

**Selectboard Memo  
July 12, 2021 SB Meeting**

**Discussion on Winter Parking Restrictions Along North Street and Sparrow Farm Road**

- Geoff Beyer, the town resident who served as the point person for this past winter's Nordic signage discussion, will be here to review, along with the board and Road Foreman Perry, the 2020/2021 test run of signage attempting to control parking by Nordic enthusiasts and potentially work on the development of a plan for the upcoming season and beyond
- If consensus is reached on a desired parking plan, there appear to be four signage options:
  - No signage – let word of mouth control unwanted parking patterns
  - Low-key, very informal signage like this past year
  - Higher quality but still informal signage
  - The full monty – proper regulatory signage with traffic ordinance support; if this is the choice, the board needs to take action quickly to amend the traffic ordinance to have everything in place in time for winter

**Consideration of Ash Tree Management Plan**

- Resilient Roads Committee Chair Jeff Cueto and Town Tree Warden Paul Cate will be here to present the proposed final East Montpelier Ash Tree Management Plan for consideration by the board; this plan is a tweaked and updated version of the interim plan the town has been operating under for over a year; a major component of the plan is the fiscal element that ensures annual funding for tree removal/treatment/replacement (see page 20); the FY2022 SB budget includes \$15,000 toward this effort; the great unknown is what level of grant funding will be available to supplement the town funding; we've received \$22,000 over the past two years; the FY2022 grant program has not yet been announced

**Town Treasurer Monthly Financial Report**

**Don Welch, Town Treasurer**

- Treasurer Welch will present both the standard monthly report for the period ending June 30<sup>th</sup> plus a second report showing the current, updated but still fluid, end-of-FY2021 budget status

**Review of Treasurer's Financial Management Questionnaire**

- 24 VSA §872 requires the SB to review the town treasurer's financial management questionnaire (a form provided by the VT State Auditor), describing the town's internal financial control mechanisms; there is no change from last year – either in the form or the answers
- If comfortable, the board should authorize Chair Gardner to sign the form

**Discussion on Capital Improvement Committee's Annual Request for Information on Future Capital Projects**

- The Capital Improvement Committee annually requests town entities to list potential projects to allow the committee to properly plan for the projects; possible projects for the board to include:
  - **Potential Town Garage Upgrades**
    - A committee was set up to study the situation and determine a potential project scope; not much progress to date
  - **Potential Town Office Upgrades**
    - The town office is on borrowed time – the last major work was done in the mid-1980s; at the time it was expected that the town would gain 15 years of usage before having to consider a new office concept; 35 years later ...

## **Preview of 2021-2022 Property Tax Rates**

- The state has released the education rates for the upcoming tax year:
  - Homestead rate: \$1.8929, down 0.0714 from FY2021 (3.8% decrease)
  - Non-homestead rate: \$1.7352, down 0.0236 from FY2021 (1.4% decrease)
- Using a current estimate of \$3,100,000 for the grand list (0.81% increase), the projected tax rates for the 2021-22 tax year:
  - Homestead rate: \$2.4818, down 0.0563 from FY2021 (2.2% decrease)
  - Non-homestead rate: \$2.3719, down 0.0085 from FY2021 (0.4% decrease)
- The tax rates are expected to be set at the August 2, 2021 board meeting

## **Consideration of VTrans Grant Agreements**

- **FY2022 Better Roads Category D Grant for County Road Culvert**
  - VTrans has awarded the town a \$60,000 Better Roads Category D grant for replacing the damaged and undersized County Road culvert located at the Mallory Brook crossing north of Barnes Road and south of Powder Horn Glen Road; the project is estimated at \$168,000, so this is very much a partial grant, supplemented by the additional funding listed below; if comfortable, board should authorize TA Johnson to complete agreement
- **FY2022 VTrans Structures Grant for County Road Culvert**
  - VTrans has awarded the town a \$24,772,62 structures grant for replacing the “North of Barnes” County Road culvert; if comfortable, board should authorize TA Johnson to complete agreement

## **Discussion on Emergency Services Agreement [Potential Executive Session]**

- Calais submitted notice of non-renewal on March 30, 2021, seeking to negotiate a new emergency services agreement prior to the expiration of the current agreement at midnight on September 1, 2021; a letter dated May 25, 2021 and received by email May 30, 2021 provided reasoning for the notice and proposed agreement changes
- If the board desires executive session: 1 V.S.A. §313(a)(1)(A) contracts; requires a specific finding that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body at a substantial disadvantage; if such a finding is made, a second motion is then necessary to formally enter executive session
- At its June 21<sup>st</sup> meeting the SB reviewed a Calais-provided draft agreement that included changes to current terms:
  - Article 1 has two changes:
    - Notice of non-renewal needs to be submitted no later than 3 months in advance of the agreement’s renewal date; current agreement requires 5 months advance notice
    - The agreement term shifts from successive 1-year rollovers to a maximum length of three years
  - Article 6 is completely rewritten:
    - The existing methodology mandates different protocols for EMFD annual operating budgets, which are supposed to be presented as part of the town’s general fund budget, and EMFD capital expenses, which are handled in a manner at the discretion of the individual town’s Selectboard
    - The new language eliminates the distinction and leaves presentation of both to the discretion of the individual town’s Selectboard
- At the request of Chair Gardner, TA Johnson developed a draft that does the following:
  - Attempts to clarify but keep the intent of the Calais changes to Article 1

- Keeps the Calais-proposed changes to Article 6 but attempts to create an obligation for the two boards to support the operating budget figures agreed upon between the boards and EMFD
- The board's stated intent is to provide a response to the Calais proposal after this meeting and then, if necessary, set up joint sessions with Calais to work on the agreement before reaching out to EMFD

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

- The municipal offices have been operating under the latest SB order since June 22<sup>nd</sup>; one in-person (with a somewhat successful remote component) has been held – the July 1<sup>st</sup> Planning Commission meeting; there is no current push from employees or committees for greater freedom/flexibility; the office remains open for normal services with limited internal building access

### **Liquor Licenses: Caledonia Spirits Catering & Special Event Applications**

- The Maple Roots Festival is being held at Morse Farm on Saturday, July 24<sup>th</sup>; Caledonia Spirits is requesting a catering permit for the event; Caledonia Spirits, on behalf of itself and Good Measure Brewing, is also requesting a special event sales permit for the festival
- If the board is okay with the requests, there should be a motion to approve the requests and to authorize the town clerk to sign off on the approval

### **Warrants**

#### ➤ **July 12, 2021 Regular Warrant for Approval**

- Since we're back to in-person meetings, this warrant should be signed by all board members present
- The annual CAI webmap fee (\$2,400 – no change) is on this meeting's expense warrant; this is the first year for "auto renewal" of the underlying agreement
- There will almost certainly be a need for a special "between meetings" warrant for the Peoples Bank credit card bills, likely next Monday, which Chair Gardner can handle along with his regular payroll duties

### **Personnel Matters [Potential Executive Session]**

- TA Johnson vacation leave carryover request; if executive session is desired, it should be under 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3)

### **Town Administrator Report**

- Update on County Road Project:
  - All required wetlands and stream alteration permits for the two culvert replacement projects are finally in "draft permit" status; the latest out-of-notice-period date is August 9<sup>th</sup>, which by default becomes the target date for commencement of the culvert projects
- Meeting Schedule:
 

○ August 2, 2021	6:30 pm	Selectboard regular meeting
○ August 12, 2021	7:00 pm	Tentative – EMFD update at ESF
○ August 23, 2021	6:30 pm	Selectboard "special" regular meeting

### **Zoning Administrator Report**

- 4 new applications since the June 21<sup>st</sup> SB meeting; 45 total so far in 2021
- The next DRB meeting is scheduled for July 20, 2021; this meeting is for the continuation of the hearing for Application 21-032, the building & business expansion at 1528 US Rte. 2 (Demers Auto & Green Mountain Day Spa)