CERTIFICATE OF NO APPEAL OR SUIT PENDING FOR 2018 GRAND LIST

For the first time in years the town has no outstanding appeals of grand list assessments. In compliance with 32 V.S.A. §4155, the Listers and Selectboard members certify this fact. Board members signed the form to certify it.

K. LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWALS

There were applications for two renewals of the standard second-class licenses to sell:

Dudley's Store
Plainfield Hardware

The renewal forms were signed by SB members.

There was also an application for a Special Event Permit: Caledonia Spirits at Morse Farm on March 24, 2019. The SB authorized the town clerk to sign it.

L. WORK SESSION FOR 2019 TOWN FORUM AND MEETING

The SB discussed how to prepare for Town Forum (9:30 am on Saturday, March 2) and Town Meeting (9:30 am on Tuesday, March 5).

M. WARRANTS

Signed.

N. OTHER BUSINESS

S.103; Bill to Alter Association Health Plans

The town's new health plan offering to our employees is an Association Health Plan through BRS (Business Resources Services). A change in federal rules allowed such plans to be offered again. S.103 is designed to blunt the benefit of association plans for small employers by requiring the premium rating be based on the employer size, not the group size. This change would likely increase our premium significantly. The town has been asked by BRS to register opposition with our state legislators. Board members decided to carefully monitor the bill's progress.

Meeting Schedule Changes in April

As was true last year, currently the meetings in April are scheduled for the 1st and 15th, the second of which is during school spring break. A simple resolution is to shift both regular meetings, one to the 8th and the other to the 22nd. The SB agreed to make the change.

Meeting Schedule:

February 19, 2019	6:30 pm	WCUUSD first school meeting at U-32
March 2, 2019	9:30 am	Town forum at East Montpelier Elementary School (EMES)
March 4, 2019	6:30 pm	Selectboard regular meeting
March 5, 2019	9:30 am	Town meeting at EMES
March 18, 2019	6:30 pm	Selectboard regular meeting

Zoning Administrator Report

9 permit applications so far in 2019.

The next Development Review Board meeting will be held March 12, 2019; 2 warned hearings for final plan review of a proposed 4-lot reconfiguration/subdivision of the 3-parcel Abrams complex at 925 Center Road and a proposed 2-lot subdivision of the Coburn property at 139 Daggett Road

O. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: I move to adjourn. Made: Ms. Willis. Second: Mr. Troia. 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.