

**MEETING OF THE
ORWELL SELECT BOARD**

October 27, 2008

7:30 p.m.

Town Office

**Select Board - Paula Barnes
Walker James
Carla Ochs
Roland Simmons
Peter Young**

**Present: Allen R. Alger
Robert Arnebold**

Rep Will Stevens

Susan Ann Arnebold, Clerk

Directly following the BCA meeting, the Select Board meeting was called to order at 7:28 p.m., by Roland Simmons, Chair.

1. CITIZENS COMMENTS.

None.

2. HIGHWAY REPORT.

a. Road Report - Allen M. Alger is on vacation. The roads are in good shape and the Road Crew is doing an excellent job in winter prep of the vehicles and equipment and in road maintenance.

b. Murray Road Damage - Once again severe damage was reported on Murray Road last Thursday. Lorenzo Quesnel again ran his huge tractor over this road causing much damage. Vehicles could not drive over the damaged road area [about 1/4 mile] without concern that their vehicle would be thrown off the roadway. Dean had to scrape the road twice to date. Discussion ensued.

Huge ridges and masses of clay were strewn all over the road. At this time the Murray Road is "sloppy as the devil". The situation is where Ag vehicles spreading manure on corn ground bring huge wads of clay out into the Town road with heavy vehicles ridging and clumping the Town road. The State police were notified on 10/24/2008. No reply was given to date.

Will Stevens stated that Shoreham billed the farmer involved and did collect for damage. It was noted that this particular farmer does not have to come out onto Murray Road; there is another access.

The Road Crew will made an estimate of the cost of the damage and the farmer will be billed. The Select Board feels the legislature needs to address these Ag vehicle problems.

c. Mark Russell Road Drain - Roland Simmons reported that this drain was pushed through under the town road. The understructure was sand. The drain to Lake Champlain seems to be working out.

d. Chipman's Point Water Problem - The State continues to work on creating a plan to resolve the water flow. There is a possible Betterback Roads grant available to do an engineering study of the water flow in this area. Roland Simmons is pursuing this. The process is one step at a time.

3. MINUTES.

Paula Barnes moved to accept the minutes of the regular meeting of October 13, 2008, as written. Roland Simmons seconded the motion. The motion passed - 4 Yes 0 No.

4. PAYMENT OF BILLS.

Paula Barnes moved to pay the General Fund orders in the amount of **\$4,113.78**, Line Item for the Wright Memorial Library building in the amount of \$13,000, Sewer orders in the amount of **\$244.50** and the Town payroll. Carla Ochs seconded the motion. The motion passed - 5 Yes 0 No.

5. SEWER REPORT.

Walker James reported that the chloride tanks need a new cover. This summer a load of lumber was purchased to make the covers. Wesley Orr was to do this job as part of his Eagle Scout project but this did not happen. He has now been hired to do the job for the Sewer Treatment Plant.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT.

7. OLD BUSINESS.

a. FEMA Money \$24,858 - Roland Simmons received the State of Vermont Standard Subgrant Agreement for the FEMA claim for storm events in August of 2008 during which Orwell roads received damage in the amount of \$24,858 [as determined by FEMA]. The agreement was completed and signed by Roland Simmons, as required and mailed out the same date to begin the processing of payments to Orwell.

b. Safety Issues on Route 22A - In answer to Allen R. Alger's query, the Select Board have not received any further information on this request. Road studies are being completed and the process is still in motion, mostly slow motion.

8. NEW BUSINESS.

a. Town Highway Aid Resolution - Roland Simmons read the VLCT highway resolution. Discussion ensued.

Carla Ochs moved to adopt the resolution for Orwell as presented by the VLCT and to have the Select Board Chair sign the document. Peter Young seconded the motion. The motion passed - 5 yes 0 No.

Copies of this Orwell resolution will be made and mailed to Governor Douglas, Secretary Hill, the district Rep and Senators and to VLCT tomorrow. A copy of this resolution is attached to these minutes.

b. General Election Nov 4, 2008 - The Town Clerk reported that to date there are about 88 absentee requests of which about 55 have already returned their ballots or voted in the town office. Hopefully we will have 16 pairs of counters which should make the ballot counting process easier for all. Four people will be doing the summary sheets this year.

9. OTHER BUSINESS.

a. Rep Will Stevens - The Select Board welcomed Rep Will Stevens and thanked him for giving his time to report and answer questions. Will Stevens is running for reelection, gave a brief report of his 2 year service to the district [Shoreham, Whiting, Benson, & Orwell] and then took questions.

On the Ag vehicle problem - eight years ago a grey area was discovered concerning farm versus hired vehicles to do farm work. This was new news to the Ag Agency. Will Stevens will look into this. It

would seem reasonable that the commercial haulers were not exempted from the regular laws but the farmer would be. But it seems this is all open to discussion—who is really liable for road damage.

Will Stevens gave the following response to the VLCT municipal proposals:

1. State to administer Education Tax - supports.

2. Fully fund Pilot - supports. Now all Pilot money comes from municipality's 20% share. Now no money comes from the General Fund. This speaks to home rule. Roland Simmons feels that **all** towns so voted should be **allowed** to have the option of the 1% tax.

3. Fund all mandates - supports.

4. Home Rule - supports. Looking for model facilitator between towns and state.

5. Specific time limit on legislature session. Will Stevens explained that four freshman including him went to the legislature council with this proposal. The claim is that the legislature is doing more. But what is really needed Will believes is leadership to lead and set priorities and set the time limit.

6. Gas tax - if increased should be done as a percentage. At this point bonding should be considered to get roads, culverts and bridges in repair at the same time putting people to work. Susan Bartlett is looking into "strings free" Federal money with Vermont's delegation.

7. Same Day Registration - does not support.

Current Use - under review but we need this program. This should now be a policy, Will feels.

Property taxes still an enormous problem. The current state taxing system is not equitable.

At this point in time who will be Speaker is up in the air.

As Will Stevens sees an economic future, Vermont has people, image, and natural resources to use to go forward with economic development. To the extent that these can be integrated, we will have successful businesses to help Vermont move to the future. His goal is to get together with business people and bring their needs to the legislature.

b. Municipal Planning Grant Resolution - The Select Board received the resolution for municipal planning grant form from Andrea Ochs for the Select Board members to sign. Roland Simmons reviewed the form. Discussion followed.

Carla Ochs moved to have the Select Board sign Form 6 for the Municipal Planning Grant. Paula Barnes seconded the motion. The motion passed - 5 Yes 0 No

10. ADJOURNMENT.

Walker James moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:54 p.m. Paula Barnes seconded the motion. The motion passed - 5 Yes - 0 No.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Ann Arnebold

Clerk of the Board

Regular Select Board Meeting

May 12, 2008

NOT APPROVED

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Regular Select Board Meeting

July 23, 2008

Regular Meeting

March 26, 2007