

**SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 2024, 6:00 P.M.**

Those present in person: Mike Hogan, RD Eno, Karen Larsen, Skip Bothfeld, Betty Ritter, Brittany Butler, Frank Kampf, Brittany Butler, Ruth Goodrich, Jenn Miner, Kris Schmidt, Gary Gulka, Sid Griggs, Irv Robbins, Ben Vitale and Spencer Vitale; via zoom: Rodger Sheldon, 860 707-0688 Alisson Hogan, Steve Hogan

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 RD and Karen add under other business – Mike would like to add a letter regarding Chief Deasy and FD, motion carried.
3. Approval of Minutes from August 20, 2024 Selectboard Meeting – A motion was made by RD with a second by Karen. Karen wanted to correct Item 7 regarding possible repairs of West Hill Pond Dam, the Town would not like to tear it down, not the State. There are also 2 large debris piles and the Tributary which are separate from West Hill Pond. Motion carried.
4. Highway – Working on grant projects. Aldo injured himself and may be out for 1-2 months. We may put ad in the paper. Will suggested that we contact Paul Stecker as he may be interested. We will hold off on the advertisement until Sid talks with Paul. He talked with Green Mountain Paving they may possibly be here the first week in October. He talked with the foreman in Danville regarding the rental of the marking machine. There is a possibility that we can rent or barter with them for the use of the machine. Roadside mowing will be done as they can. Karen – asked about a new salt disbursement method. Sid was going to try it last winter, but that didn't work as we did not have cold weather for a few days to see if it would work. He would like to extend it to another year. Class 4 roads conversation – what does that look like. Mike said possibly next meeting if we keep the agenda shore.
5. Neighborhood Designation – discussion, possible action -RD – we have a Village Center Designation and a designation that might be useful to any development within walking distance to the village. It is a ¼ mile from the center. Brittany stated that it is not a quick process. The VCD was in place when she came into the zoning position. She was only her the amendment. The first step is changing the density and there is a lot going into this. If we have something in place it is better than not just an idea of new development. Mike asked if this could be in the Town Plan. Brittany – there is a growth center – it is a designated map. It makes it easier to find funding if we have something in place. RD – one of the reasons for this interest is relocating the Town Garage. As it stands, the village does not offer anything. Would this have any effect on the grand list. At this time, it would not, but if you could connect it to water and sewer that would be a plus. What does it mean to change density. It is 2.8 acres, now you can have up to 5 dwellings on 1 acre lot. It would be a 4-story apartment building. With the new laws we can go 1 story apartment building above current zoning. What happens to lot that the ND would go through. VCD is only for existing buildings. ND would give funding and grants for new development. RD felt we should move forward. First step DHCP, Regional Planning and Planning Commission. Mike – what is the timing. March, 2025. We could put something in the Town Plan to make it a goal. A meeting does not have to be in place before the vote. Would we have to contact the state to see about this goal. RD the only possible place is East of Main Street. We can't develop in the flood plain. Karen – if a town enrolls and creates this structure and a developer wants to develop are we also committing. If we sign up for this process, are we committing to accommodate the multifamily housing. Our first step is to have a meeting with the State. RD asked that Brittany to check with the state for a meeting.
6. Approval of CFD Temporary Building Invoices – Final invoice for temporary building to Connor Contracting. \$159,804.45 A motion was made by RD with a second by Skip, motion carried. The next one is for Dewolfe Engineering in the amount of \$36,045 for the final building site. A motion was made by RD with a second by Skip, motion carried. RD wanted to know if we could break the building down into components instead of paying for the entire building. Joel from Scott Engineering advised not to do this. It is a matter of financing that would cost more breaking it down in components. We could look for grants. Joel would not be involved with the grant search. Dean advised that we have invoices left pending for Burlington Communications, installation fees for Seth, insulation for the second gate on west side of basketball court. Motion carried.
7. Signing of Declaration of Inclusion – A motion was made by RD with a second by Karen sign, motion carried.

8. Public Records Discussion – Ruth Goodrich – April 17 – because we are working with contractors – Mike read the statute what is proprietary. We have our attorney going through them. There has been a lot of hours spent on this. This is labor intensive, and it could cost the town \$1,000's of dollars and we are not finished. Mike stated he wanted to have a separate line item to indicate the cost of this request. Dean is reading a letter regarding public request – some of items are exempt from this request. He has submitted it for public record. Mike discussed that this is a very difficult task and are grueling. The purpose to let people know. Mr. Vitale wanted to know if this is a public record request. Karen stated yes, and she has every legal right. To request this. However, it is at a significant taxpayer expense. RD moved that we enter Deans letter as part of the minutes, Mike seconded. Motion carried.
9. FEMA Declaration Flood Update – July 10, 2024 – There is a declaration, and we are keeping track of the costs. We are putting the pieces together. Karen also wanted to let the public know that people that were impacted by this flood will be able to collect unemployment if there were not able to get to work, or their vehicle was damaged or for any other reason related to the flood. FEMA is in the area and you should be able to access this process of application, for example of loss income.
10. Other FEMA Updates – from day 1 FEMA has promised to pay for all our expense. Right now, FEMA has a shortfall due to all the disasters. They are still telling us they are going to pay us for reimbursement. We are pursuing to take care of the damage of the flood in July 2023 and July 2024. We are working on mitigation to protect Cabot from future flooding. We are submitting earlier, but it seems they fell in a black hole. Recently we are fixated on a man that is working for Cabot and hope to have it all in place for submission by end of October. We are looking at bigger culverts, etc. FEMA will have to come through, but we will have to hold the notes. Dan Vitale wanted to know if do we have timelines? We are looking at some grants to help us and we are looking at wastewater plant. Does FEMA have a timeline for the new one? Currently there is no timeframe.

RD - we have been in discussion for the new public safety building, looking at other grant funds that would supplement the funds. Karen stated that we want to be super cautious before we put the shovel in the ground. Monies are being spent on permits, etc. FEMA said they will pay for all of this. Ben Vitale - Are we legally obligated to build another. Karen stated there are regulations at state and federal level and it depends on functionality for fire and safety. Because of the items in our homes, many firefighters die of cancer and need a decontamination bay is necessary when they come back from a fire. Also, if we are to occupy longer 15 months there are some regulations that must be met. As of right now certain regulations have been waived. Another thing is we do not have facilities right now and we need to have an emphasis on an emergency operation center. Dean and others have put 1,000's of hours during these floods. We are doing far better than most towns in VT. RD stated that we need to understand that Dean and Mike have put in inestimable service for the community. We will continue to do updates.

11. Clark Sawmill Update – we are submitting an application to ANR today for the Friends of Winooski to clean this up. The Town will own it for a quit claim deed which requires \$500 to submit this application. A motion was made by RD with a second by Karen to submit the application along with the \$500 fee, motion carried.
12. Health Officer Appointment – Discussion and approval – Jenn stated that she will not continue as Health Officer and suggests that you consider someone else. We will put an ad on Front Porch Forum. Dean wanted to thank Jenn for the fantastic job she has done for many years. RD also wished to express his gratitude. He also suggested that Jenn would write a narrative for the things Jenn has done for the record.
13. Rexford-Winston Property Buyout Application under VT Flood Resilient Communities Fund – possible action there is property of 13.88 acres which is adjacent to rec field. It is mostly flood plain. Important asset going forward. There is no building site and access is limited. It is owned by Susan Winston and is appraised at \$29,100 with new appraisal. Gary stated he heard from Suzanne and was ready to sell. We have grant funds with Community Resilience Fund and would like to have Gary proceed with go forward with the grant. The Town has authority to buy. It is for sale at \$52,452.63. A motion was made by RD with a second by Mike to proceed with the grant application. Karen stated Susan is willing to wait. Gary stated it is both sides of the village. North and Winooski tributary and both sides of the river. This would be coming from the Flood Resiliency Taskforce, and we would pay nothing for this purchase. The sooner we get the application in the sooner the better. It does have flood plain access. This was supported by the Flood Resiliency Taskforce. It is natural and the benefit of flood plain. (Amount may be a little higher.) We will need another appraisal, and the landowner could possibly receive 30% more. The Resilience Task Force to have a meeting on Wednesday, September 18 for the public to discuss this. Motion carried.

14. Water and Wastewater

- a. Update from Rodger Sheldon, H2O Innovations – Rodger and Mike met the other day about the necessary repairs needed. UV System is obsolete, and what it would cost what it would cost to replace \$3-5000, and the ventilation system and heating system need to be replaced. Once we get the skid upgrade, we will be in decent shape except for the UV System. Can run it until it dies or replace it? It really needs a whole new UV system. There are a lot of pump station items. Sawmill pump station – he could not get it to break free. Control panel needs replacement – at least \$15,000. Junction box needs replacement, overflow tanks along with the wet valve – no check valve in between. Elm Street – needs repair. Rodger will work on getting quotes. We have some money allocated \$275,000 – set aside the budget goes through. Vermont Bond Bank is offering 0% loan with some of these issues. We will prioritize on all the needs. There is also electrical work which we are planning on doing. Rodger will find out a ballpark price on the UV system. The total amount could be around \$500,000. There are additional items needed for the skid. Mike will sign this in the morning.
- b. Other Business There was no other business.

15. Town Clerks Office

- a. Orders – orders have been signed.
- b. Approval of St. Johnsbury Liquor License for Cheese Culture a motion was made by RD with a second by Skip, motion carried.
- c. Other business grant for buildings – The grant for \$500,000 has been approved. Betty will be working with Sam Lash from the CVRP to review this. We should be able to do a lot of the work for the WW plant with some of these funds, along with the Willey Building and the garage.
- d. October meetings: the meeting for October 1 will need to be changed to October 8 and we will have the second meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> as is normally scheduled.

16. Other business

- a. Dean read a letter (which is attached)
- b. RD read a letter in response to correspondence from the Cabot Ambulance (this is also attached)
- c. Gary will go over the meeting agenda for September 18 meeting for Flood Task Force.

17. Motion to adjourn – a motion was made by RD with a second by Skip. Motion carried. We adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Betty Ritter, Town Clerk

To Cabot Select Board and Cabot community  
Tuesday, September 3, 2024

My name is Dean Deasy Chief of Cabot Fire Department

I received a copy of an email regarding the delay on the "public access records request" That Ms. Goodrich submitted on April 17th, 2024, for information on the public Safety projects for Cabot VT.

Everything I had ( along with multiple others involved with the request) was sent to the town attorney for review shortly after the initial request. To ascertain this issue, I followed up and found out that due to a state statute, to protect the structures and the people that will be operating within such structures, some items are exempt from disclosure under Title 1, Sec. 317(c)(1) (attorney privilege), (25) (passcodes), and most importantly (32) (final building plans -structural/security, etc.).

Items under this category are exempt from disclosure due to the critical infrastructure/design of specialized buildings, like those used for public Life safety support. This law, from my understanding, is so the information is secured, protected from attack or mischief acts, hacks into the safety systems, and prevent such information from falling into the hands of the general public (as history has shown, in the past, some have done some life-threatening acts with access to this type of information).

It would be like attempting to get the blueprints of the Vermont state capital, courthouses, hospitals, prisons, or even schools and obtaining how those buildings are put together, what holds them up, their "Achilles heel", their security systems/design ETC.

We now live in a different world, yes even in our small town. Our school goes into lockdown more often than not, In the past, the fire department has been placed on high-status stand-by to stage more than folks realize at the request of VSP for undisclosed events right here in Cabot. In the US, terrorism exists in an attempt to execute plans to hurt our first responders, our neighbors, and our kids. Unfortunately, certain folks take joy and celebration in disrupting our community and homesteads.

Many of the emails being reviewed by the attorney(s) contained many of the above items under Title 1 Sec. 317 that need to be reviewed and redacted in part or its entirety for the safety of all. The Towns Attorney performs this. A very time-consuming process to read/understand and review the data submitted by others. I alone submitted close to 2 thousand emails, along with thousands + of attachments let alone what others involved

submitted. Needless to say, the town attorney's office has been swapped with this request to the point where it was suggested by them to bring in outside attorneys to asst.

Keeping in mind we are talking about designing a public safety building for Life safety operations, so obviously most if not all the correspondents are directly related to this project design. Realizing that it's just a lack of knowledge of others and unfamiliar with the safeguards put in place by the state just for reasons like this, this process can not be simply "just placed on a thumb drive and hand it over" or just push a button as one stated.

The task is enormous and unfortunately is running an additional tremendous cost (thousands) to the taxpayers of Cabot for this process of review that Ms. Goodrich has asked for. I'm not saying folks should not know what is happening, nor not have a right to request such information, to be crystal clear, that's the reason I pushed for many open public meetings we had with multiple visits with the architect, etc. To answer folks' questions, face to face, to help pass what information we can legally about the project and still comply with other state statutes too.

The fact that Ms. Goodrich just requested an independent second request that was submitted on August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2024, has likely **doubled** the cost to the taxpayers. We are talking thousands of dollars x 2 in attorney fees Plus, the exhausting time spent by the town clerk's office and staff organizing these requests when that time I am sure the Town clerk will tell you, could be better applied to management of the daily business of the town office.

What I strongly agree with and is the "tip of the spear" is volunteering my time as Chief of Cabot Fire Department to shepherd the money side of the Cabot Public Safety projects. Looking at the end cost to taxpayers, attempting to keep this cost to 0 cost dollars to the town, or very close to it to the best of our ability as we rebuild our town Safety infrastructure with FEMA and comply with NFPA, OSHA, VOSHA and State regs that protect our first responders. .

These cost items have been reviewed in all types of open public meetings, public building committee meetings, ongoing public conversations, even Public Town hall meetings, etc. I commend the transparency and honesty of the Town moderator, Our past and current town treasurer and the full Cabot Select Board during this complex process.

A copy of all accounting payments & received funds is run, kept, and passed strictly through the treasurer's office of the Town of Cabot. No other avenues are used. all costs are reviewed, open for comment, and rejected or approved during the regular and emergency public select board meetings that have been held over the past year. All invoices are detailed with a breakdown to comply with FEMA requests for reimbursement mechanisms. These can be printed off for review by the town treasurer for little or no cost

to the taxpayers. If someone does not know of the situation Cabot is currently in (along with every other town in Vermont) due to the devastating storms we weathered, it would be like saying "You never heard of 9/11?" as a footnote 343 Firefighters were killed on that day.

In closing,

The hours being totaled by the attorney is costing the folks of Cabot, you the taxpayers (and I'm also one of them) thousands and thousands of additional dollars for the now 2 independent requests for information. most information will likely be redacted and the additional cost can not be sent to the requestor. that will need to be paid by YOU and me, the folks of Cabot. To be clear, Anyone, including myself, has a legal right to request information from any present or even past SB members or town agency, but there are far more (smarter) cost-effective ways to get the same answer. Many times for free

Submitted For the public record

Be Safe



Dean Deasy  
Chief Cabot Fire Department

*Cabot Selectboard:*  
Michael J. Hogan, Chair  
Fred Ducharme, Vice Chair  
Karen Larsen, Secretary  
Walter 'Skip' Bothfeld  
Richard D. Eno

**TOWN OF CABOT**  
3084 Main Street  
PO Box 36  
Cabot, Vermont 05647

Office (802) 563-2279  
Fax (802) 563-2423

*September 2, 2024*

*Re: Cabot Selectboard support for Chief Dean Deasy  
Response to Jennifer Miner correspondence.*

Good afternoon-

The entirety of the Cabot Selectboard was copied from Jennifer Miner's correspondence of August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. What follows is a statement of the Cabot Selectboard's full faith and confidence in Chief Dean Deasy's professionalism, leadership, and adherence to State of Vermont EMS protocol.

Ms. Miner is the current President of the Cabot Emergency Ambulance Service (CEAS), a private organization currently pursuing an ambulance transport contract with the Town of Cabot. Although we hope to work professionally and productively with the leadership of the CEAS in finalizing a transport contract to serve the citizens of Cabot, it should be noted that the CEAS is not part of the Municipality and does not speak for the Selectboard or any of the communities' Municipal entities, including the Cabot Fire Department.

A review of SIREN reporting data does not corroborate Ms. Miner's experience at the Cabot Creamery on a recent call when she reported the CEAS was greeted with surprise upon arrival. The leadership of the CEAS has -on multiple public occasions- been clear that they are challenged by current levels of volunteer staffing. More than two-hundred employees are on the Cabot Creamery campus in Cabot on any given day and Creamery personnel have on several occasions approached members of the Cabot Selectboard with concerns about the low response rates of the CEAS. Creamery employees have also been clear in their articulated hopes for the development of a Cabot Fire Department led FAST Squad to work in partnership with CEAS to respond to Creamery EMS needs in ways that are consistent and timely. Ms. Miner's assertion that Chief Deasy has taken an inappropriate role as a 'supplementary dispatcher' is simply untrue. This is evidenced by the numerous times that mutual aid -generally East Montpelier- has responded to calls at the Creamery because of the CEAS's inability to field a legal crew for transport. Those calls have, on occasion, been supported by the Cabot Fire Department as detailed in SIREN data and run sheets. Both the Creamery and the entirety of the Cabot Fire Department are well aware of, and are in strict adherence to, mutual aid protocols.

We also reject the hearsay that unnamed "people" have been instructed by the Chief (or anyone else in the Municipality) not to dial 911. Ms. Miner has on two separate occasions during Selectboard Meetings offered this perspective to the general public. On neither occasion, nor in private conversation has she been able to provide details, names, or circumstances to support such assertions, and no one has ever come forward to endorse these statements. Chief Deasy and the entirety of the Selectboard have been clear and unequivocal: that anyone in need of EMS services of any sort should immediately dial 911.

We trust this matter is closed, but should you have any questions or wish to discuss further, please reach out directly to any member of the Cabot Selectboard.

Sincerely,

Michael Hogan, Chair  
Fred Ducharme, Vice Chair  
Karen Larsen, Secretary  
Walter 'Skip' Bothfeld  
Richard D. Eno  
cc.

- Chief Dean Deasy, Cabot Fire Department
- Jennifer Miner, President, Cabot Emergency Ambulance Service
- Ray Walker - Vermont EMS
- Carrie McCool - Dispatch Supervisor Montpelier Police Department
- Joseph Aldsworth - District 6 Chair, President CFMAS