

# TOWN OF ELMORE, VT

## Monthly Select Board Meeting

Meeting Minutes – prepared by G. Schwartz  
Status: Approved

**Meeting Date:** April 14, 2021

**Start Time:** 6:01 pm **Adjourn:** 7:33 pm

**Meeting Attendees via electronic means:** Caroline DeVore, Robb Wills, Glenn Schwartz, Michel LaCasse, Don Valentine, Corey Pepali, Chris Watson, Roger Marcoux, Dolan Patrick and Emily Rosenbaum

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**This meeting was conducted remotely via electronic means**

### **Meeting Minutes Approval:**

The minutes of the March 14, 2021 Select Board Meetings were approved

### **1. SPECIAL TOPICS:**

- a. **UPDATE:** Lamoille Agency of HHS – overview from Emily Rosenbaum

**Notes:** Emily and Corey presented information regarding the Lamoille Agency of HHS (see attached). The Lamoille Area Health and Human Services Response Command Center was setup as a response to Covid 19. They are working with the State Department of Health to distribute information and are working as a coordinating organization. The Select Board agreed to help spread their message.

- b. **UPDATE:** Lamoille County Sheriff's Department – Sheriff Roger Marcoux

**Notes:** The Town of Elmore used to pay the Vermont State Police to Patrol Elmore. However approximately 20 years ago, the Town and the Lamoille County Sheriff's Department came up with an agreement to share their services with the towns of Wolcott, Johnson and Hyde Park. In this agreement, the Town of Elmore would pay for and receive 20 hours per month to patrol areas within the Town in an effort to reduce burglaries. The Town receives statements that includes the number of miles patrolled, arrests, tickets and warnings. The Lamoille County Sheriff's Department committed to supply the Town with stationary Speed signs in an effort to reduce speeding within the Town of Elmore. The Select Board will discuss these boards and other related items in order to maximize efficiency and visibility of the Sheriff's Department at our next Select Board Meeting.

### **2. ACTIVE ITEMS:**

- a. **UPDATE:** Elmore Highway Maintenance Facility

**Notes:** R. Wills and R. Burley have created a Site Criteria and Rating matrix that will be used for site ranking. They are currently looking at 20 sites that will be ranked individually. They will then get together and compare their notes. The use of State property was also discussed and D. Valentine will submit questions to the Select Board.

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b. **UPDATE:** Clerk's office maintenance

**Notes:** The second door at the Town Office has been replaced. Baker Builder will be out in a few weeks to begin the soffit, fascia and shutter work. Louis Marineau Painting will follow with painting and pressure washing.

c. **DISCUSSION:** ATV use Elmore

**Notes:** The use of ATV's was discussed and the Select Board has decided not change the current policy. Therefore, the use of ATV'S on Town Roads **will not** be permitted.

d. **DISCUSSION:** Town office copier purchase/lease

**Notes:** The Town copy machine has lasted beyond its expected life and now requires replacement. The following three options were presented by S. Draper

1. Buy → \$3,889
2. 5 yr. lease \$68/month \$816/yr → \$4,080/5yr
3. 3 yr. purchase lease \$129/month → \$4,644 total

The Select Board voted unamously to purchase the new copier for the amount of \$3,889.00. G. Schwartz to notify S. Draper.

3. **CONTINUING ACTIVE ITEMS:** (Update status by principle owner):

a. **UPDATE:** Road Commissioner's Report – Lacasse

**Notes:** The Road Commissioner reported the following;

- Mud season began a couple of weeks ago so road grading is happening when weather permits.
- Equipment is ready for possible late spring snow
- 900 CY of gravel has been used to repair mud season roads. Additional material will be procured as necessary
- March had many wind events. However no major damage was incurred.
- A couple of culverts have failed and will require replacement. The worst of which is located on Beach Road.
- Prices for stone have **increase significantly** and will impact the budget.
- Greenup day is on May 1, 2021. Green trash bags are available at the Town Garage, Town Offices and the Elmore Store.

b. **CONTINUING:** Elmore Town Office Closures: Remain in effect. All person's wishing to conduct business in the Town Clerk's Office or with the Board of Listers must make an appointment. During appointments, all visitors must wear a mask to cover their nose and mouth. Office employees must practice social distancing of 6 feet. If social distancing cannot be practiced, masks must be worn.

**Notes:** The Select Board Meeting will meet in person at the next monthly meeting

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#### 4. COMPLETED/INACTIVE ITEMS: (Update status by principle owner)

- a. Review Action Item List

**Notes:** The action list was not reviewed at this meeting

#### 5. NON AGENDA/OTHER ITEMS: (Time Available)

- a. **DISCUSSION:** Check Warrant Report

**Notes:** The Check Warrant Reports that were supplied by S. Draper were reviewed and accepted by the Select Board. G. Schwartz to sign for the Board.

- b. **DISCUSSION:** Replacement of R. Burley as Town representative for Elmore CUD broadband representation.

**Notes:** R. Burley has asked to be replaced from his position as Town representative for Elmore CUD broadband representation. This request was made so that he can devote more time to the Highway Maintenance Facility. G. Schwartz in an effort to find a replacement spoke to several individuals and made the recommendation to utilize Dolan Patrick. Dolan will try to get up to speed and report back to the Board.

#### 6. EXECUTIVE OR DELIBERATIVE SESSION AS NEEDED



## Lamoille Area Health and Human Services Response Command Center

### Overview

A week after Governor Scott issued the Stay Home, Stay Safe order, a group of Lamoille area health and human services leaders convened. The goal: share information so we could serve our community until the crisis lifted. Quickly, it was clear ongoing need would be enormous, and we adopted the incident command structure.

A year later, the Lamoille Area Health and Human Services Response Command Center (LAH2S-RCC) is still at it. Our unprecedented collaboration includes more than 30 organizations and 70 people. Operations teams are: food, shelter, healthcare, mental health and substance misuse, and employment. These teams are comprised of people already doing the work, with leaders who are central to the incident command.

Every two weeks, the command meets to align on three objectives with measurable goals. Objectives range from finding housing solutions to informing people about vaccination plans to resolving a food systems issue. With people across organizations pulling in the same direction, the team rapidly solves problems involving multiple agencies and sectors. Objectives often lead to ongoing collaborative work.

LAH2s-RCC includes four elements that previously were missing from area-wide work:

- Public information: ensures the entire area is aware of evolving realities and resources. Utilizes a communications system custom built for the Lamoille area: weekly newsletter, resource page, traditional media, social media.
- Planning: provides backbone supports such as data-tracking, documentation of meetings, internal communications.
- Finance and administration: provides support to operations team, including grant writing, event planning, and support.
- Commanders: set measurable goals based on the shifting realities and needs, coordination, synthesizing.

Now, we are moving towards a sustainable model that will maintain the high levels of public information and support coordination. We want to sustain the organized collaboration that we have built through the COVID crisis and the systems-wide functions — resources that our health and human service organizations do not have in house.

## Successes

### *Substance misuse*

- Objective to support the mental health and substance misuse ops team in their efforts to reduce overdoses. Goals: 1. wide community distribution of Narcan and harm reduction packs, 2. community awareness of mental health resources, risk reduction, and other mental health initiatives. Effort involved more than five different organizations, plus the planning and public information officers.
  - At least 9 overdoses this year prevented through harm reduction packs
  - 600 harm reduction packs distributed, 300 more ordered.
- When publicized through our channels: 22 applicants for a mini-grant program for Healthy Lamoille Valley, far above their usual.

### *Employment*

- Lamoille County spiked at the highest unemployment rate in the state (25.6% in April of 2020)
- Researched, funded, created, distributed reopening kits for 60 local businesses. Included PPE, reopening protocols, and info on the evolving services and financial support. Involved: Mainstreet Alliance, Lamoille Restorative Center, employment team, planning, logistics, businesses, public information.

### *Food*

- 13 freezers around the county to store food in accessible places: requested by the food team, advanced to state senator by PIO, supported by Capstone. We're now getting 13 freezers that will be distributed in the area and maintained by area groups so food is preserved and available.
- Facilitation, distribution, and public information about Everyone Eats meals, including instantaneous collaboration when food needed movement. Supported program expansion in Lamoille, which served 150+ families in 2020. 3145 meals already served in the first few months of 2021 (Jan 25-March 14). Involved: Capstone, Meals on Wheels, Lamoille Community Food Shelf, Hunger Council, Lamoille County Mental Health, Lamoille Health Partners, planning, public information officer, houses of worship.
- Heightened collaboration with groups such as Meals on Wheels, which delivered over 50,000 meals throughout Lamoille County and Worcester.

### *Housing*

- Approximately 91 adults, 28 children experiencing homelessness in Lamoille consistently.
- March 2020: immediate collaboration to move people experiencing homelessness into GA housing and making sure they have something to eat

- Consistent collaboration through the year on providing for immediate needs (vacuum cleaners, microwaves, clothing, food, gas money, socks, voting events, flu vaccination) that transitioned eventually to FEMA funding for consistent support onsite.
- March 2021: collaborative priority setting to request American Rescue funds to purchase properties to increase the availability of affordable housing units and find a permanent home for Lamoille Community House (our local shelter).
- These efforts included pretty much everyone, requiring incredible coordination: houses of worship, entire LAH2S-RCC command, local government, schools, town clerks, Lamoille County Mental Health Services, Capstone, United Way, and so many more.

### *PPE*

- Early on in pandemic: Distributed thousands of masks, gloves, and sanitizer to organizations in the area to allow continued functioning. Collaboration between: United Way of Lamoille County, Jewish Community of Greater Stowe, Concept 2 (business), Capstone Community Action, LAH2S-RCC logistics and public information officer

### *Medical*

- In the state with the lowest COVID infection rate, Lamoille County consistently has had the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> lowest rate of all the counties.
- Objective was to promote the flu shot. Involved: VDH, Lamoille Health Partners & Blueprint for health, Copley Hospital, LAH2S-RCC public information officer, and Unified Command. Results:
  - 2019 flu vaccination: Vermont 41%, Lamoille County 39%
  - 2020 flu vaccination: Vermont 43%, Lamoille County 45%

### *Crisis funds*

Raised to help individuals address impacts of COVID in the areas of housing, utilities, food and transportation:

- United Way- \$40K
- Capstone- \$86K
- Collaboration with Stowe C-19 Fund and other town aid groups to address needs
- \$15,000 raised in early days of pandemic to provide phones with hot spots to families of students in Lamoille South for students to remotely access school. Involved: Katz Amsterdam, Capstone, Jewish Community of Greater Stowe, local schools.

### *Domestic violence and child abuse*

- Command set objective due to reports of increased domestic violence and child abuse.
- Coordinated with two school districts to bring Clarina Howard Nichols ED to speak to entire faculty.
- Designed and executed public awareness campaign on what to do in cases of suspected child abuse or domestic violence.

### *Mental Health*

- Waiting list six times the usual length for mental health supports.
- Disseminated information about short-term mental health support to community as they await help. Involved: Lamoille County Mental Health Services, Lamoille Health Partners, North Central Vermont Recovery Center, public information.
- Mental health providers survey to map resources in area for long-term planning. Involves: Katz Amsterdam funding, Lamoille Restorative Center, Capstone, mental health & substance misuse team, public information officer.
- Grant to assist with 100 Mental Health bags. Involved: United Way and Lamoille Family Center.

### *Public information*

- Weekly newsletter to 600 area leaders with information from all health and human services orgs, state partners, healthcare, etc. Information flows in and out.
  - Sharing priority each week that gets re-shared by: schools, selectboards, libraries, etc.
  - Information available when they need it.
- [United Way of Lamoille County resource page](#). Started by UWLC, now maintained by public information.
  - All information goes there, as well.
  - Provided a temporary web landing for Racial Equity Alliance of Lamoille (REAL) as they work on their page.
  - Distributed 10,000 business cards that say “Need help?”, list the resource categories, and have a website address plus QR code. Gas stations, organizations, markets, medical offices, etc.
  - Page statistics 1/1/21-3/16/21:
    - UWLC website: 1,663 (subtracting a separate event), compared with 680 visitors in the same period last year.
    - General resource page: 861 visitors
    - COVID testing: 210 visitors
    - Mental health resources: 144 visitors

- Racial equity page: 113 visitors
- Food resources: 119 visitors
- Almost all organic searches
- Monthly column in the paper.
- 358 Followers on Facebook, 130 Followers on Instagram

### **Partnerships**

- Town local assistance groups
- Schools
- Rotary clubs
- Local government
- Libraries
- Pharmacies
- Businesses
- Legislators

### **Quotes**

*From a community member:*

“About the Localvore app. I got your email and signed up. I was wondering what I was going to feed everyone. This school vacation is expensive! My bank account is in the negative until Wednesday and we have no food in the house beyond school snacks and PB&J. So it is a huge help! I just forwarded the email with the info to a friend.”

*From a selectboard member:*

“Knowing that this group was an umbrella resource that had interconnected knowledge of the state of play in the county and our community, WAS HUGE! When I first came on to the Selectboard, each group was much more siloed and now through all that LAHHS-RCC has achieved, there is a much clearer picture of need and how we might target and address these issues!”

*The News & Citizen, January 7, 2021*

[Better Together: Service Agencies Work in Concert During the Pandemic](#)