

## Minutes

### Select Board Meeting Town of Coventry Monday October 16, 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

#### **Public Present**

Phil Marquette  
Kerry Keement  
Marilyn Prue, Orleans Ambulance  
EJ Rowell, Orleans Fire

#### **1. Order**

Matt called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm. Persons present introduced themselves.

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

#### **3. Allow for public comment**

None

#### **4. Emergency Services – Orleans Fire and Ambulance**

Scott M stated the reason that Orleans Fire and Ambulance Officials had been invited this evening was because Coventry is looking at all of its emergency services contracts in order to maximize efficiency and response times to its residents. Scott M and Matt M had previously met with Orleans Fire and Ambulance, as well as, Newport Ambulance. Scott M asked Orleans Ambulance to provide the Coventry Select Board with a proposal for Ambulance Services based on responding to 50% of the town and a proposal for responding to 100% of the town. Marilyn Prue was present at the meeting to present the proposals for Orleans Ambulance. Marilyn showed the board maps outlining the area of service that Orleans Ambulance would provide under the 50% coverage proposal. Marilyn stated that EJ Rowell drove the mileage to the areas of Coventry that Orleans would respond to compared to the mileage from the Newport Ambulance Bay. Based on mileage and response times Orleans Ambulance would be better suited to respond to all the area south of Coventry Station Road. Marilyn explained how the Orleans Ambulance budget is compiled and how the cost to Coventry would be calculated under the 50% proposal. Marilyn then showed the board the cost for Orleans Ambulance if they were to be responsible to the entire town. Orleans Ambulance is fully staffed 24 hours and day, seven days a week. Currently, the Orleans Fire Department provides service to a little less than half of the Town of Coventry. EJ Rowell again provided a map that showed what Fire services from Orleans would look like if followed the 50% proposal from the Ambulance service. Marilyn explained the Coventry is currently billed on a 5-year rolling average for fire services and that under the 50% plan the price would remain about the same. Marilyn explained how the Orleans Fire budget is constructed and how Coventry fits into the overall budget. Scott M asked EJ about fire response times and EJ provided a map showing the quickest response times to all of Coventry with Orleans Fire and Newport Fire splitting the town. Scott B felt that response times are the most important aspect to consider when making emergency service contracts. Scott M asked about 911 boxes and EJ stated that they can be easily changed if a line for service is redrawn. Scott M asked Marilyn and EJ if there was a deadline for the board to make a decision. Marilyn stated that the middle of November would be fine. Scott M said that Newport Ambulance will present at the next board meeting and the Coventry Select Board will decide in Ambulance and Fire services two meetings from tonight. Deb T told the board the emergency services contracts are paid in one lump sum after the first of the year.

#### **5. Coventry Station Road Update**

Matt M told the board that Road Foreman, Nathan Standish, Engineer Tyler Billingsley, and Town Administrator Matt Maxwell met with representatives of FEMA to discuss the repairs needed on Coventry Station Road and the funding of such an endeavor. Phil M stated that the town should bring up other roads that experience constant water damage within the town. Matt will

continue to have weekly meetings with FEMA throughout the duration of the project and will keep the board apprised of all progress. Scott B asked Matt to find out when the appropriate time to start bidding out the project would be, as he would like to see work starting in the Spring.

## **6. Community Center Cleaning Services**

The town received four bids for cleaning services. Scott M said that he had reviewed all the bids prior to the meeting. Deb T said that we should make sure that individuals applying for the job should have a certificate of insurance and proper rug cleaning machines. The select board had a discussion over the various bids and what each was offering compared to the price of the bid. Scott M asked Israel Sanville, one of the bidders, if he had anything he wanted to say. Israel said he can obtain a COI if he gets the bid and has the ability to steam clean the carpets. Scott M asked which of the bidders came to look at the building. Matt M stated that 3 of the 4 bidders came and looked before submitting a bid. Israel Sanville noted that he has been cleaning the Orleans County Courthouse for seven years. Scott M directed the town administrator to follow up with Mylene and Israel and hire whichever candidate seems like the best fit. Deb T said to make sure that each bidder is able to complete all the tasks set forth in the RFP. Dave B reminded the board that some of the cost for the bidders comes from equipment and the cost to maintain such equipment. Scott M made the motion to give authority to Matt M to hire a cleaning service contractor up to a max amount of \$1500 per month. Dan W made the second and the vote was unanimous.

## **7. Paving 2024**

Matt M told the board that the town had received two budgetary quotes for paving in 2024. Scott M asked if previous select boards had a plan for how the paving should be handled year to year. Scott B answered that the plan was to eventually pave all class 2 and 3 roads within the town. Scott M and Phil M had a brief discourse on potentially paving River Road and Webster Road. Scott B felt that Cleveland Farm Road and Glen Road should be the priority for 2024 as this would make things more efficient for the Road Crew and their maintenance. No decisions were made and the discussion will continue at a future meeting.

## **8. Town Truck for Road Crew**

Scott B described the need for a regular truck for Road Crew use instead of having to rely on the F600 truck. Scott B felt a small utility truck for checking roads and other transportation needs would save 8,000 to 10,000 miles a year on the F600. Dan asked how much use the F600 would get if we purchased a regular pick up. Scott B said that with a regular truck the F600 could be used exclusively for small plow jobs, salt, and chloride application. Scott B said

there are couple trucks available that fit the town needs and the budget. Scott M asked where the money would come from and Scott B said from the Capital Equipment Fund. There was no decision made and the board decided to continue the discussion at a later meeting.

## **9. Roadside Mowing 2024**

Scott B spoke with a representative of Pete's Equipment and Sales about renting a roadside mower for four weeks next summer. If the mower works well the town will consider buying it. Scott B stated that the current system of roadside mowing, a mower attached to the back of a small tractor, is unsafe and not productive. Phil M asked if the mower itself was detachable. Scott B said that it was, but would probably remain permanently attached and used exclusively as a roadside mower. The board did not make a decision and will discuss further at a future meeting.

## **10. Treasurer's Report**

David B presented the select board with the October Treasurer's Report. Dave B expects to receive the quarterly tipping fee payment from Casella in the next couple weeks. It should be between \$400,000 and \$500,000. Dave B stated that there are tax payments coming in and not much on the expense side for October. Scott B asked about the back hoe purchase and Dave B said it has come out, but just recently and will be reflected on the next report. Dave B let the board know that the ARPA Fund balance is down to zero with money obligated to the Coventry Fire District still needing to be spent. The EDP Microsoft shares have been converted to mutual funds as per the instructions of the donors. Scott M and Dave B had some discussion on money that has been put into CD's is tracked and identified. Scott M would like to see dollar amounts for all investment funds for Town Meeting. Dave B gave the board a document detailing all of the town fund balances currently held at Community National Bank. Dave B has recently moved \$250,000 into two six-month CD's that will come due in March and April. Six months to one-year CD's are earning about 5% interest. Dave B informed the board that once money is put in a CD it cannot be accessed without paying a penalty. Dave B has invested most of the investable money the town has in its various accounts, based on the direction given to him by voters at Town Meeting. There is approximately 1.75 million in CD's that should earn between \$50,000 and \$60,000 in interest over the next six months. Scott M stated that the select board intends to ask the town voters to eliminate all special funds at Town Meeting. Scott M then asked Dave B for some clarification on moving money should the special funds get eliminated. Dave B and Scott M discussed the next steps for the auditors with the transition from accrual to cash-based accounting. Dave B told the board how the special funds were originally set up and that the auditors will advise on how to condense it down to one account with various to's and from's. Dave B talked to the board about the reserve fund

balance and the where we stand on CD's. Dave B told the board his plans for further CD investment next month. The Select Board thanked Dave B for all his work.

#### **11. Other Business**

Deb T would like the select board to consider switching the heating of the Community Center from oil to propane. A technician from Amerigas inspected the boiler at the Community Center and said it is old and in need of replacement anyway, so a change to propane might be beneficial. Amerigas also checked on the boilers at both town garages. These boilers cannot be converted to propane, but are also old and in need of updating. Deb T will ensure that there is a proper maintenance schedule for all town boilers. Dave B had an engagement letter from the Auditing Firm of Sullivan and Powers that needed to be signed and returned. Scott M made the motion to accept the audit scope engagement letter from Sullivan and Powers. Scott B made the second and the vote was unanimous. Phil M asked the board to consider some sturdier fencing around the Lady Bird Park area for the benefit of Fall Festival. Phil and Scott B discussed what type of fencing would be needed to hold up in the area. Phil M will get some quotes to present to the board.

#### **12. Approval of Minutes – 10/2/2023**

Scott M made the motion to approve the minutes of 10/2. Dan W made the second and the vote was unanimous

#### **13. Warrants**

Scott M made the motion to accept the Warrants. Dan W made the second and the vote was unanimous.

#### **14. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 7:13pm

DRAFT