

CORNWALL SELECT BOARD
Regular Meeting, Cornwall Town Hall
November 19, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ben Marks, Ben Wood, Magna Dodge, Brian Kemp, John Roberts

ALSO PRESENT: Sue Johnson, Don Burns; Kate Rothwell, Lew Castle

The meeting was called to order at 7:01pm.

QUORUM—*Established.*

AGENDA—Ben M. reviewed the Agenda with the suggestion that Minutes of the Board's Special Meeting, November 13, be added to the Agenda Minutes and the Flood Resilience draft be added under Old Business. Ben W. MOVED / Magna. **SECONDED** to amend and approve the Agenda. **Motion passed** (5in favor, 0 opposed).

GENERAL FUND AND HIGHWAY ORDERS—*signed.*

MINUTES—

- **November 13, Special Meeting**—Magna MOVED / John **SECONDED**, to approve the minutes as amended: *Old Business*, “...its discussion on Articles II and III and began ...”. **Motion passed** (5in favor, 0 opposed)• **November 5**—Magna MOVED / Ben W. **SECONDED**, to approve the minutes as amended: *Other Business*, “...the Town will continue its practice of plowing ...”. **Motion passed** (5in favor, 0 opposed)

CORRESPONDENCE REVIEW—*None*

PUBLIC COMMENT—*None*

TOWN CLERK / TOWN TREASURER'S REPORT—[*Sue*]

- **Salt Contamination Report**—Sue explained the that she had asked Bill Johnson to do another salt contamination water report about 3 weeks after the previous report. Both show an improvement but neither indicates a normal situation. Sue also noted that Bill has a spreadsheet that she will request for the Board as it may indicate trends. Discussion ensued about what the thresholds mean, and possible next steps, such as having an engineering firm reassess the situation to see that the current process is on track.
- **Non-citizen voting**—Lew Varricchio, *Addison Eagle*, contacted Sue about an article he is planning on non-citizen voting. Board noted it is a non-issue in Town at this time.
- **Website**—John proposed that a redesign of the website be done to make it easier to find things. He asked who currently was involved in maintaining the site and what could be done in this regard. Sue indicated that she and Peter McCormack, who has been volunteering his services, were the primary website maintainers, noting that her abilities regarding a redesign were limited. She suggested that Peter would be the person to speak with regarding redesign possibilities.

ROAD COMMISSIONER'S REPORT—[Brian]

- **Road Maintenance/Winter Prep**—Work is ongoing, the recent snow event was without issue.
- **Swamp Road**—Paving is done, road looks good.

NEW BUSINESS—

- **MREMS**—[Kate, Lew] Kate Rothwell, Middlebury Regional Emergency Medical Services,, and Lew Castle, Cornwall Fire Department addressed the Board regarding the proposed increase in the Ambulance Service's budget allocation request. Kate explained the reasons behind the raising of the towns' assessment fees (from \$2.50 to \$10 per capita) were due to several factors, all related to increased expenses. Expenses focused on equipment, vehicle/medical/gear supplies, and training costs. She noted that volunteers are increasingly more difficult to enlist, and that many trainees are hired away, after training, by ambulance services offering paid positions. Additionally, MREMS does not have an in-house bookkeeping service but hires out, does not have a solid payment enforcement protocol, and past efforts to keep costs low for users, have all contributed to an unsustainable financial situation. Kate also noted that they must now pay a \$39,707 tax annually just to allow them to process Medicaid/Medicare claims. In setting their assessment fees, they reviewed fees charged statewide by other similar services (some do not offer as wide a range of services MREMS includes). The statewide average is slightly over a \$24 per capita assessment, so even with the large jump in the MREMS fee, it doesn't approach 50% of the statewide average. Magna expressed interest in additional financial information and was invited to attend a MREMS Board meeting where she could ask specific questions which Kate was not able to address.
- **Fire Panel/Phone Line Issue**—[Sue] Problem surfaced a couple of weeks ago and both Otelco and Royal Group have been out to investigate. There does not appear to be any negative impact on fire department call-out. Sue has to reset the panel nearly every morning. The panel was originally installed by Marshall's (which has subsequently been sold to Royal Group) and uses 2 phone lines. Otelco could find nothing wrong with the phone-lines or jacks, inside or out. Royal Group could find no fault with the panel and indicated that a “cellular communicator” would by-pass the Otelco landlines and should solve the problem—for a price and an ongoing monthly fee. After discussion, it was agreed that both Otelco and Royal Group must come back and pursue a proper solution.
- **Porch Light**—Sue arrived one morning to find the light hanging by a thread and called Newton's to come out. The light has been taken back to the shop to see if it can be fixed. When removed, it was found that there had not been a proper installation when it was put up. Newtons will installed correctly when the light is fixed or replaced.

OLD BUSINESS—

- ***Flood Hazard***—Don noted that there is an “either or” option in a municipality's ability to receive maximum emergency relief funding through the federal Emergency Relief And Assistance Fund (ERAF). One option is to have regulations that protect river corridors by restricting development in those areas. The other option is to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System, a 12–18 month process that is renewed annually. Don indicated he feels that a regulation would be the preferred way to go.
- ***Land Use Regulations***—Discussion of what the related Statutes require, whether or not the by-law additions to or deletions from a Statute should be kept as written in the draft, how far I into private land holding a Statute might reach. Also, discussion of the positive/negative “tone” of the draft by-laws. Board decided to hold a special meeting at 7:00pm on November 26th to resume their review of the proposed regulations.

ADJOURNMENT—Magna MOVED /Brian SECONDED to adjourn the meeting. ***Motion passed*** (5 in favor, 0 opposed).

The meeting was adjourned at 9:12 pm.

Submitted by
Robin Conway, Interim Minute Taker