

Approved April 21, 2015

Town of Cornwall  
Selectboard Regular Meeting  
Tuesday, March 24, 2015

**PRESENT** – Ben Wood, Ben Marks, Magna Dodge, Dave Sears, John Roberts, Sue Johnson

**ALSO PRESENT** – John Burton, Bobbie Carnwath, Mary Dodge

Town Clerk called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Quorum – *established*

*General Fund and Highway Orders – signed*

Report on Reconciled Bank Statement - *reviewed*

**AGENDA** - Ben M. MOVED / Magna D. SECONDED a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of one item in board organization– election of Vice-Chair. MOTION PASSED – 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

**BOARD ORGANIZATION**

- **Chair** - John R. nominated Ben Wood for Chair of the Select Board. Ben W. accepted the nomination and said he had also considered serving as one of two Co-Chairs. After a short discussion of the difference between having a Chair and Vice Chair versus two Co-Chairs, it was agreed that organizing with a Chair and Vice-Chair would be the best choice. John R MOVED / Ben M. SECONDED a motion to elect Ben Wood as Chair of the Select Board. MOTION PASSED - 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstained.
- **Vice Chair** – Ben W. MOVED / John R. SECONDED a motion to elect Magna Dodge as Vice-Chair of the Select Board. MOTION PASSED – 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstained.
- **Clerk of the Board** – Ben W. MOVED / Magna D. SECONDED a motion to appoint Sharon Tierra as Clerk of the Select Board. MOTION PASSED – 5 in favor, 0 opposed.
- **Meeting Schedule** – John R. MOVED / Magna D. SECONDED a motion that the regular meeting schedule for the coming year be set as follows: June, July, and August: the first Tuesday of the month at 7 pm. All other months: the first and third Tuesdays at 7 pm. Regular meetings will be held at the Town Hall. MOTION PASSED – 5 in favor. 0 opposed.
- **Newspaper for legal notices** – John R. MOVED / Magna D. SECONDED a motion to designate the Addison County Independent as the newspaper the Town will use for legal notices. MOTION PASSED – 5 in favor, 0 opposed.
- **Roberts Rules** - John R. MOVED// Ben M. SECONDED a motion to adopt Roberts Rules for Select Board meetings. MOTION PASSED – 5 in favor, 0 opposed.
- **Candidates for appointed/elected positions** - Sue J. presented the list of names of officials to be appointed. Sue has talked with everyone on the list and all are willing to serve. Jim Duclos has started to search for a candidate to replace him as Zoning Administrator, but he continues to serve, so the list should be corrected by striking the language of ZA as a vacant position. John Burton spoke up to state his interest in serving as Zoning Administrator. John R. MOVED / Ben M. SECONDED a motion to

adopt this group of officials on the list as amended. MOTION PASSED – 5 in favor, 0 opposed. Amended List Attached.

- **Road Commissioner Resolution.** Dave S. MOVED / Magna D. SECONDED a motion to approve the following resolution: “The Cornwall Select Board gives the Road Commissioner authority to manage the roads to the best of his ability using his own judgment without oversight of routine operations.” MOTION PASSED – 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

**John Burton** stated that he feels that the Select Board does not have enough oversight of the Road Commissioner. He also said that the Road Commission has been absent at a number of Select Board meetings. John then presented a copy of documentation of work done that the Road Commissioner of Charlotte provides to the Town of Charlotte and a copy of documentation of work done that Cornwall’s Road Commission provides. John wants the board to compare the 2 sets of documents, because he believes Charlotte’s system provides better information about work done. He believes if Cornwall had better information, more money could be saved.

**Ben Wood** replied that Cornwall operates differently from Charlotte. Ben stated that the board has great respect for our Road Commissioner and appreciates that he looks for the best way and least expensive way to do work on our roads. The board would not want him to spend more time on the computer, and is satisfied with the documentation he provides.

**Dave Sears** said that the Road Commissioner in Charlotte is not a Town employee. Rather he is independently contracted to do the work on subcontract status. Dave told Mr. Burton that he appreciated the fact that he brought in this information, for the board to consider. In response to Burton’s complaint about Road Commissioner’s attendance at board meetings, Dave informed Mr. Burton that the Road Commissioner in Cornwall is not required to attend Select Board meetings, although he frequently does, to provide updated information to the board.

**John Burton** questioned the legitimacy of the capital fund for equipment and then said that some people in town didn’t even seem to know what kind of truck had just been acquired. He added that the Town of Charlotte seemed much better at saving money on road expenses than Cornwall.

**Sue Johnson** replied that the capital planning and funding process includes public committee work, an annual public hearing and voter approval. The Capital Fund includes scheduled purchases and is voted on at Town Meeting. As to Mr. Burton’s comment about the lack of knowledge by some in town about the new truck, she wishes to inform him that the new truck has been in town for exactly one week.

**Ben Marks** spoke to Mr. Burton’s comment about Charlotte being better at saving money for road expenses. Because the Town budget and expenses of Charlotte are much bigger, they may be able to achieve economies of scale that a small town like Cornwall is not able to do.

**Magna Dodge** added the Cornwall and Charlotte are two very different towns in size and organization. Charlotte has full time paid administrators in many positions. To compare them is an “apples to oranges” comparison.

## MINUTES

- **February 17, 2015** Ben M. MOVED/ Dave S. SECONDED a motion to approve the minutes with the following change to one sentence under Old Business, Dog Ordinance: “*Fine would be \$50, increasing with each successive offense.*” MOTION PASSED – 4 in favor, 1 abstained.
- **March 2015 Town Meeting** – Dave S. MOVED / Magna D. SECONDED a motion to approve the Town Meeting minutes as distributed. The question of whether Town Meeting proceedings should be recorded or not, was raised, but not resolved. It was suggested that the Moderator strongly suggest that the citizens use mikes when speaking and that having a portable mike would be helpful. MOTION PASSED – 4 in favor, 1 abstained.

## CORRESPONDENCE REVIEW

- **Homeward Bound Contract** – Sue J. recommends option 2, with no limit on number of dogs, at a cost of \$550 annually. John R. MOVED/ Ben M. SECONDED a motion to approve the Homeward Bound contract under option 2 terms. MOTION PASSED – 5 in favor.
- **Town Service Officer appointment form** – was completed, designating Barbara LaFramboise as Town Service Officer.
- **Addison Solid Waste reps form** – was completed, designating Michael Hennessey as representative and Greg Dennis as alternate.
- Notice from **Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force** regarding grants – Dave S. will pass on to the Fire Department.
  - **Letter of appreciation** to the Select Board from Jim Pugh and Barbara Greenwood for the Town’s work in response to the proposed pipeline spur.
  - Notice of VLCT April 9 **construction contracts workshop** – Sue J. will pass on to the Road Commissioner.
  - **Letter from the Secretary of State** about a public hearing in Office of Professional Regulation on proposed changes affecting property inspectors – Sue J. will pass on to the Zoning Administrator.
  - Notice of **Vermont Town Forrest Centennial Celebration** – will take place during the whole year of 2015
  - **Vermont Economic Indicators Report**
  - Information from Addison County Regional Planning Commission ACRPC regarding **oversight of the municipal planning grant** the Town was awarded for the Cornwall Conservation Commission’s (CCC) natural resources survey. Bruce Hiland was the person previously designated to oversee the grant. A current Select member is needed to oversee and to officially request the money. It was decided that Ben Marks will serve in this role, with Dave Sears as alternate.
  - Courtesy notice from **Kelly Brush Foundation** that the annual Kelly Brush Ride will be held Saturday September 12, and the route will again come through Cornwall.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

- **Bobbie Carnwath**, a Cornwall Planning Commission (CPC) member, said that the CPC wants to establish a subcommittee called the Energy Committee. The Energy Committee will meet for the first time on March 30. Two members of the CPC will be on the committee, with the rest being other interested citizens. Bobbie has spoken with

people in other towns with energy committees, and has attended a statewide training conference. She said the Energy Committee would like to help the Town as well as its citizens save money. The group would like to coordinate with the capital committee and serve in an advisory role on the proposed addition to the Town Hall. Bobbie said she has been trying to communicate with the Energy Coordinator, but no strong connection has been made yet.

Ben W. suggested that the committee work with the Energy Coordinator Gary Barnett and sees no conflict between the work he is doing and what this committee would do. Dave S. would like to see a write up on the scope of the committee. Bobbie C. said that when they meet, they will first clearly define the role of the committee. In a couple of months they would like to be on the agenda and tell the board what they are doing. Ben M. said that the board will research the relationship of this committee with the Select Board, including who appoints the committee. Ben W. will talk with Gary Barnett.

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- **John Burton** voiced his opinions and complaints. He stated that there is a lot of discontent about the way the Town “is being run,” and he came to express this and to offer alternatives. He said that he is a property owner and taxpayer but is not registered to vote. The moderator at Town Meeting denied his request to speak at Town Meeting, due to his status as a non-voter. Mr. Burton questioned if Roberts Rules were being consistently used. Mr. Burton objected to the fact that the voters approved money for non-profit agencies located outside of Cornwall when it could have gone to pay fines on unpaid property taxes in Cornwall. To emphasize one of his points about property taxes, he mentioned the total dollar amount of property the Select Board pays. He believes the Town would be better served by having a Town Manager. He complained about attendance at Town Meeting and compared it to a better percentage in Charlotte. He has ideas to save the Town money, such as putting a shipping container behind the Town Hall for document storage instead of building an addition.

**John Roberts** responded that funds approved for non-profit agencies goes to local citizens, our friends and neighbors, who use their services. **Dave Sears** added that information on these services, along with numbers of Cornwall residents served, is in the Town Report.

**Ben Wood** added that many of the services help the same citizens who have difficulty paying property taxes because of limited income, while others who do not pay their taxes may have the money but choose not to pay.

**Sue Johnson** would like an apology from Mr. Burton that she “conspired” against him, as he stated in a recent email to her. She has been overwhelmed by his assault of nasty comments, and has gone out of her way to comply with his numerous requests for information.

**Dave Sears** asked Mr. Burton what his agenda is. What is he looking for from the Town? Why compare Cornwall to Charlotte?

**John Burton** – Thinks his email is now blocked through the website.

**Sue J.** said he could use the alternate email address she gave him to send messages to the Town Clerk if the technology is not working with the address he is using.

**Ben W.** – informed Mr. Burton that the Town Hall renovation will be discussed at a public meeting scheduled for April 8 at 7 pm at the school and suggested he come and listen and provide input then.

**Dave S.** suggested that John B. work with the board instead of against the board.

#### **TOWN CLERK / TOWN TREASURER'S REPORT – Sue Johnson**

- Sue attended the Community Advisory Meeting at VT State Police barracks in New Haven. New Haven barracks is fully staffed, with 11 troopers, 3 sergeants, a negotiator, and one canine unit. Crime reports in the county are available online. The Addison County Sheriff's Department has a contract with Casella Solid Waste to pick up and go through any bags of trash illegally dumped. If you see a bag of trash dumped on side of road, call the Sheriff's Department. The Game Department would like to know about any baiting, lights in the woods at night, bragging, etc., that are signs of illegal hunting in Addison County.
- Sue is considering attending a week-long educational program in July. The Secretary of State's Office is mandating that Town Clerks go to a 4-day training on new election laws.

#### **ROAD COMMISSIONER'S REPORT – no report this evening**

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

- **Town & Cemetery Mowing** – will go out to bid April 7
- **Conservation Commission** – CCC member Mary Dodge is here to report that the natural resources inventory is being completed and the first draft of the report being written. 70 significant sites were identified and examined in the field. The final report is expected in early May. The CCC would like to move from an understanding of what we have to a plan for what to do with this understanding. The CCC is coordinating with the CPC. John Roberts will be the point person between the CCC and the Select Board. Mary requested that the Commission be increased from 5 to 7 members, that Mark Cesario and Rene Langis be appointed to the CCC, and that the board approve CCC membership in the Association of Vermont Conservation Commissions (AVCC) The CCC will meet again on March 25.

John R. MOVED/ Dave S. SECONDED a motion to approve CCC membership in the AVCC. MOTION PASSED – 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

John R. MOVED / Ben W. SECONDED a motion to appoint Mark Cesario and Rene Langis to the CCC. MOTION PASSED – 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

- **Public Meeting of Capital Budget and Plan Committee** is scheduled for April 8 at the school, to discuss possible renovations to the Town Hall. Sue will put together a history of what we have done to maintain the building, background on how the building has been used and how it might be used in the future.
- **VGS/PSB update** – Ben Marks (speaking as Town lawyer for the pipeline proceedings) Vermont Gas canceled its plan for Phase Two, and has stopped the PSB process. The Parties in that process petitioned the PSB 8 weeks ago to have their costs and fees refunded. Requests are pending at the PSB at this time.

- ***Cornwall's Hazard Mitigation Plan*** - Emergency Management Network has been working with Tim Bouton (ACRP emergency planner), to update the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The next step is for the Select Board to read and approve. Without this Plan in place, FEMA could deny funding for any emergency event Cornwall may have. Sue will forward Select Board members the link to the electronic copy of this large document.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

- Ben Marks wants to add 911 signs to the agenda for the next meeting. John Burton asked if 911 signs are mandatory. Ben Marks replied that they are not.
- Jim Carroll would like to provide training on Roberts Rules

Ben M. MOVED/ Magna D. SECONDED a motion to adjourn. MOTION PASSED – 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Sharon Tierra, Clerk of the Select Board