

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
November 7, 2019
(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Carol A. Fachini, and Christopher Warren.

Daniel J. Potvin and Michael G. Denault were not present.

Visitors: Lynn Austin, Paul Austin, Carolyn Bloniasz, Helen Fields, Stephen Greene, Kamlyn Haas, Thomas Morandi, Tyna Senecal, James Stimpson, and Pat Sullivan.

Mike Smith, Bennington Trail Cruisers.

Ralph Meima, Green Lantern Solar.

Luke McKay, Dog Officer.

William Levine, Emergency Management Director.

David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.

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. The mapping project, third quarter budget figures, fiber optics network and a dog update was added to the agenda. There were no changes made to its order.

POPLAR DRIVE CULVERT REPAIR

Thomas Morandi read a letter to the board signed by Paul and Lynn Austin, Walter and Carolyn Bloniasz, and Thomas Morandi and Kimberly Roberts-Morandi concerning the culvert that was repaired at the entrance of Poplar Drive. They feel targeted, bullied and threatened by the board. He stated that they cross over the road but do not own it and he noted prior minutes concerning the topic. Paul Austin agreed and said they do not want to be blamed when the culvert plugs up again. The board acknowledged their concerns.

BENNINGTON TRAIL CRUISERS

Mike Smith spoke to the Selectboard about allowing his organization to repair County Road from the section where the electric company created the parking area this past summer westerly to the Pownal line. He has been working with the national forest who has been more cooperative lately. Upgrading this section will allow them to connect to other trail systems for multi-use recreation. The bridges they install will not be wide enough for use as a vehicular highway, but they do good work that meets the nationwide standard. His organization put 500 tons of material into the Stage Coach Road last year. His group will be applying for a grant and will need a letter of support from the town. The town will not be responsible for any maintenance but he hopes the town will agree to their repair of the road section for a multi-user trail for the length of the project which is ten years. Mr. Smith provided the Selectboard with a map and the grant application information.

GREEN LANTERN SOLAR

1. Ralph Meima is working with the Tietgens to install a 150 kw project on one acre of land near the MA line. He reviewed the town's electric bills for the past two years for the highway garage and trash compactor. He asked the Selectboard to consider signing up as an off-taker to purchase credits toward our electric bill at a reduced rate. He calculated only about \$60.00/year in savings. Since the streetlights are not metered, they cannot be factored into the savings. He has also talked with Karen Atwood at the supervisory union in the hopes that the school will also sign up as an off-taker as they could see savings between 12-15%.
2. Jim Stimpson asked about a community solar array where several people could organize themselves to purchase a share: 1 panel or up to 10 panels depending on your consumption, of the array. This has a 10-11 year payback period, an 8% annual return over a 20 year period, and a substantial reduction of your monthly electric bill. Mr. Meima said that it is a lot of hard work recruiting people but could be worth it if people had a site and wanted to work together.

MINUTES

MOTION by Chris Warren to accept the potentially-vicious dog hearing minutes of October 2, 2019 as written.

SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Chris Warren to accept the regular meeting minutes of October 17, 2019 as written. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #43 \$ 7,490.20 payroll

WARRANT #44 \$ 43,445.80 accounts payable

WARRANT #45 \$ 7,369.48 payroll

WARRANT #46 \$314,603.26 accounts payable

FINANCIALS

The Selectboard reviewed and confirmed financial statements for the month of October.

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. The five Poplar Drive property owners have all paid \$84.89 which is a 1/5 portion of the total culvert repair bill. Dave Tatro worked within the town's right-of-way and did a nice job.
2. The trucks are ready for snow plowing.
3. The newest Freightliner has been repaired. All work was covered under warranty.
4. The road crew added gravel in areas that needed it.
5. Nancy Bushika said the garage bathroom looks great. It is nice and clean and even has hot water.

RECYCLING

Nothing to report.

REVIEW DOG [AND WOLF HYBRID] ORDINANCE

The board will discuss the ordinance at the next meeting. Nancy Bushika would like to wait until Dan Potvin and Mike Denault are present for their input.

GREEN MOUNTAIN POWER STREET LIGHT

1. Nancy Bushika received a call from Susan Senecal stating she would like to see the streetlight on the Jepson Road corner kept on. Paul Dupuis also submitted a letter asking that it be kept on due to the many accidents near his house.

MOTION by Chris Warren to keep the light near 540 Jepson Road working. SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

2. There has been no response from landowners near the intersection of Jepson Road and Boulger Road. Bill Levine agreed that it is a difficult intersection. The board decided to seek further input and will discuss it again at the next meeting.

CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

Mary Lou McKay is willing to organize the ceremony again this year. Mike Denault knows someone who will donate a tree. The ceremony is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, November 26, 2019 at 5 p.m.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Joan Levine, Pat Sullivan and Tyna Senecal are willing to serve again this year. Heather Tietgens submitted an offer in writing to serve on the committee. Sally Bohl indicated Sheila Pecor would serve if the board needed someone.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to appoint Joan Levine, Pat Sullivan, Tyna Senecal and Heather Tietgens to serve on the Finance Committee through budget season until the budget is approved with the same terms as in the past. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

DOG UPDATE

1. The town has not heard from the Judicial Bureau concerning the tickets that were issued.

2. Luke McKay, the Dog Officer, has been holding a small Chihuahua-mix dog for 12 days now. The dog was sick when Luke McKay acquired it and Nancy Bushika authorized payment to bring the dog to Greylock Animal Hospital. A rabies vaccination was given while there. The vet bill was \$145.00. Many people have offered to adopt the dog and the original owner is unknown. Luke McKay submitted a bill for \$131.00 for his daily fee and mileage to date. The dog owner would be required to pay a \$25.00 administrative fee, \$10.00 per day kennel fee as well as the vet bill before acquiring the dog. Since the dog is being re-homed, the board will waive all costs. They will accept a donation if offered. Luke McKay would like to re-home the dog on a first come, first served basis, and will contact the person who made the first offer to adopt the dog.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to re-home the dog to the first person and if she chooses to offer a donation, the town will accept it, but no adoption fee will be required, and to give the new owner copies of the Greylock Animal Hospital invoice and rabies certificate upon adoption. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

3. Last Saturday Luke McKay received a call from the Vermont State Police to pick up a dog. It was reported that the owner tried to kill the dog. When he arrived, the dog could not stand or walk and was very emaciated. The matter is under investigation. Greylock Animal Hospital was not willing to treat this dog and said we needed to find a Vermont vet. Luke McKay consulted with West Mountain Animal Hospital in North Bennington and the dog was euthanized. Luke McKay found the new veterinarian to be very friendly and professional. The vet charged for the euthanasia and donated the rest of his service to the town. Luke McKay has over 14 billable hours just tending to this one dog.

MOTION by Chris Warren to authorize Luke McKay to spend up to \$300.00 for critical care per dog if needed. SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

4. A resident in town would like to organize a kennel supplies and dog food drive. The board thought that was a great idea. Luke McKay said he would like to have a catch pole, bite gloves, an animal carrier and canned dog food. At a prior meeting, the board approved an escrow for dog funds and any money donated during the drive can be placed in escrow for kennel necessities. This resident could work independently or contact the Community Projects Committee for guidance. Once the drive is organized, information can be placed on the town website.

5. Many people have stopped at the dog kennel to see the dogs. Luke McKay is concerned that someone sticking their fingers in the fence to pet a dog could get bit. He asked the board to allow him to move the kennel up to his house. It would save the town mileage costs and he could keep a better eye on things, for instance if the heat lamp malfunctions during the night, someone would be there. Sheds & Stuff will charge \$300.00 for the move. Nancy Bushika thought having the kennel on town property would be best. Carol Fachini stated if Luke McKay resigns as Dog Officer, the kennel would have to be brought back to the highway garage. Chris Warren suggested the town should contribute to the electricity used by the kennel if it is at Luke McKay's.

MOTION by Chris Warren to pay for the kennel to be moved to Luke McKay's home and if the electricity becomes onerous, to bring in the bills for the board's consideration. SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

ALL BOARDS MEETING

Nancy Bushika felt the All Boards meeting was well attended. One of the requests was whether a calendar could be added to the website with a schedule of all the town and school meetings. Chris Warren felt a simple list of events might be the easiest way to start.

TOWN ATTORNEY/SCHOOL OWNERSHIP

Nancy Bushika stated the attorney's letter did not clear everything up. She would like to give the School Directors a copy and then meet with them. Helen Fields read the letter and said the attorney found that the land belongs to

the town. He also made the assertion that any property on the land goes with the land. The attorney gave several suggestions for the town and school to move forward. Helen Fields suggested the board schedule a public hearing and invite the attorney down to answer questions. Bill Levine felt that type of meeting should be formally structured and moderated. Paying the attorney to come down for a public forum was not the best use of town funds. The School Board will be sent a copy and a meeting will be scheduled between the two boards.

PILT PAYMENTS LAWSUIT

An agreement has been reached in the Kane County, Utah v. United States, Class Action Lawsuit for underpaid PILT payments from the government to towns across the country. Stamford's share was determined to be \$1,233.00 less attorneys' fees of \$412.00 and the town received a check for \$821.00.

FEMA GRANT TO UPDATE LOCAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

To be discussed at the next meeting.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Bill Levine would like to have Kingsley service the generator. They provided a proposal with various costs for different levels of service. Bill Levine thinks the maintenance service costing \$350.00 would be best. The technician that services the fire house generator doesn't work on Kohler generators. Jim Stimpson asked if we had a yearly maintenance plan in place. We do not. Nancy Bushika noted that we should have a plan for the generator in case Bill Levine is not available. Jim Stimpson said as Emergency Management Coordinator, he would be willing to learn and help out.

MAPPING PROGRAM

Cartographic Technologies was paid \$29,000.00 by the state to map the town. The project is complete and the town has three weeks to review the work. Susan Boswell provided a read-only program for the town computers and Sally Bohl, Nancy Bushika, Bruce Richardson, and Lori Shepard have worked hard to review the maps. There are some discrepancies and errors, some on the town's side which are being corrected, and some on the mapping company's side. For \$3,000.00 the town can purchase a paper set of the maps. For an additional amount we could hire the company to update the maps each year along with an annual license fee of \$300.00. Sue Boswell will come next week to work with Sally Bohl, Nancy Bushika and Lori Shepard and answer several questions. Helen Fields stated that BCRC is working on a GIS map of Stamford.

FINANCIALS

Third quarter budget figures were provided for the board's review.

VETERANS DINNER

The pot luck dinner to honor our veterans will be held on Saturday, November 9, 2019 at 5 p.m. at the school.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

The ceremony is scheduled for Sunday, December 15, 2019 at 12 p.m. at the Stamford School and wreaths will be placed on graves in the two town cemeteries. They are short 32 wreaths. Anyone interested in purchasing a wreath should contact Donna Engel, Donna Whitcomb or stop at the town office where forms are available.

ORDINANCE ENFORCEMENT TRAINING

Nancy Bushika noted that VLCT is holding a seminar on ordinance enforcement on Wednesday, December 4, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. in Montpelier for anyone interested in attending. They will cover how to write the Judicial Bureau tickets, how to issue them and more.

CYBER SECURITY WEBINAR

The town clerk and assistant town clerk participated in a cyber security webinar presented by the Vermont Elections Division. It was very informative.

SEED SAVERS GARDEN SHED

Helen Fields announced that they will be working on roof of the future garden shed this Saturday, November 9th at 10 a.m. and invited people to come and help.

BULLETIN BOARD

Stephen Greene will be finishing the doors for the bulletin board very soon.

FIBER OPTIC NETWORK

Chris Lynch from the Matrix Design Group is working on a proposal for Stamford. It will take a couple weeks.

MOTION by Chris Warren to adjourn. SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini
Clerk

CF/las

REMINDERS

1. Wednesday summer recycling hours have ended.
2. New recycling punch cards for use beginning November 1, 2019 are available at the town office.
3. Tax bills have been mailed and are due in hand by 8 p.m. on Thursday, November 21, 2019. By town vote, postmarks will not be accepted. Any unpaid tax will be subject to a one-time 8% penalty and 1% interest per month for the first 3 months and 1.5% interest per month thereafter until paid.
4. Please visit the town's new official website: townofstamfordvermont.org.
5. The town clerk's office hours are: Monday: closed; Tuesday: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.; Wednesday 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.; Thursday 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.; and Friday: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.