

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, January 16, 2024, 6:00 P.M.

Those attending in person: Mike Hogan, Fred Ducharme, R. D. Eno, Skip Bothfeld, Michelle Leclerc, Betty Ritter, Frank Kampf, Ruth Goodrich, Jenn Miner, Elizabeth Vitale, and daughter; Those attending via Zoom: Karen Larsen, Gary Gulka, Cabot Fire Association, Dana Glazier, Stephen Hogan, Kris Schmitt, Laura McCaffrey, Sandy Pond, Will Ameden, Rodger Shelden

1. Call Meeting to Order – The meeting was called to order by Mike at 6:00 p.m.
2. Approve Agenda - A motion was made by Fred with a second by RD, motion carried.
3. Approval of Minutes from December 11, 2023 Budget Meeting, January 2 Preliminary Budget Meeting and January 2 Selectboard Meeting – we will defer until February 6 meeting.
4. Public Comment:
 - a. Jenn – at the last meeting some state statutes were discussed about the variance of where the Ambulance resided – Ray Walker, EMS Programs Administrator, VT Dept. of Health has signed off on this. Jenn then spoke with Karen and explained that the Cabot Ambulance was in complete compliance with all regulations. They were also asked about the percentage of calls answered in 2023, 80% of the calls the ambulance was there. They also submitted a petition to be on the ballot regarding the Cabot Ambulance.
 - b. Laura McCaffrey Afterschool grant money and she is working with several organizations. There are several items on the list which may be on the SB list already. She would like to meet with the SB on February 6. Much of her work is with Rec Committees.
 - c. Neal Bainton – Wanted to know if anything was being done to reduce the risk that occurred on July 10. We are working on one and it is top priority with the with task force and CVRPC. We are looking for ways to apply technical assistant funds to mitigate the central and north section of town. The legislature has introduced a bill to reduce debris and clean up waterways.
5. Highway Updates –
 - a. Sid has been working hard and we have the new road crew member on board. He would like to be able to take the pickup truck home at night. This will save time to see how the roads are rather than having to stop at the garage to exchange vehicles. The SB agreed this would work during this time.
 - b. He will be meeting with engineers regarding 5 mitigation cites for a temporary fix and permanent fix in the spring tomorrow. They are Jug Brook Road, Blodgett, Mack Mountain Dubray Road, Lovely Road, which are all FEMA related.
 - c. Certificate of highway mileage – there are no changes from last year. A motion was made by RD with a second by Fred. Motion carried.
6. Trails Committee – Landowner Appreciation Letter – would like to send a letter to each person that has allowed the trails on their property. He will get a final letter to Betty to have the SB sign.
7. Conservation Committee – RFP for Continuation of Natural Communities Study – He reviewed this. A motion was made to approve the RFP by RD with a second by Fred. Motion carried. Mike wants to know about the next meeting of the Taskforce Meeting, and he has some information he would like to share with the group. SLR will help them with an engineering study of the tributaries. They are preparing a scope of work and cost and see what grant funding they can pursue. Focus on the most immediate needs with possible solutions that can be managed for 2024. Mike talked with Rep. Casey from Montpelier that is introducing a bill regarding the flood and would like to invite him to the meeting. Gary agreed.
8. Flood Relief Updates:
 - a. Clark Sawmill – new phase 1 development, and brownfield program which the attorney thought we should attend and enroll Cabot in the Brownfield Program. A motion was made by RD that we enroll Cabot in the Brownfield Program and pay any fees associated with it, and was seconded by Fred, motion carried.
 - b. USDA Projects hold to next meeting,
 - c. Taskforce Update, HMGP Currier Property – there is eligibility of elevating the property, and the Curriers stated this is what they want instead of a buyout. Possible cost of \$228,000 with town responsible for 25% but can work with the residents for some of this portion. Her father will come to the next meeting to discuss this.

9. Announcement of future meetings: LHMP January 22, 6:30 PM and January 26, Rep Henry Pearl 5-7 PM and he wants to hear from Cabot residents about anything regarding the town.

10. Water and Wastewater

a. Wastewater Plant – Fred and Mike’s Observations at WW Plant – Fred on the plant, his personal opinion was not working properly and there is a lot to learn regarding this system. It is necessary to change the electrical panels at a cost of \$23,000. Rodger – mentioned ventilation system (at least one-half of the system) – should be on a timer, but the heating cost will go up. What about timers or a humidistat – can be used to regulate ventilation.

We did take care of that issue by the fire station. The pipe is now dry. Damage done – water line down for the FS was to go 6’ line and then went through the WW pipe that was down on 3’. This is one area that affected our pump outs. Fred will check with Dean and Connor Contracting. There has to be some negligence on their part, and we now have over \$40,000.00 in pumping to pay for.

b. We will need to address the Gasket issue. Just received the final report of the inspection. Camera pictures were from Elm Street to temporary fire station. RD wanted to know if we will need to dig up the pipes. It would be more economical to dig for one gasket rather than slip lining.

c. The computer at the plant crashed and will be replaced. We received a quote today. RD are any problems facing from lack of maintenance negligence. Rodger does not believe so, just a lot of things to address. Stan Welsh – when the plant was first built there were condensation problems. Ventilation should take care of this. What about a humidistat – we will check with Aaron on this or an HVAC contractor.

Gary Gulka – has a question air to air heat ventilation system – would have to see about the price, motors sealed, etc. Fred said it would work, but we need to look at the cost.

What about a manhole on Danville Hill. He doesn’t have anything to compare it to it. Could we scope this. Rodger – yes, we can.

d. One of the affluent pumps died, and we need to drain the tank and repair it.

e. Engineering Report Update – 20-year evaluation of the plant – operation 50,000 daily peak flow 90,000 – it is never operated near that. H2O has a membrane filtration plant and Rodger asked them to come out and look to see how we can increase production. The cost of citric acid has increased up to \$260. Rodger is checking with Allen Engineering, who we buy the chemicals come from to see if there is an alternative chemical at a more reasonable price. 29,000 at peak but could it handle a higher peak. Permitted flow can be 50,000 a day, we have put out 21,000 – the highest was 25,000/day. RD If we had businesses come into town to make allocations – at this time the plant could not handle 50,000. How much excess capacity remains in the system. Rodger does not know. Possibly if we could get 35,000 a day we could run efficiently. Mike recommended that everyone read the engineer’s report and ask some questions. Look at priorities on the list. What is the ceiling.

f. Water Investment Fund – In progress

g. Other business – There was no other business.

11. Town Clerks Office

a. Orders – they were signed.

b. Other business – there was no other business.

12. Other Business

Planning Commission – Bobby Searles – informed the SB that the PC go back from 5 to 7-member board. It seems a quorum always lacking. A motion was made by RD that we reduce the number of seats from 7 to 5 on the PC by Fred. Motion carried.

SB Article for Town Meeting – Michelle has been an Assistant Town Clerk and Treasurer for 12 years. It will be hard to replace her. The legislature passed a law a few years ago to allow towns to appoint a town treasurer or clerk for lots of various reasons. A person in the treasure’s position should have a strong financial background and be able to stay up on Grants, etc., understand accounting, analysis. The Board is proposing such a position for a 1-to-3-year term. Mike has drafted a job description to review, and they are not required to live in Cabot. A motion was made that the article be put on the Town Warning by RD with a second by Skip. This would have the ability to increase the number of people to apply for the position. Motion carried. Professionalize – report to SB. Betty has two more years will this take place before then. Mike stated that it would be in effect after 30-48 days. Make a difference pay negotiate possibly adding a third position. After discussion motion carried.

13. Executive Session – Personnel – RD asked to go into Executive Session for personnel issue with a second by Skip, motion carried. We went into ES at 7:23 PM. There were no decisions when we came out of ES.

14. Motion to Adjourn – a motion was made by Fred with a second by Skip, motion carried. We adjourned at 7:40 pm.