

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
March 3, 2022
(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Carol A. Fachini, Michael G. Denault, Pamela Tworig, and Brandon Field.

Visitors: Robert Bouchard, Carolyn Brooks, Laura Champagne, Helen Fields, Karen Kuranda, Sheila Lawrence, Luke McKay, Tom Nazzewski, Beth Phelps, Dan Potvin, Jessica Tatro, Trevor Tatro, and Natalie Yorke.

David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.

William Levine, Emergency Management Director.

Lori Shepard, Selectboard Secretary.

Mike Denault, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., opened with the Pledge of Allegiance, and welcomed everyone.

REORGANIZATION OF BOARD

MOTION by Mike Denault to nominate Nancy Bushika as Selectboard Chair. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Brandon Field to nominate Mike Denault as Vice Chair. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Mike Denault to nominate Carol Fachini as Clerk. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

JUDICIAL BUREAU APPOINTMENTS

MOTION by Mike Denault to keep all the current judicial appointments the same. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

DESIGNATION OF MEETING DATES

MOTION by Mike Denault to meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at 6:00 p.m. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. Meeting dates are subject to review and may be changed. It was noted that sometimes School Board meeting are held on the same night as Selectboard meetings. Bill Levine suggested that if the boards held their special meetings on Wednesdays, there would not be a conflict. The Selectboard will suggest this to the School Directors.

DESIGNATION OF NEWSPAPER FOR PUBLICATIONS

MOTION by Mike Denault to designate The Berkshire Eagle as the newspaper for publications. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

DESIGNATION OF SELECTBOARD MEMBER TO REVIEW WARRANTS

MOTION by Mike Denault to designate Nancy Bushika to review bills and have the authority to approve payments prior to Selectboard meetings. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

DESIGNATION OF HIGHWAY LIASON

MOTION by Mike Denault to appoint Brandon Field as liaison to the highway department. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

DESIGNATION OF SHERIFF/STATE POLICE LIAISON

MOTION by Brandon Field to appoint Mike Denault as liaison to the sheriff's department/state police.
SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

APPOINTMENTS

1. Susan Flash submitted a request to serve as Green Up Day Coordinator.
2. Bill Levine asked that the board hold off on making any appointments to the Emergency Management Director and the Emergency Management Coordinator positions.
3. Annemarie Potvin does not want to be reappointed as an alternate to the Planning Commission. Jessica Tatro stated that she would like to serve as the Planning Commission alternate. Nancy Bushika did not feel alternates were necessary and noted that no other boards have alternates. Karen Kuranda is also willing to be an alternate for the Planning Commission.

MOTION by Mike Denault to appoint Jessica Tatro as the Planning Commission alternate. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

4. MOTION by Mike Denault to appoint Carolyn Brooks to the Community Projects Committee for the three year term formerly held by Pat Sullivan. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

5. MOTION by Mike Denault to appoint each as designated below. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

Zoning Board of Adjustment: Jean Kurpiel, 3 year term

Zoning Board of Adjustment: Sheila Lawrence, 3 year term

Dog Officer: Luke McKay, 1 year term

Energy Coordinator: Jennifer Hughs, 1 year term

Septic Officer: Maura Hawkins, 1 year term

Planning Commission: Sheila Lawrence, 4 year term

Planning Commission: Jenifer Hughs, 4 year term

Conservation Commission: Sheila Lawrence, 4 year term

Road Commissioner: David R. Tatro, 1 year term

Tree Warden: Bruce Richardson, 1 year term

Bennington County Regional Commission representatives: Debra Burchard and Daniel J. Potvin, 1 year terms

Green Up Day Coordinator: Susan Flash, 1 year term

HEARING OF VISITORS:

1. Karen Kuranda would like the Selectboard meetings to be held in the gym when there are so many people in attendance. Mike Denault noted that per the Governor's order, it is no longer required, but it is something the Selectboard often accommodates.
2. Carolyn Brooks asked about the most efficient way to keep the website up to date, citing that it did not have the town meeting or election information listed. Nancy Bushika noted that it is a new website, a work in progress, and they intend to have it up to date.
3. Dan Potvin congratulated Pam Tworig for her win on the Selectboard and reminded everyone about the oath they took to uphold the Vermont Constitution. With current world events, Dan Potvin urged everyone to get a copy of the letter from the town office explaining how to survive a nuclear fallout and having supplies to be able to stay in your basement for two weeks if you are in the radiation zone. He said that FEMA's latest statement is incorrect. He also recalled the letter he disseminated at the beginning of COVID-19 urging everyone to plant gardens and build up three months' worth of supplies. He said fertilizer will become very expensive. Dan Potvin said he is not fear mongering, he wants the residents to have this information, to buy seeds and plan ahead.

4. Helen Fields indicated that compost can be purchased from Holiday Farms in Dalton, MA by the truck load. She said she started the Seed Savers Group and is looking for others she can train to take over. She will talk to the principal about making the garden at the school more functional. She believes food security and seed saving are essential. Dan Potvin offered to rototill gardens for residents in town.
5. Natalie Yorke would like them to put together a presentation on food preservation.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #7 \$ 8,057.23 payroll

WARRANT #8 \$32,684.40 accounts payable

MINUTES

Natalie Yorke would like 2 sentences added to the last meeting's minutes. Since she was identified as the representative of the citizens group of the ATV subcommittee, she would like it noted that Jessica Tatro was representing the Stamford Ridge Riders Group. She also wants a specific statement that she made included, as follows: Natalie Yorke indicated that the citizen members of the committee will work with the Stamford Ridge Riders to find ways for them to access the trails locally in the future if they so choose. Nancy Bushika stated that the minutes are meant to be a summary; they are not word for word verbatim, and that Lori Shepard does an excellent job with them.

MOTION by Brandon Field to accept the regular meeting minutes of February 17, 2022 as written.

SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. The Dodge is back from Bedard Brothers.
2. Dave Tatro has called the contractor for the Lincoln Road project.
3. The town has not received the bill for the loader from Milton Cat.
4. Nancy Bushika would like our grant submittals to reflect all our hidden costs. The board agreed.
5. Nancy Bushika noted that since the Purchasing Policy has been signed, the board can now move forward to update the Hazardous Mitigation Plan.

RECYCLING

Nothing to report.

REVIEW RESULTS OF TOWN MEETING

The board felt there was a great turnout. Mike Denault suggested moving Bill Levine's location as moderator so he has a better view of the townspeople and board members. Nancy Bushika had compiled a list of town meeting attendance over the past two decades and it was about 15% of the voter base, occasionally 20%. Helen Fields thanked the Finance Committee, saying their advice is very helpful. She would like to have food at town meeting and thinks it will promote community building.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Bill Levine indicated that the access to attend the first Regional Emergency Management meeting was changed and apologized for not relaying it to the town office and Dan Potvin. He attended the meeting. He indicated that the state has moved the emergency management section dealing with hazardous material to a centralized, statewide emergency management committee. The remaining local emergency management has been changed from local to regional and is now divided into 5 or 6 sections across the state. The Bennington region will meet again in another 3 months. Dan Potvin was originally appointed as a voting representative to the Bennington regional emergency group along with Bill Levine.

Bill Levine clarified that they want Emergency Management Directors from each town along with a representative from emergency services, so Dan Potvin will not be a voting member and he will look for a representative from the fire department.

2021 GRAND LIST

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to sign the 2021 Grand List stating there were no suits pending. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

UNIFORM MUNICIPAL EXCESS WEIGHT PERMIT

MOTION by Mike Denault to approve the Uniform Municipal Excess Weight Permit applications from Barrett Trucking Co., Inc., Renaud Bros. Inc. and Valley Crane Services, Inc. SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The appropriate fees and insurance information were received from each applicant.

BENNINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

The town has not received a renewal contract. The matter was discussed and Mike Denault will contact the sheriff's office again. There has been a noticeable increase of state troopers in town and Mike Denault will contact them for more information. He reiterated the importance of watching out for each other, paying attention and staying safe.

LEGISLATIVE REAPPORTIONMENT

Nancy Bushika updated the Selectboard on the most recent legislative reapportionment map which would put Stamford with Somerset, Readsboro, Searsburg and half of Pownal. Nancy Bushika requested and was granted permission from the board to work with the town clerk to prepare a response indicating that we do not want to be grouped with Pownal. Our town has nothing in common with Pownal, no connecting roads, no shared school districts or similar needs. Pownal's overwhelmingly larger population could reduce our representative voice. We will also acquire a new representative since Laura Sibilia will not be able to represent us in the new grouping.

JOINT MEETINGS WITH SCHOOL BOARD

The board would like to resume joint meetings with the School Board. Nancy Bushika will contact Erika Bailey and will suggest a Wednesday night meeting.

SUMMER MOWING

Nancy Bushika asked if the board would like to bid the job or contact the current contractor about his rates. Last year we sent an invitation to bid to several contractors and only received one bid. The board should review the specs and decide whether to pay per year or per mowing. Pam Tworig thought going out to bid was best and the person who submitted a bid for the cemetery work might be interested. Nancy Bushika and Pam Tworig will review the mowing specifications and discuss with the board at the next meeting. Helen Fields said the school lawn looks healthier with less mowings.

AUDITORS

The Selectboard will use the Selectboard report from the town report for inclusion in the auditor's report.

VERMONT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Nancy Bushika requested permission to sign a letter for the Building Community Group to support a grant they are pursuing from the Vermont Community Foundation. Nancy Bushika was uncomfortable

about being fiscally responsible for the grant. Carolyn Brooks reassured her and said the group is under the umbrella of the town.

MOTION by Pam Tworig to sign the letter of support. SECONDED by Carol Fachini.

Dan Potvin recalled that decisions should not be made during new business since the item was not on the agenda. The approval cannot wait until the next meeting due to the grant deadline. The board agreed that the sign installation project was started some time ago and is halfway completed. Nancy Bushika will sign the letter of support tonight and they will make the decision official at the next meeting.

ELECTION

Mike Denault congratulated Pam on her Selectboard win. He also thanked Dan Potvin for his years of service on the board, saying Dan Potvin was the one who encouraged him to run. Pam Tworig wants to move forward and work to bring this town back together. She offered to help Dan Potvin with his 5k race this spring. Nancy Bushika said this town has always come together during times of need.

DOG CLINIC

Luke McKay has scheduled the Rabies Clinic for Sunday, March 20, 2022 from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the town office.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini
Clerk

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REMINDERS

1. Anyone interested in helping Bill Levine review the contents of the Red Cross trailer or interested in forming a Citizen Response Group should contact Bill Levine directly or the town office.
2. Please visit the town's new official website: www.stamfordt.net for town information and updates.