

Approved February 17, 2015

**TOWN OF CORNWALL
SELECT BOARD MEETING**

Cornwall Town Office
February 3, 2015

PRESENT: Ben Wood, Ben Marks, Magna Dodge, Sue Johnson, Stu Johnson

ALSO PRESENT: John Burton, Mary Conlon, Jack Carter, Bobbie Carnwath

PUBLIC MEETING FOR THE CAPITAL PLAN AND BUDGET

The annual meeting for the Capital Plan and Budget was called to order at 7:03 pm.

Sue Johnson explained that Cornwall is required by State statute to have an annual public meeting to review and approve the capital budget. The Town has a capital fund for equipment and a capital fund for buildings. The purpose of planning and setting aside funds each year for anticipated expenditures for equipment and buildings is to achieve a fairly even tax rate, avoiding peaks and valleys.

The Capital Plan and Budget Committee has met several times over the past few months, to study the Town's capital needs. In 2014, a new plow truck was purchased. This year, a Ford 250 pick up truck will be purchased. The balance in the equipment fund will roll over.

Building fund priorities in 2014 included drilling a new well at the Town Hall and insulation of the cellar. A new roof for the Town Hall will go on in the spring of 2015. A public meeting is planned for April 8th or 9th, to hear citizens' views on use of the Town Hall, to inform plans for an addition to the building and to make the 2nd floor ADA compliant.

The Committee recommends that both capital funds be level funded for FY 2016 – \$130,000 for equipment and \$100,000 for buildings.

Ben Marks asked if installing a cold climate heat pump as a heat source has been considered.

Sue Johnson said yes, the Committee has discussed it and that discussion will be continued at the April public meeting.

Ben Marks added that the money slated for air conditioning in the capital fund budget could be used for a cold climate heat pump.

John Burton asked about the contents of the vault.

Sue Johnson replied that the vault contains all the Town records that the Town is required to keep.

John Burton asked who decides priorities, such as accessibility.

Sue Johnson said that accessibility in buildings used by the public such as Cornwall's Town Hall fall under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

Bobbie Carnwath added that ADA compliance is required for new construction and buildings that are altered.

Mary Conlon suggested that by the April meeting, the Committee should have more information about the costs for an addition.

Ben Marks suggested creating an information sheet that shows money saved through having a capital plan. Sue J. will follow up.

Ben Marks MOVED / Magna Dodge SECONDED a motion to maintain level funding of the capital funds - \$130,000 for equipment and \$100,000 for buildings - on the General Fund budget for FY 2016, as suggested by the Capital Plan and Budget Committee.

MOTION PASSED.

Ben Marks thanked the Capital Plan and Budget Committee for their service to the Town and special thanks to Mary Conlon for all the work she does in conjunction with the spreadsheets.

The Capital Plan and Budget meeting was adjourned at 7:20 pm.

SELECT BOARD MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 pm

Agenda – *approved with no changes*

General Fund and Highway Orders – *signed*

MINUTES

January 20, 2015 – Ben Marks MOVED /Magna Dodge SECONDED a motion to approve the minutes as distributed. **MOTION PASSED.**

CORRESPONDENCE REVIEW

- **Fair Cemetery** - Select Board received a call from an anonymous person that there is a tree down on a fence at Fair Cemetery, of longstanding concern. Ben W will call the Cemetery Commission.
- Vermont State Police will host another **crime statistics meeting** on March 19 at 6 pm and invite a representative from Cornwall to attend. In the past Sue J. has attended these meetings. If anyone else is interested, let Sue know.
- **2015 Certificate of Highway Mileage.** The board needs to complete and sign. This State certificate determines Cornwall's share of State aid for Town highways for FY 2016.
- From Vermont Department of Health – the latest **salt report** on levels at the well at the Town garage. Ben W will call Bill Johnson about testing for salt level in the well.
- Note from **Town Attorney** to inform the board about an **increase in rates.**
- From Vermont Department of Taxes, a notice that the annual report on the **2014 grand list for the entire state** is now online. Sue will direct people to the website, who are looking for this type of information.
- Letter to Select Board from **Carolyn Van Vleck** expressing her concern regarding the pipeline.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- **Bobbie Carnwath** sought clarification on what the Town is doing or not doing right now to respond to the proposed pipeline project. She also had a question about funds for legal fees for the PSB process.
- **Ben Marks** said that legal appropriation of legal fees is a line item allocated on the Town's budget. If fees exceed that amount, it will need to come from somewhere else.
- **Ben Wood** said that the board is waiting to see what happens next with Vermont Gas. The company is currently dealing with Phase I, which has been remanded back to the PSB for another review. The Town has everything in place to proceed with the PSB process, if Phase II continues.
- **Ben Marks** stated that Cornwall has not withdrawn our testimony, nor any of the motions we have made. Vermont Gas told the PSB they were not ready to proceed, because they did not have their costs in order.
- **Ben Wood** added that when we stopped, we were ready to go to trial. At the same time, our meetings with Vermont Gas resulted in a proposed term sheet, which the board discussed in a public meeting with citizens. The Town did not make any "deal" with Vermont Gas.
- **Ben Marks** said we do not need to spend a lot of time speculating about what the PSB and Vermont Gas will do next. Ben M. added he would be happy to talk with Bobbie later about why he thinks what he thinks about the PSB process and likely outcomes.
- **Bobbie Carnwath** stressed that if citizens vote again on the pipeline, the wording of the question is very important.
- **Ben Wood** said it was too early to talk about what the question will be. Right now there is no question,
- **Jack Carter** said that if there is a question, it should be made totally clear, without double negatives.
- Ben Wood said that before any vote was taken, an informational meeting will be held, or two meetings, if needed.
- **John Burton** wants to know why we put salt on the roads? it kills trees and it kills cars. John states that the Town of

Charlotte does not use salt. He would like to see the issue of salt on Town roads put on the agenda for a future meeting.

- **Ben Wood** replied that the board will put salt on the agenda of a future meeting.
- **John Burton** asked that since the Town attorney has increased his rates, is the Town looking for another lawyer? How do you know if the increased rate is a fair price?
- **Ben Wood** replied that he will look into it.

TOWN CLERK / TOWN TREASURER'S REPORT – Sue Johnson

Preparation for Town meeting is underway. The Town Report has gone off to the printer, will be back by Feb 11, so absentee balloting can proceed. There is one contested race, for the 1-year term on the Select Board.

ROAD COMMISSIONER'S REPORT – Stu Johnson

Sand shed is ½ full, so sufficient for now. Stu plans to haul in more sand, when there is a break in the weather.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Dog Ordinance**

Magna Dodge reported that progress on the dog ordinance is moving slowly, as a work in progress. The “Dog Committee” recommended adopting the VLCT model ordinance, copies of which Magna circulated. Town Attorney Jim Carroll is currently reviewing enforcement issues. Carroll has said he believes the Town is better with an ordinance than without one, even with the difficulty of enforcement. Enforcement is the open issue, along with questions such as – how long should a dog allowed to whine or bark before being considered a “nuisance”?

John Burton wondered if the Justices of the Peace could help keep the peace between neighbors in conflict over dogs.

Sue Johnson replied that by Statute, the Justices of the Peace have already busy with serving in multiple roles in Town and are volunteers.

Next step – have Jim Carroll focus on the proposed ordinance and get back to the Select Board.

- **Highway/Worksheet System**

Cornwall citizen John Burton asked that the issue of recording work done by Cornwall's highway department be on the agenda tonight. Mr. Burton is here tonight to register his complaints and make suggestions. He thinks that more detailed records should be kept.

Stu Johnson said that logs of work done each day are kept at the Town sheds. At one time, he kept more detailed records, but the Select Board at that time, did not want Stu to spend his paid time filling out detailed time sheets and worksheets.

Stu Johnson added that the integrated management plan has mandates regarding herbicides that do require detailed records and the Town is in compliance with that.

Ben Wood said that Stu is an elected official, voted in by the people and given the trust to do the best job he can. The board is pleased with the current record keeping done by the highway department. Furthermore, Stu goes way beyond expectations in his ability to save the Town money, stretching the highway dollars every year to get the job done, and done well. As a result the highway equipment budget is able to be level funded for the coming year.

John Burton said he was concerned about vegetation control records and would like to see what Stu has for records.

Ben Wood said that while Stu is our elected Road Commissioner with strong support from the citizens, not everyone has to agree. We will bring the notebooks here to the Town Office for John Burton to review. Regarding herbicides, any landowner can request no-spray on his land.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Request of Conservation Commission to increase member size.** The CCC would like to increase their board from five members to seven. The CCC is a volunteer board appointed

by the Select Board. As no member of the CCC is here tonight to answer questions, the request is tabled until someone is here to speak for the CCC.

OTHER BUSINESS

- ***Salt in the well - update.*** After extensive study of the issue, some questions remain: What is the projected cost of continuing to pump? What is the Town's obligation under the permits? What is the Town's obligation under the settlement? The board will identify sources of answers and continue to discuss at a later meeting.

Magna Dodge MOVED/ Ben Marks SECONDED a motion to adjourn the meeting. MOTION PASSED.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm

Respectfully submitted, Sharon Tierra, Clerk of the Select Board