

LAW ENFORCEMENT STUDY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON / HYDE PARK / WOLCOTT
REMOTE PARTICIPATION VIA ZOOM TELECONFERENCING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3 AND WEDNESDAY MARCH 10, 2021

Present:

Committee Members: Duncan Hastings, Diana Osborn, Peter Gallo (March 3), Roger Audet, Andy Duff (March 10), Rick Hawkins (March 10)

Others: Roger Marcoux, Bill Morley (March 3), Kara Lanphear (March 3), Chris Watson (March 10), Kurt Klein (March 10), Randall Szott (March 10)

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. *Call to Order*

Duncan called the meeting to order at 6:30 on March 3.

2. *Changes to Agenda*

No changes to the agenda were needed.

3. *Review and Approve Minutes of 2/3/21 Meeting*

Diana moved and Peter seconded to approve the minutes of February 3, 2021.

Peter suggested maybe the minutes should be shorter and just include the salient points. Duncan said he thinks about what someone ten years from now would want to know about the meeting. If the minutes are too general people won't have a sense of what the meeting was about. Diana said because these meetings have not been attended by people outside the committee, the minutes are the only opportunity for anyone to know what was going on. For that reason she thinks she would be in favor leaving them as is.

The motion was passed.

4. *Meet with Sheriff Roger Marcoux*

The committee had previously sent questions to Roger Marcoux. He provided answers for the first 3 questions. Then the meeting was adjourned until March 10 at 6:30 because the committee learned that a conflicting meeting had been scheduled for the same Zoom meeting room. The meeting resumed at 6:30 on March 10.

Roger Marcoux explained that sheriff's departments in Vermont have primary responsibilities for transportation of people who are in custody for mental health or corrections and the service of civil papers. They are mandated to provide transportation but not given funding to buy cars to do the transports. So the legislature gave sheriff's departments the ability to do contracted work hoping they could make enough money from that to do their mandated work.

For the benefit of the new committee members, Roger started over again with the answer to the first question that had been sent to him. Question 1 was about staffing. Roger said LCSD has a total of 6 patrol deputies and 1 detective assigned as full-time Level III trained law enforcement officers. They have a detective sergeant, a patrol sergeant and 2 corporals. They all take calls and handle shift supervision. The part-time captain's primary oversight is all day-to-day administrative functions while the supervisor on duty has operational oversight. The first job for

each of these people is to answer calls and perform law enforcement functions. Oversight and supervision is a collateral duty.

Question 2 was about administrative and part-time personnel and how their costs are assigned to the contract budget. Does the budget line item for salaries include these services? Roger said the budget line item for salaries includes everything. We pay 1/3 of the \$30K cost for an administrative person and 1/3 of the \$45K cost for a captain. Roger is allowed 5% as administrative fees by statute. He takes 3%, which is \$30K. There is \$16K allotted for part-time deputy positions to assist with things like transports and major cases. Overtime is also part of the salary item.

Question 3 was about hours and shifts for officers. The committee had created a staffing spreadsheet and asked if it was accurate and if current coverage meets the needs of the towns or the terms of the contracts.

Roger said the spreadsheet for the most part accurately reflects the hours and shifts. Two primary deputies per day are working 12 hour shifts each. The hours of operation, which do not deviate, are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. The overlapping shift hours for a second deputy may change in accordance with patrol town needs of the day. Non-patrol contract deputies are called on in the event of serious incidents or natural disasters and they are paid through the contract.

LCSD meets the obligations of the contract. The open shifts that occur due to turnover of deputies are covered by overtime shifts. This is not an optimal practice as it contributes to burnout. Deputies are busy responding to calls for service and the associated investigations and paperwork. Town calls for extra service such as traffic enforcement in specific areas are called directed patrol. Calls for service are prioritized and traffic enforcement usually occurs when all other work is completed. Two people on every shift would enhance safety and the ability to cover more requested directed patrols.

Roger described the functions of each position:

Senior patrol sgt. – oversees day-to-day operations; 12 hour rotating shift; responds to calls and covers shifts.

Detective sgt. – investigates all major crime, predominantly busy with sexual and domestic assaults/abuse cases; works 8 hour shifts; has supervisory duties; called out for backup and crime response.

Patrol sgt. (currently open) – works opposite rotating 12 hour shift from senior patrol sgt. Supervisory duties and responds to calls.

Two corporals – covers sergeant's duties if they are not available; responds to calls; 12 hour rotating shifts.

Patrol deputies – responds to calls; 12 hour rotating shifts

All patrol personnel have collateral duty patrol responsibilities to become certified trainers for training mandated by the Vermont Criminal Justice Council, which is unfunded.

The school resource officer is assigned and paid through the school district and is not part of the patrol budget.

Question 4 was about whether the school resource officer is part of the patrol contract and whether the patrol contract budget funds any portion of the SRO's work. Roger said in the past the expense and revenue for that position were put in the patrol budget because there was no other place to account for it, but that was confusing so Roger took it out and put it in the administrative budget. Off school time the SRO works as reserve deputy and is paid through the administrative reserve budget. She occasionally assists patrol. She is available for backup in emergencies when she is at school.

Question 5 was about patrol services to Elmore. Is there a separate contract with Elmore? Do the costs of services to Elmore accurately reflect investments made by the patrol towns? Roger said there is a contract with the Town of Elmore for 20 hours per month. This arrangement was agreed to by patrol towns years ago. The patrol deputies and cruisers are there on patrol time or overtime. This is a traffic control task and all revenue is applied to the patrol budget. The contract covers all overhead.

Question 6 is whether there are any other services are being provided to other towns, departments, agencies, or entities which are supported by the budget being assigned to the patrol towns. Roger said all work LCSD does that uses a deputy has an associated contract or budget. Codes on timesheets establish which pot of money pays for the deputies' time. Patrol deputies stick to patrol functions and if they are needed for something else they are paid out of that other account. There is a contract with the Town of Eden to pay for LCSD deputies responding there. All overhead is covered; however, it results in less than \$1K a year.

Question 7 is about how mutual aid works in Lamoille County and whether the amount of assistance LCSD gives and receives is appropriate and balanced. Roger said law enforcement challenges have changed significantly over the last 20 to 30 years. Working alone as a patrol deputy over a large territory is very dangerous and results in a high burnout rate. Morristown PD probably back LCSD up as much as or more than LCSD backs them up. Stowe PD and Morristown PD have multiple people working a shift and through the years each department and deputies and officers have learned to listen for the types of calls that may require backup. They all work together seamlessly. LCSD backs up the State Police on life threatening calls. LCSD has a contract with Eden that they will reimburse LCSD for time spent there. There is a drug investigative team collaboration with MPD, SPD and federal agents. They also work mutual aid with serious child-related sexual assault type crimes. Mutual aid is fair and balanced.

Question 8 is about whether LCSD collects and analyzes information on calls for service, response times, arrests, tickets issued or other outcomes and if so how the information is used. Roger said calls, cases, and body cams are reviewed by the captain and sergeants. The sheriff meets with one or more of these individuals daily to discuss the results. LCSD understands they

are a customer service business and they are looking to maintain and improve that service. The department has hired a part-time community liaison to study the patrol race data on traffic stops. Statistics are provided to selectboards once a month and to the media once a week. LCSD has studied major crime trends such as arsons and drug trafficking, which has allowed them to set up overtime details for activities such as surveillance. They are also able to study busy times for calls. Roger feels they understand their needs and that the people of the towns are well served. However, there is a perception from some people that they are not out working because people do not see them. The statistics indicate that each deputy has the same or more incidents handled than their counterparts with a larger department. LCSD is doing the same or more with less resources.

Question 9 was what Roger sees as the greatest law enforcement challenges facing the patrol towns and how he thinks those challenges can best be met. Roger said domestic violence and people in mental health crisis, with both involving substance abuse, are challenges within the department and the situation is not improving. Of concern is the disturbing number of sex crimes involving children. Time involved in investigation and documentation of criminal cases is increasing. In the meantime LCSD is responding to quality of life complaints such as speeding that are very demanding.

Out of state drug traffickers continue to deliver illicit drugs to local distributors. There has been an increase in the level of violence associated with drug trafficking in the county, with more firearms present than ever before. Drug trafficking is responsible for more burglaries, break-ins and overdoses (with deaths resulting.) Drug trafficking has impacted many families where children are neglected and caused LCSD to partner with the Department of Children and Families in order to protect those children. The number of families affected by substance use disorder continues to grow and tear the fabric of our Lamoille County life. Illicit drugs are a significant threat that is worsening year to year.

Question 10 was what LCSD's greatest challenges are in providing services under the current structures and whether there are specific things that could improve or eliminate those challenges. Roger said the most significant issue for LCSD is the rising cost of providing services. LCSD must be competitive with the surrounding law enforcement agencies who are unionized and have a 20-year retirement. LCSD and our patrol towns suffer greatly when for years we have lost people to surrounding agencies because LCSD does not have a 20-year retirement option and because deputies do not want to work shifts alone. Retirement issues will require the towns to apply pressure to the State Treasurer's Office. Increasing budget issues have prevented a safe level of staffing. As law enforcement becomes more regulated, more training hours are mandated by the state. These costs are not paid for by the state but are passed on to the patrol communities.

Question 11 was whether Roger foresees any difficulty maintaining the current level of law enforcement while addressing these challenges. Roger said LCSD has been dealing with the above mentioned items for 40 years, yet the level of service to the community has equaled or surpassed those of our neighboring law enforcement agencies, with fewer resources. He believes LCSD cannot continue to recruit people in the same way as in the past because fewer people are applying. Retaining people is challenging because deputies trained to a Level III standard are a

valuable commodity. Without the retirement and safe staffing levels LCSD continues to lose deputies. Most new applicants are entry level. Patrol towns pay for the initial training at around \$20-25K per person. If LCSD cannot properly staff the department in the future, the patrol program is in jeopardy. Entry level deputies stay for sometimes not even a year then leave. LCSD finds entry level candidates and the patrol towns pay for the training. The other municipalities in the county avoid this cost by hiring a currently certified deputy. If the patrol towns started their own police department they might avoid some of these issues because municipalities are allowed in VMERS. However there are significant costs associated with the creation of a municipal police department.

Question 12 was whether Roger foresees lack of a 20-year retirement plan and officers working alone on a shift leading to problems providing services under the contracts if solutions cannot be found. Roger said he believes he answered that in the answer to the previous question.

Question 13 was about use and inventory of equipment purchased under the contract, which remains the property of LCSD, and whether LCSD would be open to a change in the contract allowing the assets to become the property of the contract towns. Roger said patrol contract equipment is solely for patrol use. The LCSD also contributes non patrol contract money toward patrol equipment. For instance LCSD donated \$100K over the past 3 years to buy patrol cruisers outside the patrol budget. LCSD also buys fingerprint machines, office furniture, etc. Inventories are kept for insurance purposes. Much of the language in the contract has been in place since the early days of the sheriff's department. The idea was to make certain that if one town left the group 1/3 of the equipment would not be taken away from the other two towns. LCSD would consider new language on this issue.

Question 14 was what kind of plan to provide law enforcement services to the contract towns Roger would design if he could design a plan from scratch. Roger said for now he believes a fully staffed department with at least 2 people on duty for all shifts and a comparable benefits package for the patrol deputies is the most desirable situation for the partner towns. LCSD has a federal COPS grant for a 7th person but will not staff that position without further feedback from patrol town selectboards. Morristown's incident numbers are comparable to LCSD's and they have 8 positions plus a detective. They have a chief and 1.5 FTO for clerical. Their budget is \$1.3 million for FY21. Roger thinks the immediate future for the patrol towns should also envision the addition of other partners. Elmore and Eden could be approached. Cambridge has been approached but competing with the status quo where they get VSP primary enforcement for nothing has been very difficult.

The patrol towns can consider starting a police department but there are startup costs to include a facility, radio communications, infrastructure, a chief of police, clerical assistance, a police union, etc. The towns would also assume the liability and directly deal with complaints and policies, but would have more control.

He believes in the future – 10 to 20 years from now – a regional public safety department may be the most efficient way to deliver services to the towns, starting with law enforcement and EMS. If Morristown agreed to join with Hyde Park, Johnson and Wolcott we might be able to cover vacations, sickness and attrition in a more comprehensive manner. Patrol staffing will

continue to increase in this scenario; however, management and administration may be consolidated. There would be cost savings in volume purchases of equipment, ammunition, training, etc. The trend in some areas of this state's municipalities has been to combine fire, law enforcement and EMS with one public safety director. Lamoille County should study this concept as creating a full-time cadre of firefighters supplemented with volunteers may be the most affordable option if combined with many communities. Strategic placement of public safety equipment may reduce the need for redundant assets.

For the next several years he thinks proper staffing and comparable salaries and benefits for LCSD is the best avenue for patrol towns.

Question 15 was whether there is an adequate succession plan for providing contract services upon Roger's retirement and whether it has been effectively communicated to the contract towns. Roger said he sees a seamless transition from one sheriff to the next. It was seamless when Sheriff Manosh passed away and he was appointed. He never had the benefit of speaking to him about a succession plan, but he saw the value of the patrol division in the community and he continued to provide the service. There is someone on his staff who he is mentoring to be the sheriff in a few years but ultimately it will be up to the voters. When he is 2 years away from retiring he will work with patrol towns and make a smooth transition possible. He believes there will be no problem in the continuity of patrol services.

Question 16 was which agencies, services or program providers collaborate with LCSD and what opportunities exist for future cooperation. Roger said all law enforcement agencies in Lamoille County work with Lamoille County Mental Health, all of the Agency of Human Services departments and schools. Some groups suggest replacing police officers with social workers on some calls. Those workers need police protection when people are in crisis; otherwise, they normally go to the calls without LCSD involvement. Roger believes embedding of social workers with rural police is possible but the current system of support for law enforcement in Lamoille County is sufficient until more resources become available.

Question 17 was about LCSD's role in enforcement of town ordinances and state statutes concerning "minor" topics like parking, animals, ATV's/snowmobiles, disputes, etc. Roger said LCSD does issue tickets for violations of local ordinances and state violations. The deputy has the discretion to either write a ticket or issue a warning. It should happen when a deputy sees a violation and certainly when they are requested and not on a more important call. For years there has been discussion between towns of hiring a dedicated ordinance deputy to handle animal complaints, health officer type issues, etc. LCSD does not participate in snowmobile or ATV enforcement as they do not have the staffing.

Question 18 was how LCSD balances prevention, community service and public awareness activities with pursuit of criminals. How are these projects funded and how does it affect the town contracts? Roger said the patrol division is part of the overall department which includes many divisions. The sheriff has been involved in many initiatives that address prevention, community service and awareness. Roger is the person who takes on those initiatives. His job is to weave these activities into the different LCSD programs. Any crime that can be prevented from happening helps our patrol program. However, the money to address prevention does not

come out of the patrol budget. The drug take back initiative is statewide and there is a contract with the Vermont Department of Health. The school resource officer is paid for through a contract with the school district. The DEA Task Force deputy works in our patrol area with patrol that is not funded out of patrol but has resulted in big arrests this year. LCSD has used non-patrol money to purchase or help purchase equipment. LCSD initiatives have been an added value to patrol towns because Roger can access resources for non-patrol programs that help prevent crimes.

Duncan asked, acknowledging the issues Roger raised regarding the Vermont Municipal Employees' Retirement System and his observation that a more regional police force might be a long term approach, does Roger see any way under the current format that the towns could assist him with the state treasurer who manages VMERS? One option for communities is formation of a Union Municipal District. Can Roger see any scenario where goals of more regional policing and addressing retirement and retention issues might be achieved under a Union Municipal District?

Roger said an intermunicipal district would be municipal and that would allow its law enforcement employees to access the VMERS 20-year option. That would take care of the retirement issue. There are some sheriff's departments that are allowed in the municipal retirement plan but he has been told he is stuck forever with what he previously agreed to. There are legislators who are willing to address that. He has been fighting at the statehouse for access to VMERS for 4 or 5 years. If Wolcott, Johnson and Hyde Park created an intermunicipal district and the district had its own police department he believes employees would immediately have access to VMERS. There is a chance that will happen with the sheriff's department.

Duncan asked if Roger sees any possibility of the sheriff's department providing law enforcement services for a Union Municipal District. Roger said his understanding is that to be in the municipal retirement system employees would have to be municipal employees. But if they are employees of the intermunicipal district then the district has liability. Currently all the liability related to staffing is with the sheriff's department. That is one good reason for towns to contract with LCSD.

Andy Duff said he wondered if Morrisville or Stowe could ever be consolidated into a county-wide agency so one agency would provide services to the whole county. Roger said there are a lot of local control issues. Stowe pays a lot of money for their police department and wants to have control over it. He thinks way down the road consolidation is a way to provide effective services. We see that in other states where a single police department covers a large area. He has not talked to Morristown or Stowe about this.

Andy asked, has any other county in the state tried this? Roger said there are a few intermunicipal districts. One was created when Hardwick teamed up with Greensboro. He understands maybe Greensboro is going a different direction this year. There may be a few others. It is a natural fit for county sheriff's departments but then operation is at the whim of the sheriff, as opposed to setting up a police commission or some structure that gives more control.

Andy said we call one entity a city police force and call one a sheriff's department but what we are really interested in is law enforcement across the board. He is not as interested in the names as in the function.

Roger said he thinks the possibility of bringing in more revenue by having more partners is something that has to be studied as costs go up. That is one thing the committee could look at.

Andy said it seems like administrative and supervisory services could be streamlined. Roger said he thinks the thing to look at is where consolidation could happen. Multiple buildings would still be needed to serve a spread out area, but maybe there could be one human resources department and one chief.

Duncan said he agrees with Roger that the long term solution to issues of law enforcement is probably going to be a more regionally based model. It is very difficult to get towns to relax the degree of control they have over their own police department. Our focus as a group is on the 3 current patrol contract towns. We could recommend in our report, and probably should, that towns over the course of time investigate opportunities for more regionalized police services. But the only thing we have control over now is the 3 towns that contract with LCSD. We can say whatever we want regarding regional policing but we don't have much voice.

Diana said she thinks moving forward we are not only constrained by the things that have been mentioned but also by state statute. She is finding what seem to be points of contradiction between the reality in Lamoille County and what she is reading online. For instance, she heard Roger say tonight that the sheriff's department has a mandate to transport but the state doesn't pay for it. But she can see in state statute where it says "Full-time deputy sheriffs whose primary responsibility is transportation of prisoners and persons with a mental condition or psychiatric disability shall be paid by the State of Vermont." And she also heard Roger mention things that are paid for by the contract towns when state statute mentions those things being paid for by the county. She is anxious to hear how this really works.

Roger said the state pays for 25 deputies statewide to do transports. Lamoille County does not have one of these full-time deputies. The state pays per diem and LCSD has to find reserve deputies willing to come in when a transport is needed. LCSD has to provide them a car that LCSD buys. He can't believe in this day and age this is still the way the state is functioning with respect to this, but it is.

Diana said state statute refers to the county as the funding source for Roger's salary, but there is no job description. Roger said money for the sheriffs and the 25 deputies comes out of the state but they are not considered state employees. The county cannot pay for any law enforcement services. Back in the late 70's Lamoille County took Stowe to court because Stowe didn't pay their county taxes. Stowe questioned why they should pay for sheriff's department law enforcement services when they had a police department. Stowe lost and then they appealed and won. The court said a municipality can't be forced to pay county taxes for law enforcement services.

Diana said the main statute that discusses the county situation is 24 V.S.A. § 73. Roger said 24 V.S.A. § 290 also discusses sheriff's department operations. Diana said what is being described as the state model doesn't seem to be what is happening. Chris Watson read from 24 V.S.A. § 73:

The county shall provide the sheriff with an adequate bond, a suitable office, office equipment and supplies, and adequate telephone service. The sheriff's department shall also be provided with law enforcement equipment, supplies, insurance, and funds for maintaining and operating such equipment as the assistant judges consider necessary to ensure that the department operates in a safe, accountable, and professional manner. The county shall also provide reasonable secretarial assistance and bookkeeping assistance. The county shall also provide funds necessary for department personnel to comply with basic and in-service training requirements established by the Vermont Criminal Justice Council; funds to provide the matching share for grants from federal, State, or private sources; and funds to pay the liability insurance premiums for the sheriff and sheriff's deputies.

Roger said that that describes what the assistant judges are responsible to give the sheriff's department. They will only give those resources they feel are directly involved in the courts. Statute specifically says the county will not incur any costs associated with any contracts the sheriffs might have. So contract towns have to pay the true cost.

Diana said Roger had said the patrol contracts pay for training but this says the county pays for training. Roger said the assistant judges will train deputies who work in the court. When he got here 20 years ago they wanted clear separation between what they were paying for and what they were not paying for. They are supposed to pay for electricity but LCSD has a 911 call center that uses a lot of electricity. So the county pays a portion of the electricity cost, patrol pays a portion and communications pays a portion. The backing for that is the lawsuit that occurred.

Duncan said the reference to what the judges consider necessary is referring to the side judges in the development of their budget. What Roger is saying is consistent with his understanding that county funding for sheriffs' departments is just related to maintenance of the court system, not general law enforcement. Roger said 50 cents of each dollar is coming from Stowe and Stowe has a real interest in making sure they are not paying for things not clearly stated in statute.

There was a comment that there are two things going on – this year's budget and looking at the future. Roger said costs will continue to rise, so he suggested the 3 towns talk about it and see if there is anything better out there. He is hoping LCSD will continue to provide the services for the towns but if the towns identify a better deal, who is he to say it's a bad idea? He is hoping LCSD will be the best deal that is available.

Diana said it seems that towns with more money and their own departments, like Stowe, drive the system into being one where each town needs to provide its own service, as opposed to the sheriff's department being the default system for the entire county and a town choosing to supplement with their own service. Is that true?

Roger said the sheriff's department is not the default. He thinks LCSD is the only sheriff's department in the state that provides 24/7 coverage, though he thinks Franklin County is going to start. The default service is the Vermont State Police. You can get them for nothing. The problem is that they have such a large area to cover. Are they going to handle the full range of complaints LCSD handles and how long will it take them to get to you? The office that covers this area is in Williston. That is what the towns have to weigh. Are people willing to put up with less, especially around quality of life services?

Diana said what she doesn't understand is why the county default wouldn't be the sheriff so there would be overlapping coverage rather than boundary coverage. Roger said because there is no way to pay the sheriff for the service. The Stowe vs. Lamoille County case says there is no way to use county taxes. He can't make a town pay for law enforcement service out of county taxes. Duncan said he suspects the only other way to make that happen would be legislative change from the state to adequately finance county sheriffs' departments to do full service law enforcement for every town in the county.

Diana said that brings her back to the observation that it is really state statute that seems to be driving the system into being what it is. Roger said there was a point in time where county sheriffs were the law enforcement for towns. The State Police started in 1946. LCSD started in the 1860's or 1870's. At some point in time the municipalities took more control over their towns. The county form of government never really took hold in Vermont like it has in other states.

Diana said 24 V.S.A. § 296 says transportation to correctional facilities can be made by any sheriff, deputy sheriff, State Police officer, police officer, or constable in the State. But she is hearing now that it can't just be any police officer but has to be someone from the sheriff's department. Roger said by statute anyone a judge orders into mental health or correctional custody is transported by the sheriff's department. The reason for the other language is that any law enforcement officer has to be able to make an arrest and transport to a correctional facility. Then the next morning a sheriff's department officer will get them and bring them to a judge.

Roger said Diana and everyone else on the committee has a standing invitation to visit the sheriff's department for more information.

Duncan said it has always been his general understanding that a constable's law enforcement authority only extends to the town where they were appointed. Is that also true when transporting a criminal? Roger said it is up to each town whether to give its constable law enforcement authority. If they are going to have law enforcement authority they have to go through the academy and that gives them statewide jurisdiction. But there is the question of whether the town wants to take on the liability of them making an arrest in a different town. They do have statewide jurisdiction if they go through the police academy but what limits them is the authority given to them by their selectboard. Duncan said he thinks there is also a section of statute that says if a constable is going to work in another town they need consent from the selectboard of the other town. Roger agreed.

Duncan said when he worked for the Village of Johnson they ran an electric department and had similar problem training and then losing lineworkers. It cost the village more than \$30K to train a lineworker. They ended up implementing a contract provision that if the village paid 100% of the cost of training, the employee agreed to a set number of years of working for the village and if they left before that time they would compensate the village for a portion of the training cost. Is that anything LCSD has considered or would consider? Roger said they started doing multi-year contracts. He currently has a couple of cases where people left and owe LCSD money but their attorney says it will cost so much to litigate that they will come out on the losing end. So they are now looking at the efficacy of those contracts.

5. *Next Steps*

Duncan said it might make sense for him to have a brief side meeting with Rick and Andy to bring them up to speed on where we are. He feels we probably have gathered enough information to generate our report. Is there any more information we need to gather or can we begin drafting the report?

Diana said a lot of that hinges on the survey that was going to go out to selectboard members. Looking at the responses and knowing whether we had met their expectations would be the best way to confirm whether we are ready to start the report. Duncan said he has gotten only 7 responses to the survey and 5 are from Johnson. Ron Rodjenski and Randall Szott both responded. He can send another email encouraging other selectboard members to return the survey. He would say there is a pretty strong unanimity among those who responded and that we are pretty much on target with their expectations. Diana said if nothing glaring has come up in those, she is comfortable with starting on the report.

The committee discussed the format of the report and the process to use in developing it.

There was a question about whether this committee will die after this report is finished. Duncan said his take is that at that point our work would be done. He would hope there would be recommendations of the report that the selectboards would want to take to the next logical step, which may lead to formation of a new committee with perhaps a different focus addressing recommendations in the report.

Diana said at the end of this month she will start a 7-month backpacking trip. She is happy to be involved as much as she can before that, then she will have to bow out.

There was some further discussion about the format of the report.

6. *Adjourn*

Diana moved to adjourn, Roger seconded, the motion was passed and the meeting was adjourned at 8:22.