

**Minutes**  
**Select Board Meeting**  
**Town of Coventry**  
**Monday October 2, 2023**

*This meeting was recorded on Zoom and then posted to YouTube. The link to the Town's YouTube channel is at [www.coventryvt.org](http://www.coventryvt.org).*

**Board Members Present**

Scott Morley  
Scott Briere  
Dan Webster

**Town Officials Present**

Matt Maxwell, Town Administrator  
Dave Barlow, Treasurer  
Deb Tanguay, Town Clerk  
Israel Sanville, Planning Commission  
Nathan Standish, Road Foreman

**Public Present**

**1. Order**

Matt called the meeting to order at 4:59 pm. Persons present introduced themselves.

**2. Changes or Additions to the Agenda**

**3. Allow for public comment**

None

#### **4. Casella Tax Dispute**

Scott M stated that the Town of Coventry and Casella have reached an agreement on the valuation of their property located at Landfill Lane in Coventry. The agreement has been signed by a judge and will remain in effect until the next town wide reappraisal.

#### **5. Emergency Services Contract**

Scott M described how the Coventry Fire services is split between Newport and Orleans with Coventry Station Road being the approximate boundary. Newport Ambulance currently covers the entire town. Scott M and Matt M met with EJ Rowell and Marilyn Prue from Orleans Ambulance with the idea being Ambulance services should be divided the same as fire services. The next step will be a meeting with Newport Ambulance.

#### **6. Road Budget Surplus**

The Town of Coventry had a Road Budget surplus of \$9793.00 for FY 2023. Scott M stated that General Fund surpluses are given back to the voters to decide what to do with it, but he didn't think that was true of a Road Budget surplus. Dave B stated that recent legislation enacted by the State of Vermont made it so there is no longer a distinction between Road and General Fund surpluses. Dave B said that the Select Board is responsible for any excess revenues and that residents then vote on those recommendations. Dave B and Scotty M continued to discuss what amount of money was left over from the previous FY. Dave B told the select board that we are currently operating under FY 2024 and that FY 2023 money cannot be pulled forward into the FY 2024 budget. Scott M will speak with the town attorney and auditing firm for clarification on how certain funds can be moved around.

#### **7. Capital Equipment Plan**

Scott B explained to the board the work he and Road Foreman, Nathan Standish, have done on the town's capital equipment. Scott and Nathan have created a document to track hours, miles, etc. on all town equipment. Scott B said that much of the town inventory is old and has not been properly maintained and that the town could save money in the long run by owning more of our own equipment. Nathan recommended that the town purchase a backhoe and provided 2 quotes that he had received prior to the meeting. Both quotes included an extensive warranty. Nathan also felt that the town truck that caught fire in March should be replaced. Scott B then stated that he would like to see a new trade in schedule for town equipment ensuring that we get the best resale or trade in value, while maintaining our fleet of capital equipment. Scott B said that should we decide to purchase a new plow truck the town would not have to make a payment until the summer of 2024. Dan W felt that the purchase of a backhoe would make a lot of sense for the town and that price quote Nathan presented was a good deal. Nathan thought we should try and purchase the truck first. Scott B felt it made the most sense to purchase the backhoe

and order the new truck. Nathan reminded the board that Road Crew only has one Class A CDL driver. Scott B thinks that the loader should be replaced by 2025. The Select Board had brief discussion over possible capital equipment purchases which led to Scott M asking if the town could get out of purchasing the plow truck if the voters reject it at town meeting. Scott B stated that he would get it in writing that if the voters decide against a new truck there would be no penalty to the town. There was some further debate about a possible new tractor and mower for next summer. Scott M made the motion to purchase the Case Backhoe for up to \$156,550 Scott B made the second and the vote was unanimous. Scott M made the motion to purchase the Premier warranty for the Case backhoe and expend up to \$9100 for it. Dan W made the second and the vote was unanimous. Scott M made the motion to order the Freightliner Truck, pending voter approval. Scott B made the second and the vote was unanimous. Scott M made the motion to purchase a \$16,000 warranty for the truck, pending voter approval. Dan W made the second and the vote was unanimous. Scott M made the motion that funds for the purchase of the Case Backhoe will come from the Capital Equipment Reserve Fund. Dan W made the second and the vote was unanimous. Scott B said that the board should discuss purchasing a new chloride tank at the next meeting. Scott B also stated that the Grader needs a full-service maintenance for \$4,000. Scott B also felt that the Road Crew needed a truck for transportation instead of putting miles on the six-wheeler. Scott M said we should table that discussion until the next meeting.

#### **8. Community Center Cleaning Services**

The town has issued an RFP for Cleaning Services. The deadline to submit a bid is October 6, 2023.

#### **9. NEMRC Admin**

Scott M said that the town NEMRC Administrator should be a Town Administrator duty, The Select Board has overall NEMRC authority and the TA as an employee of the Select Board should therefore serve as the town NEMRC administrator. Scott M spoke with both the town attorney and the town's auditing firm about the difference between a town employee and an appointed official and how it should be an employee of the town handling the NEMRC administrator spot. Scott M said that this has nothing to do with the current NEMRC administrators' performance. Scott B suggested giving the Admin rights to the TA, with the Select Board maintaining overall control. As current NEMRC administrator, Dave B, said that fine with him and that the technical term would be leased privileges. Dave B went through the steps needed to make the transfer. Scott B made the motion to transfer the NEMRC Admin to the TA. Scott M made the second and the vote was unanimous.

## **10. Town Accounting**

Scott M spoke with the new town auditors about where he felt the select board was headed in terms of the special funds. The town accounting is currently done on a modified accrual basis and the auditors suggest we transition to a cash basis model. The Select Board had a discussion on the difference between cash and modified accrual accounting. Dave B was not sure it would be feasible to switch in the middle of a fiscal year. Scott M said that he would speak with the auditors to find out when the best time for the switch to occur. Scott M made the motion to adjust the town accounting system from modified accrual to cash basis. Dan W made the second and the vote was unanimous.

## **11. Nebelski Road Towing**

There is a vehicle in the travel portion of the roadway at the top of Nebelski Road. Scott B said that that it should be towed to the town garage. After some further discussion the select board decided to contact the OCSO and see if we can find the owner of the vehicle. Deb T stated the Coventry has two town Constables that could be utilized to provide assistance in these circumstances.

## **12. Other Business**

Scott B mentioned that all of the culverts on the Glen Road are in need of being replaced. Dave B stated the he has moved some reserve fund money into CD's. Deb T said that the town Animal Control Officer has begun issuing tickets for dogs that are not registered. Scott M would like the town attorney notified of any certified letters that are sent to town residents regarding dog licensing.

## **13. Approval of Minutes - 9/18/2023**

Scott M made the motion to approve the minutes of 9/18/2023. Dan W made the second and the vote was unanimous.

## **14. Warrants**

Deb T explained the Fire District Invoice to the board. Scott M and Deb T discussed the town ARPA payments that have gone to the Fire District.

## **15. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:31pm

DRAFT