

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
June 2, 2022
(UNAPPROVED)**

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

Visitors: Sally Bohl, Megan Bouchard, Robert Bouchard, Debra Burchard, Laura Champagne, Theresa Denault, Eleanor Derby-Kilfoyle, Kurt Gamari, Dennis W. Hart, Michael Hart, Alan Mutart, Thomas Nazzewski, Jody Pecor, Beth Phelps, Daniel Potvin, James M. Quirk, Debra Righi, James Righi, Jessica Tatro, Trevor Tatro, Walter Winship, Donna W. Williams, and Natalie Yorke.
James Sullivan, Bennington County Regional Commission.
David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.
William Levine, Emergency Management Director.
Lori Shepard, Selectboard Secretary.

Nancy Bushika called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., opened with the Pledge of Allegiance, welcomed everyone, and read a statement with procedural rules for the meeting. Additional correspondence was added to the agenda. There were no changes to its order.

HEARING OF VISITORS

Dan Potvin recommended people consider having wood as a backup heating source. He also stated that he received a donation of hull-less oat seeds. If anyone is interested in growing oats, please get in touch with him.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of May 19, 2022 as written.
SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:
WARRANT #21 \$ 7,850.42 payroll
WARRANT #22 \$69,531.78 accounts payable

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. The highway crew is beginning the roadside mowing.
2. Dave Tatro is working with Jim Henderson from the Bennington County Regional Commission for a stone-lined ditching project for next summer's Municipal Road Grants-In-Aid project.

RECYCLING

None.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. Bill Levine attended an emergency management meeting. The statewide coordinator for Vdart (Vermont Disaster Animal Response Team) stated that emergency shelters should include provisions for people's animals.
2. Bill Levine advised that the state has funds for Hazard Mitigation. The town is currently using some of those funds to update its Hazard Mitigation Plan.
3. The state is offering Emergency Management Director training on September 20, 2022 and September 21, 2022. It will be the last online Emergency Management Director course available.

VILLAGE CENTER DESIGNATION

Deb Burchard introduced the village center designation that the Planning Commission has been working on. Jim Sullivan from the Bennington County Regional Commission explained the process and how this designation does not change any zoning, but will give the town a preferential status when applying for grants. He said this program supports the state's economic goals focusing development on supporting and revitalizing downtowns and protecting open spaces around them. After reviewing the proposed boundaries, Nancy Bushika felt the golf course should be included in the village center area. Jim Sullivan explained that the state views a village center as a historical streetscape with cultural and community buildings, preferably only on Main Road. Dan Potvin confirmed that there are no strings attached to this grant. Phase II of this process is when the Planning Commission sits down to discuss carving out a village district with a little different zoning regulations than the residential district. He said there are certain advantages to having a village district, such as housing projects would become exempt from Act 250 to encourage housing development. This designation opens up opportunities for downtown areas. Jim Sullivan believes the designation will need to be renewed every five years and changes could be made during the renewal process.

MOTION by Mike Denault to approve and sign the Resolution to Apply for a Village Center Designation for Stamford. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

ZONING BYLAWS

The Selectboard asked about our current Bylaws. Pam Tworig feels there are issues surrounding their interpretation. Jim Sullivan suggested that the Zoning Administrator contact him for clarification. It might be beneficial for the Zoning Administrator to attend Planning Commission meetings. A variety of different business scenarios were discussed. If people are questioning whether a violation exists, they should not be going directly to the Selectboard, they should contact the Zoning Administrator first. Mike Denault feels this is not a Selectboard issue; if there are discrepancies in the Zoning Bylaws, they should be reviewed by the Planning Commission. Deb Burchard offered to contact the Zoning Administrator and is willing to hold a joint meeting with the Selectboard if they desire it.

ATV USE

Pam Tworig acknowledged that the Selectboard has received a few letters this week from residents. She read her own letter saying that the Selectboard has a moral obligation and feels this outcome could result in a 24/7 free-for-all that even the camp owners will not be happy with. She provided the Selectboard with a map showing areas where residents are being harassed by ATVs. She would like to see a decision that protects our residents and our property values, while still giving the camp owners the quality of life they have always enjoyed. She feels the many questions she presented have to be answered by the Selectboard. Mike Denault feels the Selectboard has a legal obligation to our residents and taxpayers. He said the loop was originally shut down, not because of any complaints, but because the law changed and said VASA was going to be the entity on that loop and the board didn't want VASA. The highway department was worried about VASA's parking lot, which is not going to happen. The solution the board came up with is totally separate from VASA and only requires a decal to ride. Mike Denault would like to see their decision for a two week trial period extended indefinitely. If the town roads are getting destroyed, they can revoke the permission at any time. He has been driving on the back roads for the last two weeks and only saw three ATVs, outside of Memorial Day where he saw one or two dozen. Everyone was riding respectfully and were people he knew. He also saw a few ATV riders on other roads who were also riding slowly. Discussion ensued regarding the policing of illegal riding and it was noted that it is not the Selectboard's responsibility to enforce the laws. Nancy Bushika asked about the opening and closing of VASA trails. The Stamford Ridge Riders were granted permission to open the trails on May 15, 2022 to begin trail maintenance and the VASA trails will close on November

1st. Pam Tworig feels there is a serious problem with Clarksburg people coming up and harassing our town.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to continue the motion to allow legal ATV riding as was agreed at their last meeting through December 2, 2022. Without a second, the motion FAILED.

Nancy Bushika thought extending the permission for another six months was a good trial period. Dave Tatro thought it was important to include hunting season for the camp owners.

MOTION by Brandon Field to authorize the legal use of ATVs for residents, land owners and their guests on the following town highways: all town Class 4 roads, including the Class 3 section of Klondike Road from its intersection with Risky Ranch Road to the Class 4 section of Klondike Road. All riders and passengers are required to follow all state and federal regulations regarding the operation of ATVs.

SECONDED by Carol Fachini.

Nancy Bushika requested that the motion be amended to include: the Selectboard reserves the right to amend or reject this policy at any time.

Mike Denault would like to revise the amendment by dropping the word policy and calling it authorization, and to add the word indefinitely.

Brandon Field reaffirmed his motion with both changes. Carol Fachini reaffirmed her second of the motion with the changes. Final Motion: to authorize the legal use of ATVs for residents, land owners and their guests, indefinitely, on the following town highways: all town Class 4 roads, including the Class 3 section of Klondike Road from its intersection with Risky Ranch Road to the Class 4 section of Klondike Road. All riders and passengers are required to follow all state and federal regulations regarding the operation of ATVs. The Selectboard reserves the right to amend or reject this authorization at any time. 4 in favor. 1 opposed (Pam Tworig). Motion APPROVED.

TOWN OFFICE USE POLICY AND VISITOR POLICY

Nancy Bushika explained that the Town Office Use Policy was instituted when the addition to the town office was built. The Visitor Policy was created as a result of a recommendation at a town clerk training session. Mike Denault asked why people come to the town office. Most visitors are attorneys or title searchers who are searching a title because someone is either refinancing or buying a house. Realtors come in to obtain information on a property they are listing. Some people come in for genealogy research. Lori Shepard said it is her job to serve the public and assist people when they come to the office for various reasons. It was noted that the town office is very busy and it can be difficult to get work done at times.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to reaffirm the Town Office Use Policy and the Visitor Policy, both as written. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

Jessica Tatro was interested in learning more about the town policies. It was suggested that as the board reviews and updates each policy that they could be added to the town's website.

COPY POLICY FOR RECORDED DOCUMENTS

The board signed the policy which was approved at the last meeting.

KEY POLICY

The board signed the policy which was approved at the last meeting.

RESIGNATION FROM COMMUNITY PROJECTS COMMITTEE

The town clerk read the email from Helen Fields resigning from the committee.

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the resignation of Helen Fields from the Community Projects Committee. SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

Anyone interested in serving on this committee should send a letter of interest to the town office or the Selectboard.

UNIFORM MUNICIPAL EXCESS WEIGHT PERMIT

MOTION by Mike Denault to approve the Uniform Municipal Excess Weight Permit application from Consolidated Communications. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The appropriate fee and insurance information was received from the applicant.

OLD BUSINESS

Bill Levine inquired again about a structure that was built on Jepson Road. A permit was granted for a garage but it appears that the owners are living in it full time. Without proper permitting, the town cannot confirm that there is appropriate septic and water facilities. Kurt Gamari noted that the town's By-laws are only as good as their enforcement. Bill Levine noted that a structure was built some time ago that was different than the permit and it had to be torn down and removed. The Selectboard will consult with the Zoning Administrator.

OLD BUSINESS

Mike Denault looked into the alleged robbery on Klondike Road. The Bennington Sheriff's Department had no information about any stabbing or robbery. If the board would like more information, he could attempt to communicate with the state police.

SPEED CART

Mike Denault will reach out the Bennington County Sheriff's Department about having a speed cart set up in town.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini, Clerk

/las

REMINDERS

Please visit the town's official website: www.stamfordvt.net for town information and updates.