

CORNWALL SELECT BOARD

Regular Meeting

**Location: via Zoom and at Town
Hall**

August 3, 2021

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

ALSO PRESENT: Sue Johnson, Don Burns, Mike Sunderland

Recording of meeting—announced

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm

QUORUM—established

AGENDA—Magna D MOVED / Brian K. SECONDED to approve the agenda as amended by striking possible vote on Cornwall Solar Power bids. ***Motion passed***—5 in favor, 0 opposed.

General Fund and Highway Orders - have been circulated for signing, either by email or in person.

CORRESPONDENCE REVIEW:

- **Salt Report** - with Sodium at 390, Chloride at 650
- **Letter from Laura Stone, Vermont Department of Transportation** - regarding the status of the covered bridge replacement. Ms. Stone said that her office is actively working on the project, she anticipates a draft scoping study/report to be complete by the end of the month. Following an internal review process (1 to 2 months) her office will reach out to set up an alternatives presentation meeting. Construction funds for the project are currently budgeted for the summer of 2025.

MINUTES

- July 6, 2021
- July 20, 2021, Special Meeting

Magna D MOVED / John R. SECONDED a motion to approve both sets of minutes as posted. ***Motion passed*** - 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS—none

TOWN CLERK / TOWN TREASURER'S REPORT - Sue Johnson

- Article I: Shall the voters of the Town of Cornwall approve, pursuant to 16 V.S.A. § 724(c), the approved financial plan dated August 9, 2021, for the withdrawal of the Ripton School District from the Addison Central School District?

- Warning has gone out for the special public information meeting on August 30 to consider Article 1 followed by voting by Australian ballot on August 31 on this Article.
- Sue J. is printing the ballots at the Town Office. She has two poll sitters and needs a few more. She is not anticipating a large turnout for this special election.
- The Board agreed that it would be good to have someone from the Ripton School Board present at the special public information meeting to answer questions as this is a unique election, required by Statute for the Town to hold, but the Town only responsible for providing the written document and is not in a position to interpret it. Sue J. said that since there are only 3 members of the new Ripton School Board and many more towns that will be holding information meetings, it will be a challenge for Ripton School Board to be everywhere.

• **ROAD COMMISSIONER'S REPORT**

- Safety issue on one-ton truck needs to be resolved.
- New tandem truck should be ready for pick up in a month or so.
- Mike S. has not been able to speak with anyone at the State Garage in Middlebury about the 40 mile per hour speed limit sign on Route 30 that was just north of Peet Road that has come down, despite multiple messages left. Tanya B. volunteered to continue with the calls to VTrans, by going higher up in the agency and, by Mike S's request, will also mention the stop sign at the end of Robbins Road that is missing too.
- Grading, mowing continues. The plan for spreading gravel includes South Bingham as a priority.
- Bid from Pike for paving received. John R. MOVED / Brian K. SECONDED a motion to have Mike S. get one more bid (in keeping with the purchasing policy) for paving and to authorize him to accept the lower or better bid in consultation with Brian K. Motion passed - 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Maple Broadband Update** - Magna D. reported that Maple Broadband is close to signing a Network Management and Retail Services agreement with an existing operator and has signed a contract with an engineering firm for pre-construction work. She also clarified the difference between OTELCO's Lightwave fiber internet service and Maple Broadband. Maple Broadband is a non-profit organization whose mandate from the Vermont Legislature is to bring high speed internet via fiber to every location in its service area, which includes Cornwall. OTELCO is a for-profit company that is not obligated to provide broadband service to all locations in its service area.
- **Audio-visual System for Town Hall update** - Tanya B. reported that there are several options ranging from a "do-it-yourself" system for around \$2,000 to a high-end system that includes installation, training and some support for around \$5,000. Middlebury College has an "OWL" system that Cornwall could borrow to try it out. The Board agreed that would be worth doing as a next step in exploring options.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Proposals for Cornwall Solar Power** - Ben M. reported that the Solar Array in Bristol is effectively sold out, so that option is out. Two bids remain, which the Board asked Sue

J. to post on the Town website - one from Vermont Solar Fund LLC and one from Green Earth Energy/McKearnon Group. John R. would like to convene a working group to examine both bids and make a recommendation to the Board.

- **Vote on Setting Cornwall's 2021-22 Municipal Tax Rate** - Sue J. explained how the three categories of tax rates are determined and mentioned that the total municipal tax rate is down from last year. After discussion,

John R. MOVED / Magna D. SECONDED a motion to set the **General Fund tax rate** for 2021-22 at 0.2108. ***Motion passed*** - 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

John R. MOVED / Tanya B. SECONDED a motion to set the **Highway tax rate** for 2021-22 at 0.1776. ***Motion passed*** - 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

Brian K. MOVED / Magna D. SECONDED a motion to set the **Local Agreement tax rate** for 2021-22 at 0.1776. ***Motion passed*** - 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

OTHER BUSINESS

- **Questions about County ARPA Funds** - Vermont League of Cities and Towns successfully advocated for County funds from the American Recovery Plan Act be sent to the Towns, as Vermont does not have County government, in the way that many states do. The Board agreed that discussion about additional ARPA funds until they arrive, because at this point, the amount and arrive date are unknown.
- **Child Care Needs** - Tanya B. reported that she is forming a task force to assess childcare needs.

ADJOURNMENT

John R. MOVED/ Magna D. SECONDED a motion to adjourn the meeting. ***Motion passed***—5 in favor, 0 opposed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:41 pm.

Submitted by Sharon Tierra, Secretary of the Select Board