

Approved September 16, 2014

TOWN OF CORNWALL
SELECT BOARD MEETING
Cornwall Town Office
Tuesday, September 2, 2014

Present: Bruce Hiland, Ben Wood, David Sears, Magna Dodge, Sue Johnson,
Stu Johnson

Guest: Katherine Branch

Meeting called to order at 6:55 pm
General Fund and Highway Orders – *signed*

July bank statement has been reconciled by NEMRC and August bank statement is in process. Sue will have written documentation from NEMRC for Select Board to review as soon as suitable format is prepared.

AGENDA CHANGES - *none*

MINUTES

August 5, 2014 – Dave MOVED / Magna SECONDED a motion to accept the minutes with the following changes:

- add full name of well drilling company in Road Commissioner's report - Spafford & Sons Well Drillers
- replace "Torte law" with tort law
- correct typos

Motion passed

CORRESPONDENCE REVIEW

- Letter from the VT Covered Bridge Society asking for permission to place a small identification/information sticker on the covered bridge. Stu said this sticker will especially inform travelers who search for covered bridges. Board asked Sue to reply in the affirmative to the Society.
- Another packet of information from Mr. Madden in New Haven about the dangers of pipelines
- Information from VLCT about a workshop on the new Vermont open meetings law
- Letter of thanks from Counseling Service of Addison County for the receipt of allocation approved by the voters at Town Meeting

PUBLIC COMMENTS - *none*

TOWN CLERK / TOWN TREASURER'S REPORT – Sue Johnson

- **Elections** –
 - Primary election was held on August 26, with turnout of 90 voters
 - The 3rd and final election of 2014 will be held on November 4, using the tabulator, which does save time. Volunteers will be needed.
- **Tax bills** are going out in next couple of days.
- **Property insurance premium increase** - VLCT property insurance company has assessed our Town buildings and increased the estimated replacement value for each building. Changes will be reflected in the renewal bill. Stu J. commented that he does not believe the new replacement value is excessive.
- **Sept 15 & 16 VMCTA annual meeting** – Sue will go.
- **Sept 10 VT Open Meetings Law workshop** – Sue will go.

ROAD COMMISSIONER'S REPORT – Stu Johnson

- **Salt for 2014-15** - State salt contract prices are up 20% from last year. Barrett (distributor) is asking towns to store as much salt as possible in the fall. Stu assured the board the highway department will do the best they can with the salt that is available.
- **TMDL event** – Stu said it was worth the trip. Pollution in Lake Champlain is a major problem. Over 50% of the problem stems from runoff from farms. Solutions need to be found and the process will be long and difficult.
- Parking lot next to Town Hall has been paved at no cost to the taxpayers.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Pipeline Update** – The Governor publically replied to legislators Bray, Jewett, and Ayer and did not withdraw his support for Phase 2. Mr. Murray from Vermont Gas has invited Bruce H. for coffee to re-open discussions between the Town and Vermont Gas.
- **Dog Ordinance** – Cornwall has an existing dog ordinance. Katherine Branch and her ad hoc committee have been studying the issue of dog control. Sue Johnson went to a VLCT workshop on the topic. Dave Sears has also done extensive research – has spoken with many people, including the current dog control officer, the constable, and officials in Middlebury. Some months ago, the Select Board also met with the Lt Michael Manley of the State Police, and Addison County Sheriff Don Keeler to discuss animal control issues. One thing has become very clear after all these discussions – there is not one person in any position in Cornwall or elsewhere, who is both willing and able to enforce a dog ordinance in Cornwall.

Sue said that municipalities must by statute enforce State laws applying to the licensing of dogs. There is also a State law regarding vicious dogs. If a dog bites a victim when the dog is off the premises of it's owner, and the victim requires medical attention, the victim may file a written complaint

with the legislative body of the municipality, a hearing must be held, a judgment made, and appropriate action taken (that may include an order to have the dog put down, for the protection of the public). Dog ordinances are optional for municipalities. Town with police departments can enforce ordinances, but Middlebury police, for example, almost never issue tickets for dog issues.

Katherine Branch – believes the dog ordinance needs updating. Even if it is not enforceable, it has been shown to have an effect on dog owners' behaviors.

Magna believes that Cornwall should have a written set of expectations about dog behavior and that all dog owners should be made aware.

Bruce suggested that when dog owners register their dog, they should get a copy of the dog ordinance. The Town has a moral imperative to do something about dogs who are not controlled and pose a threat.

Next steps: edit existing ordinance (Bruce will draft, review with Town Attorney), hold hearing September 16 to review/discuss updated ordinance draft. Then give a copy of the ordinance to every dog owner when they register their dog.

NEW BUSINESS

- ***Budget Development Process*** – will start in November
- ***Review Meeting Schedule with Other Town Boards/Committees***– This year, the Select Board has had frequent interactions with CPC, CCC, Library and Fire Department members. The Listers work out of the Town Hall and contact is frequent. Bruce will contact the School Board and Dave will contact a member of the Cemetery Commission, to see about joint meetings.
- ***Salt Summit*** scheduled for September 16 meeting. John Roberts will present.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm

Respectfully submitted, Sharon Tierra, Clerk of the Select Board