

**Selectboard Memo  
January 11, 2021 SB Meeting**

**Additions to Agenda**

- **Discussion on North Street No Parking Signs for Nordic Trails**
  - A number of handmade no parking signs have been installed along North Street & Sparrow Farm Road to try to discourage parking by those trying to take advantage of recreational opportunities
  - These are not officially recognized by the town; the town’s traffic ordinance prohibits traffic signs that do not have prior SB approval before installation

**Road Foreman Report**

- **Update on Trucks**
  - The 2012 Freightliner is officially owned by the town and was effectively utilized for the two storm events around New Years
  - The 2015 International is now back at the town garage and is operational
- **Proposed Personnel Policy Amendments**
  - The road crew is requesting consideration of two amendments to the personnel policy:
    - The town has no officially recognized holiday between New Years and Town Meeting Day; the state and many municipalities recognize both Martin Luther King Jr. Day (third Monday in January) and Presidents’ Day (third Monday in February); the town has 9 official holidays whereas state employees have 12
    - The overtime policy expressly limits the ability to utilize sick, vacation and holiday leave in determining the hours “actually worked” to meet the 40 hours of work requirement before overtime will be paid; the inability to utilize sick leave is considered an unfair and dangerous element
  - TA Johnson suggests also acknowledging the standard use of Veterans Day as a floating holiday for use during November & December

**Discussion on FY2022 Budget Development**

- **Highway Operations**
  - Road Foreman Perry is requesting a mainly level funded highway operations budget for FY2022 with four exceptions:
    - \$5,000 increase in the gravel line to make up for lost purchasing power over the past couple of years
    - \$5,000 increase in the vehicle equipment/repairs sector due to rising costs and the fact the town consistently overruns the current \$60,000 level
    - Two small increases for standard town garage expenses due to rising costs:
      - \$200 increase in the electricity line
      - \$500 increase in the rubbish line
- **FY20200 EMFD Ambulance & Emergency Services Budget Request**  
The East Montpelier Fire Department’s FY2022 budget request:

Service	Calais		East Montpelier		Total	
	FY2022 Request	% Increase over FY21	FY2022 Request	% Increase over FY21	FY2022 Request	% Increase over FY21
Fire	\$ 61,038	-5.9%	\$122,076	-5.9%	\$183,114	-5.9%
Ambulance	\$111,580	17.3%	\$223,159	17.3%	\$334,739	17.3%
<b>Town Total</b>	<b>\$172,618</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>\$345,235</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>\$517,853</b>	<b>7.9%</b>

The ambulance service budget includes other revenue items: contracted amounts from Plainfield (\$53,624, up 3% from FY2021) and Marshfield (\$43,709, up 3%) but nothing from off-the-top EMFD ambulance service revenue (down \$15,000).

**Total FY2022 Ambulance Service Budget:                   \$432,072 (up 9.4% from FY2021)**  
**Total FY2022 All Services Budget:                         \$615,186 (up 4.3% from FY2021)**

At its December 28, 2020 meeting the Calais Selectboard approved the operating budget requests as presented

➤ **Review of Draft FY2022 Budget**

- Includes all elements of highway and EMFD requests; also includes updates to revenue lines to track closer to expected receipts and some formerly unknown budget requests, such as the Washington County dues (down \$740), Recreation Board (level), and Cemetery Committee (level); current year expenses & revenues are updated to today
- Current draft projects a 1.84 cent tax increase (2.87% increase)

**Discussion on 2021 Town Meeting**

➤ **Consideration of Options for Conducting 2021 Town Meeting**

- The legislature is fast-tracking H.48, the bill designed to provide more options for holding town meeting (specifically the ability to move town meeting to a later, hopefully less pandemic restricted, time) and allow sending absentee ballots to all registered voters; current thinking is that this bill may become law within a week
- Under Act 162, the board already has the one-time ability to shift town meeting to an all-Australian Ballot affair
- If the board wants to adopt the all-Australian Ballot option, it could do so this evening; it could also signal that it supports the sending of ballots to all
  - There is currently one hiccup with the sending of ballots to all – some believe that school ballots could only be handled that way if all district towns do it; otherwise there is a perceived unfairness issue with the non-sending towns likely to have lower vote totals; this concern is being investigated at the state level; it obviously makes little sense to send out town ballots to all while not including the school ballot as part of the mailing

➤ **Discussion on 2021 Town Meeting Warning**

- Two draft warnings are presented for consideration, one in the format seen over the past two months and the other fully refined for an all-Australian Ballot town meeting
- The board should make a final decision whether to present the issue of shifting from an elected to an appointed constable
- Regardless of the decision on the constable issue, the board should decide whether to leave the second constable slot on the warning; this slot has not had a candidate for years and the write-ins are minimal; this may be a very expensive ballot to print this year and this slot is essentially wasted space
- The board should consider how it wants to present the standard property tax protocol article, with or without a slant toward allowing postmarks
- The Conservation Fund Advisory Committee recommends no appropriation article for the fund this year, so that proposed article has been removed
- Also removed was the article slot reserved for a specialized tax protocol as no such article was developed and the board has shown no desire to move forward with such an article this year
- The all-Australian version also removes all non-votable articles, such as accepting reports of the officers and other business; this version also includes a proposed agenda and time for a Zoom informational meeting utilizing the VLCT-recommended format

## **Development of 2020 Selectboard Report for Annual Report**

- The board needs to determine desired topics to include in the report

## **Discussion on Town Management in Light of COVID-19**

- Standard statement: There have been no changes since the board's last meeting; the town office remains closed to the public, with researchers/attorneys allowed to access vault materials under the terms originally set up before all in-person actions were banned – one at a time and only by appointment from Town Clerk Laquerre; mandated protocols (masks; health survey; etc.) are in effect for such appointments

## **Warrants**

### **➤ January 11, 2021 Regular Warrant for Approval**

- Just like other recent warrants, this evening's regular warrant needs to be approved as normal, which generally is shown by a quorum of board member signatures; given our current limitations, the board should once again approve the warrant and authorize TA Johnson (in the absence of Chair Gardner) to sign to that effect
- This warrant includes the final payment to JP Sicard, the sidewalk project's contractor

## **Town Administrator Report**

- Washington County Budget Meeting:
  - The annual budget meeting for the FY2022 Washington County budget is set for this Friday, January 15, 2021, at noon by Zoom remote conferencing services
- Common Level of Appraisal Report
  - Town's CLA rose slightly to 94.18% from 93.82%
- Update on AT&T Cell Tower Proposal:
  - AT&T has formally withdrawn the advance notice filing and has no plans to move forward with the Jacobs Road project
  - The public information meeting has been canceled
- Ginny Burley has been officially appointed to another 3-year term as town health officer
- Meeting Schedule:
  - January 13, 2021      7:00 pm      BCA meeting
  - January 18, 2021      6:30 pm      Selectboard regular meeting
  - January 25, 2021      6:30 pm      Selectboard special meeting
  - February 1, 2021      6:30 pm      Selectboard regular meeting

## **Zoning Administrator Report**

- 2 new applications since the December 21<sup>st</sup> SB meeting; 53 total applications in 2020 and 2 so far in 2021
- The next DRB meeting is scheduled for February 2, 2021; there are two anticipated hearings, one for a 3-lot subdivision/reconfiguration of the Messier East Hill Road parcels and the second for a dog daycare facility at 1678 US Rte. 2