

SELECTBOARD MEETING

DRAFT Minutes

April 11, 2019

7:00pm EMFD Station 2

JOINT MEETING OF THE CALAIS SELECTBOARD, EAST MONTPELIER SELECTBOARD and EMFD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

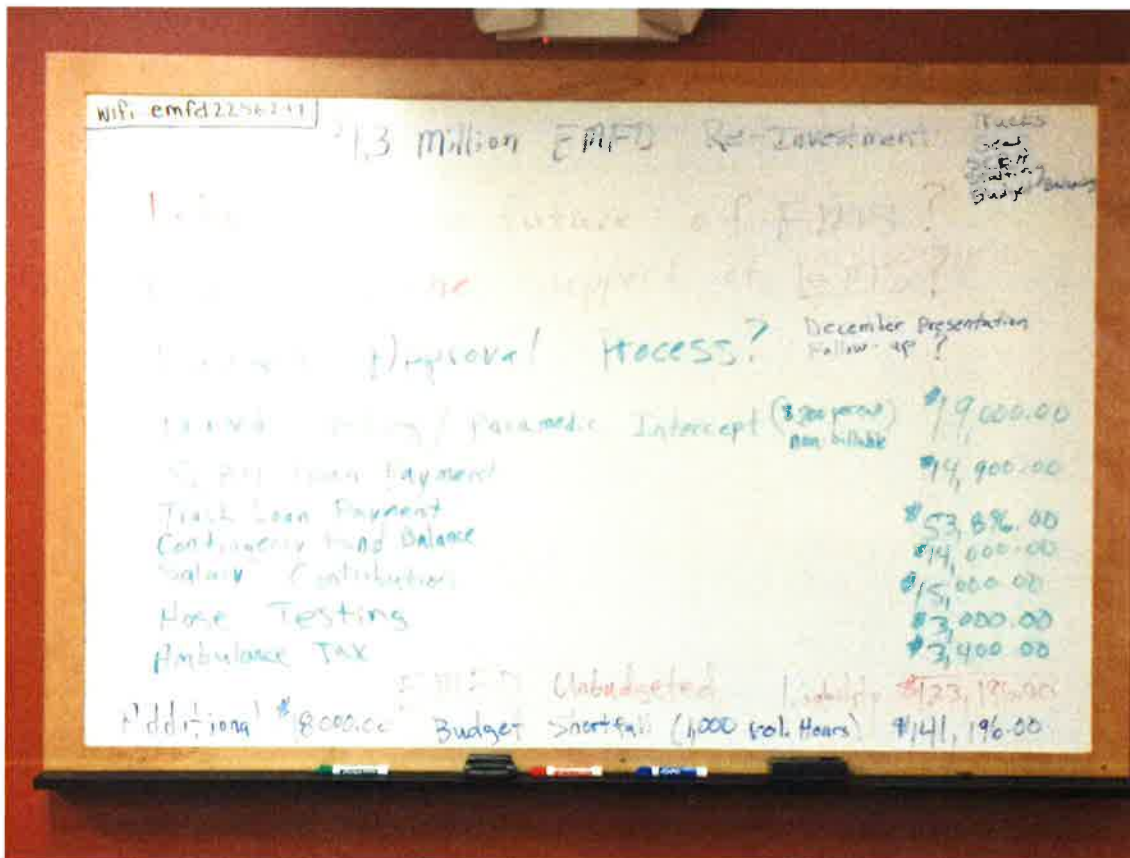
Financial Review, Budget Discussion and General Update

Attending: Calais Selectboard Members: Denise Wheeler, Sharon Winn Fannon, Clif Emmons and Rose Pelchuck; East Montpelier Selectboard Member: Seth Gardner; Bruce Johnson, East Montpelier Town Administrator; EMFD Board Members: Ty Rolland, Chief, Toby Talbot, President, Sandy Conti, Jason Cote-Wong, and Albert Petrella, Board Members and Judy Woodbeck, EMFD Treasurer/Administrative Assistant.

Denise Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm for the Calais Selectboard and advised there would be a few more agenda items for the Calais Selectboard at the conclusion of this Joint Meeting. No public comment or changes to the agenda were heard.

Ty Rolland had no agenda to present and posed two questions to the Selectboard as follows:
What does EMS in Vermont look like?
What is the support of EMS by the Selectboard?

Ty referenced the articles he circulated via email regarding departments in Vermont going out of business. Ty also referenced the white board (seen below) regarding EMFD financials/budget.



Discussion ensued. Ty Rolland blames the Selectboards for cutting the EMFD FY2020 budget when their proposed budget did not include all the expenses EMFD expected to incur, leaving the Department with a projected revenue shortfall. In fact, the joint Selectboards did not cut their proposed budget by \$18,000.00, rather agreed that \$18,000 would come from ambulance revenue before putting away funds in the Capital Reserve Fund. Seth Gardner said, "This is poor communication as far as I'm concerned" referring to the Department not letting the Selectboards know all the costs of doing business. Sharon Winn remarked Ty made an independent decision to not include all these expenses (shown above) because he thinks it's going to come off better to the decision makers (the Selectboards) when presenting the FY2020 budget.

Ty Rolland responded by saying, "Our focus is not on the budget, it is where we are going forward". Ty added the Department is saving to buy the new truck and fund the budget.

Denise Wheeler stated, "Just for the record, there is not an unlimited pot of money, we cannot afford to keep going up." Denise suggested thinking of the big picture, work closely with Woodbury Fire Department and others to find a solution to save money and still provide the high level of service. Ty Rolland noted hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent to consolidate and form a regional dispatch service in this area and still haven't been able to – that's an example of regionalization. Sharon Winn said, "The question isn't what's the future of EMS but what is the future of EMFD?" "What is the best way to provide emergency services to residents?" Sharon added. Sharon asked EMFD to model an assumption to provide emergency services, another model and a different one; then the Selectboards will be well informed, understand how they work and be able to choose going forward. Toby Talbot said, "EMFD is prepared to staff for a timely response with nine years of experience and have staff in place to go."

The Selectboards were aware of higher salary costs to fund the ambulance service as discussed at the last Joint Selectboard Meeting. Bruce Johnson stated, "We didn't cut your budget, we shifted against existing capital funds." Sharon Winn again asked for different models on paper, for example with a 15-minute response time, 30-minute response time and 45-minute response time. Toby Talbot said, "Two paid staff on days with 1-2 minute response time plus travel time – that's the model-system EMFD is trying to provide." Toby is concerned as we keep using the buffer, it drops the capital reserve fund.

Denise Wheeler made two requests of EMFD for the next meeting. Firstly, have a printed agenda; secondly provide financial reports ahead of time for the Selectboards to review. Denise expressed how really disappointed she was with the way this meeting came about tonight and hopes the next meeting will provide a productive discussion. Bruce Johnson did say that Toby provided the model we are looking for. Sharon Winn responded by saying, "It's a staffing model, not a service model. If the industry norm is only about staffing and not service, maybe you need to tie it to service." Denise noted that Toby Talbot only goes to Bruce Johnson with some discussions and not Calais. Denise asked, "Why can't we have Woodbury Fire Department at the table; it would be a better way instead of doing things in silos."

This part of the meeting concluded at 8:00 pm with Sharon Winn saying "I would accept thank you by having support of a positive working relationship." Bruce Johnson and Seth Gardner suggested and Denise Wheeler accepted the invitation for a Joint Selectboard Meeting on May 13, 2019. Afterwards, some financial documents were provided with no explanations, including the EMFD Vehicle Capital Planning Budget.

The Calais Selectboard continued with a few more items