

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
August 18, 2022
(UNAPPROVED)**

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

Brandon Field was not present.

Visitors: Debra Burchard, Kurt Gamari, Victoria Jefferies, Deborah Righi, James Righi, James Stimpson, and Natalie Yorke.

Luke McKay, Dog Officer.

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

None.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of August 4, 2022 as written.

SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #31 \$ 8,254.11 payroll

WARRANT #32 \$89,043.43 accounts payable

FINANCIALS

The Selectboard reviewed and confirmed financial statements for the months of June and July.

ROAD CONDITIONS

Dave Tatro was not present but left word that the Lincoln Road bridge work is progressing well. The highway crew has also been working on County Road.

RECYCLING

None.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

None.

DELINQUENT DOG UPDATE

Luke McKay advised that all the tickets to delinquent dog owners have been written and are being sent out. They will have to respond to the ticket through the Vermont Judicial Bureau, pay the fine and register their dog. If they dispute the ticket, the Judicial Bureau will schedule a hearing.

PREPARE FOR CANNABIS SPECIAL MEETING

Nancy Bushika spoke to the Vermont Tax Department and was told that the town is not eligible to charge the 1% tax on sales, meals and alcoholic beverages, and rooms. The decision was made when Act 60 began to only allow "gold" towns to implement this tax. Stamford is not a gold town. This vote will be passed over on Monday night. The board will hold the cannabis informational meeting on Monday night. The Australian ballot vote will still take place on Tuesday to decide whether to allow cannabis retail in town. Pam Tworig did not feel she has enough information. The state will institute a 14% tax on top of the 6% sales tax but all the funds will be retained by the state. Mike Denault felt the state is not giving the town any incentive to allow the sale of cannabis in town.

VILLAGE CENTER DESIGNATION

Deb Burchard provided a map of the approved village center designation. She will see that the information is forwarded to the Selectboard.

INVESTMENT/FINANCE POLICY

MOTION by Mike Denault to approve and sign the Investment/Finance Policy as written.
SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

LETTER TO PURCHASE PROPERTY

The Selectboard received a letter offering to purchase the town's property on Brown Brook Road. Pam Tworig said it is a mass mailing being sent to all owners of raw land. The town currently uses the property as a brush dump.

GRANTS IN AID PROJECT

The Selectboard signed the grant agreement for the FYE 2023 Grants in Aid project which is a culvert installation/replacement project on Jepson Road. The grant is \$12,500.00 and the town's 20% match is \$3,125.00.

TOWN CONSTABLE

Carol Fachini was approached by a resident suggesting that Stamford and Readsboro share the cost of a constable. Mike Denault said we can't afford it. Jim Stimpson said the constable needs to have Level 3 training. Clarksburg's annual law enforcement budget was \$152,000.00 and that doesn't include all the startup costs and initial training.

SCHOOL CHOICE

Jim Stimpson asked why there is no bus to Twin Valley High School. Mike Denault stated that Readsboro is allowing school choice for their 7th and 8th grade and wondered why Stamford didn't negotiate to have them tuition to Stamford. These are questions for the School Directors.

WINDMILL PROJECT

Nancy Bushika was contacted by a representative from Norwich Technology. The company is working with landowners in town to install a wind tower. Usually they wait until farther along in the process and more studies are completed, but they would like to come to the next Selectboard meeting to discuss the project. Kurt Gamari said the eastern ridgeline is the third most desirable ridge in the state for wind energy. The Planning Commission had several meetings on this matter

and felt the northwest ridge was a more preferable area since it would not be so visible. Jim Sullivan from the Bennington County Regional Commission suggested the town add the energy section to our Town Plan to give us a seat at the table.

DOG OFFICER/ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER

1. Luke McKay has been working with the Pownal Animal Control Officer. He was appointed the Pownal Assistant Animal Control to step in when their Animal Control Officer is out of town or on vacation. He asked the board for permission to appoint the Pownal Officer as Stamford's Assistant Dog Officer so that he could act if Luke McKay is out of town. He also asked if the board would like to consider allowing Pownal to occasionally use our dog kennel to hold dogs if their kennel is already full. It would be no additional cost to the town since we would be paying another to act in Luke McKay's place. Mike Denault would like to meet him first.
2. Luke McKay advised that state law requires each town to have an Animal Control Officer. Stamford has only appointed him to be Dog Officer. He receives multiple calls each year concerning farm animals but has no authority from the Selectboard to act in that capacity. Mike Denault felt if this is a position mandated by the state, the board should consider it. Nancy Bushika would like to see what the Animal Control Officer position entails before making the appointment. It will be added to the next meeting's agenda for further discussion.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini, Clerk

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REMINDERS

1. A special town meeting and informational meeting will be held on Monday, August 22, 2022 at 7 p.m. The decision to institute a local option tax on businesses is not debatable since the state will not allow it. The decision of whether to allow cannabis retailers and the retail portions of integrated licensee establishments in town will be voted on Tuesday, August 23, 2022 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
2. Applications for addition to the checklist will be accepted during regular town office hours and throughout election day. Forms can be obtained at the town office or you can register to vote through Vermont's online voter registration system at <https://olvr.vermont.gov/>.
3. Absentee ballots will be available until 4:00 p.m. on Monday, August 22, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. for the special election. Please call the town office at 802-694-1361.