

Approved June 3, 2025

CORNWALL SELECT BOARD

Regular Meeting

Location: via Zoom and at Town Hall

May 20, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tanya Byker, Don Burns, Brian Kemp, John Roberts

ALSO PRESENT: Morgan Huestis, Laura Fetterolf, Nicholas Gill, Ben Wood, Stu Johnson

Recording of meeting—announced

The meeting was called to order by the Chair Tanya Byker at 7:02 pm.

QUORUM—established

General Fund and Highway Orders - signed

AGENDA - John R. MOVED / Brian K. SECONDED a motion to approve the agenda as amended, with the addition of Update to Salt Situation in Old Business.

Motion passed—4 in favor, 0 opposed.

MINUTES - May 6, 2025

John R. MOVED / Don B. SECONDED a motion approve the minutes as presented.

Motion passed—4 in favor, 0 opposed.

CORRESPONDENCE REVIEW

- Press release from Agency of Transportation seeking applications to the Mobility and Transportation grant program. Tanya said she will contact the college to see if they want to collaborate on an application.
- report of lawn damage at the DAR
- latest water testing report - see discussion in OLD BUSINESS

PUBLIC COMMENTS - none

TOWN CLERK REPORT - Laura Fetterolf

- The new VOIP telephone system with auto-attendant will be installed tomorrow. The Select Board option is currently going to a voice mail box. Tanya asked Laura to have the notifications of new voice mails forwarded to her Cornwall email. Laura added that there is also an option to have the system forward an audio file of the voicemail.

- Carrie Trombley, the new cleaner, has been working for two weeks, with great results. The floor in the meeting room cannot be washed, because the paint is wearing off down to bare wood. It was suggested to seek quotes for the work on the floor.
- Laura has created a folder in Google Drive containing all the policies, bylaws and ordinances she has found thus far. She has shared the Google Drive with all Select Board members who have a Cornwall gmail address. She reminded the Board that to access the file, they must sign in with their Cornwall gmail address, not their personal email address. Eventually, the plan is for all the policies, bylaws and ordinances to be available on the website, for anyone to view them.
- The website “frame” has been sent to the Town, so content can be added and modified. Laura can pull it up for anyone who would like to see the progress.
- The front door handle needs attention. It has been sticking and not turning properly to open the door. Brian said he would take a look at it. Laura added that it would be good to have an automatic door opener for wheelchair users and others who have difficulty opening the front door independently. Morgan added that there are loose boards on the front steps and the ramp is also in need of attention. An ADA grant might be sought for these needs.
- Laura presented several documents for the Board to sign, including one naming Brian K. as the representative to the ACRPC Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), the Mutual Aid Agreement, and the Non-profit Agency Funding Policy.

TOWN TREASURER REPORT - Nicholas Gill

- The \$33,000 grant mentioned at the last meeting was a public safety grant for damage related to flooding. Another grant for \$35,000 has been identified as the CORA tree grant.
- The Town is in transition from having a person who was both the Town Clerk and the Town Treasurer to now having a separate Town Clerk and separate Treasurer with distinct roles. Nick, the Board and Laura discussed what has happened after the Town sent out a reminder to property owners that taxes were due on May 15.irate property owners called and came into the Town office, angry about different aspects of the reminder, with several being verbally abusive to the Town Clerk.

Dealing with finances, including taxes, is the job of the Treasurer, not the Town Clerk, but taxpayers were either unaware that the Town now has a Treasurer who is not also the Town Clerk, or who didn't care, and yelled at Laura because she was there and available.

Nick, the Board and Laura discussed how to prevent this from happening in the future, including having a single due date for property taxes (as Shoreham does, for example), or sending a general reminder postcard (with no dollar amount) if the current schedule

of 2 payments is kept. All agreed to revisit this issue in the fall, before the bills are sent out.

Abuse behavior in the Town office is unacceptable, illegal, and will not be tolerated. Period.

ROAD COMMISSIONER REPORT - Brian Kemp and Morgan Huestis

- Cornwall highway department uniforms have arrived and Morgan was wearing one tonight. A great professional look!
- The crew have been working on Snake Mountain Road, preparing it for paving before July 1, including widening the road to 21 feet. Morgan will be purchasing fabric to use on this project. After the widening of the road, there are now some trees that are right next to the road, pose a liability, and need to come down. Morgan is in the process of getting 2 quotes for this tree work. Don B. MOVED / John R. SECONDED the motion to authorize Brian and Morgan to select one of the quotes and have the tree work done as soon as possible. ***Motion passed - 4 in favor, 0 opposed.***
- Morgan discussed possible roads for paving in the next fiscal year with the Board.

OLD BUSINESS

Salt Situation Update - John Roberts

John reported that in 1991 three homeowners signed formal agreements with the Town, agreeing to not hold the Town liable for salt contamination in their water, and each received a one-time payment and 50% abatement of taxes. Today, two of the three houses still receive the tax abatement. There was also an informal agreement with the owner of the 4th house that the Town would provide bottled water, which continues today. The results of recent water tests that show low levels of sodium and high levels of chloride in water in these homes indicate that the source of high levels of chloride may not be road salt. If it were road salt, the levels of sodium and chloride would be similar. John will notify the Listers to continue the 50% tax abatement on the two homes mentioned.

NEW BUSINESS

Discuss proposal for Town Garage renovation with Capital Committee

The Board and members of the Capital Committee discussed the proposal from Ashar Nelson of Vermont Integrated Architecture (VIA) that included design, project management and construction of the Town Garage renovation. It was agreed to go back to Ashar and ask if he would be willing to provide another quote, for just the design, project management and permitting. The Town would like to have a preliminary design first, so that an RFP can be sent out for bids from builders.

OTHER BUSINESS - Fire Suppression System - Brian K. and Shawn F met with Asher Nelson at the Town Hall on May 7 concerning the possible addition of a fire suppression system at the Town Hall. It would require a 10,000 gallon tank either in the ground or outside the building, as there is no room in the basement for such a tank. The cost to install a fire suppression system at the Town Hall is estimated as \$250,000-

\$300,000. No plans to proceed at this time. Brian added that he was told that the Fire Marshall could grant a waiver for one day, if the Town Meeting needed to be held upstairs in the event that the school was not available.

ADJOURNMENT

John R. MOVED / Don B. SECONDED the motion to adjourn the meeting. ***Motion passed - 4 in favor, 0 opposed.***

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Submitted by Sharon Tierra, Secretary of the Select Board