

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
January 7, 2021
(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Carol A. Fachini, Christopher Warren, and Michael G. Denault. Daniel J. Potvin was not present.

Visitors: Michael Bielawski (from True North Reports), Carolyn Brooks, Laura Champagne, Theresa Denault, Susan Flash, Lisa Gardner, Ross Hanlan, Maura Hawkins, Marta Miller, Kimberly Roberts-Morandi, Thomas Morandi, Pat Sullivan, Howard Weiss-Tisman (from Vermont Public Radio), Pamela Tworig, Susan Welsch, and Zachary Winokur.

Tyna Senecal and Heather Tietgens, Finance Committee.

Eunice Rice, Health Officer.

David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.

William Levine, Emergency Management Director.

Lori Shepard, Selectboard Secretary.

Nancy Bushika called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. She led the Pledge of Allegiance and welcomed everyone. She read a statement with procedural rules for the meeting. Some correspondence was added to the agenda and the order was changed to move the hearing of visitors toward the end of the meeting.

RESIGNATION

Chris Warren read his letter of resignation. The board expressed their sadness over his decision. This creates a vacancy on the Selectboard and since there are only three regular meetings remaining before the March election, the board felt it would be best for interested parties to submit a Consent of Candidate form to run in the March election. This form is due by January 25, 2021 and is available at the town office and on the town website.

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the resignation of Christopher Warren from the Selectboard with regret. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

BUDGET WORK SESSION

The Selectboard reviewed the income and expenses for the town and highway budgets. They agreed to add \$20,000.00 for a part-time highway laborer into the budget instead of a full-time position. Dave Tatro advised that this year is the last payment for the road resurfacing loan. He has obtained a quote to resurface The Lane, Henry Hill, Jepson Road, Clough Road, Lincoln Road and Robillard Road this summer for \$224,282.00. This project will be a warrant article and will be paid with a new five year loan. Dave Tatro hopes the town will continue to support the resurfacing project every five years. He stated that we save money by paying for maintenance instead of paying for repair costs.

HEARING OF VISITORS

1. Eunice Rice, Health Officer, spoke about the safety procedures in place at the Veterans Home in Bennington where she works and recommended that the Selectboard join the fight to stop the virus. She said the vaccine will be critical and she recommends not holding in-person meetings unless all members wear masks and maintain 6' social distancing.
2. Maura Hawkins does not believe the board has the power to end the Governor's emergency order.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the special meeting minutes of December 29, 2020 as written. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #55 \$2,155.15 payroll

WARRANT #56 \$ 641.25 accounts payable

FINANCIALS

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

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. The highway crew has been working on the Zetor tractor. The engine is back together and running. The tractor is about 90% complete.
2. Kerry Alley from the Agency of Transportation contacted Nancy Bushika about the Certificate of Highway Miles. They did not include the recent Lincoln Road discontinuance on the certificate and questioned where Lincoln Road ended. Dave Tatro measured the length of the road. The board realized that the map has been labeled wrong and shows Lincoln Road from Charles Bullet's house to the end as TH#7 and the portion from the Main Road to Charles Bullet's house as TH #29. The town has recognized these portions as one road for a total of .75 mile. Nancy Bushika will notify the state. Kerry Alley also asked about some of the discontinued sections, but they happened such a long time ago, no one on the board can confirm them.

RECYCLING

1. The hauler registration forms for 2021 are being mailed out. They remind the haulers to register with the state as well as the town. The board hopes patrons can purchase their access cards by February 1st.
2. The recycling monitors will begin punching recycling access cards. They will also start charging for demolition. They will not accept cash. They will provide a payment slip and patrons can either mail in their payment or drop their payment into the mail slot/drop box located in the back wall of the town office.
3. Nancy Bushika would like a sign at the recycling center saying, For the Safety of our Employees, Please Wear a Mask if Possible. She would like to have a sign on the town garage door saying Employees Only.

SELECTBOARD REPORT FOR TOWN REPORT

The board discussed their report. Pat Sullivan has emailed an update from the Community Projects Committee. Mike Denault would like a statement saying that the Selectboard took an oath to support the Vermont Constitution and they will do their best to continue to uphold it. The Deerfield Valley Fiber report and other social agency reports will be available at the town office and on the town website instead of in the town report.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. Bill Levine has received complaints from residents that masks are not being worn by everyone at Selectboard meetings. When people shout, particles travel much farther and it is important to stay calm or wear a mask.
2. The Fire Department responded to 86 calls in 2020. 43 were medical calls. The rest were structure calls and mutual aid calls.
3. Bill Levine has scheduled the yearly generator maintenance for next Wednesday.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. The board received letters both supporting and objecting to the board's recent vote, many had no name or a false name.
2. Carolyn Brooks asked about the letter from the Attorney General. The Selectboard would like to contact its attorney concerning it.
3. The board read and acknowledged a letter written from Pam Tworig to the Selectboard.
4. The Selectboard received an invoice from Attorney Deborah Bucknam itemizing her work to date and

showing no balance due the town. The statement indicated a memo and correspondence which has been drafted. Since the town has not received any copies to date, the clerk will contact Attorney Bucknam for copies.

5. Mike Denault noted that many of the headlines in the paper are incorrect and misleading. The Selectboard is not trying to put anyone's health or safety in jeopardy, or take safety decisions away from the residents. Nancy Bushika noted that nothing has changed at this point. Mike Denault was asked at the last meeting what parts of the Vermont Constitution are in conflict with the Governor's order: our right to free assembly under the First Amendment, our right to travel freely between states, the closure or restriction of businesses without just compensation, and the right to privacy. It is the infringement of these rights that he is concerned with. He said this virus is new and we are all, including the Governor, trying to do our best, but we need to be consistent with the Constitution. Pamela Tworig feels in retrospect, the board should have done more public outreach. Pat Sullivan asked if Selectboard meetings could be moved to the gym so more could attend in person safely. The board considered Tuesday night meetings and agreed to contact the School Directors.

6. The board received a thick packet of letters from Marcus West in support of the board's recent decision.

7. The Vermont League of Cities and Towns contacted Nancy Bushika with a courtesy call to advise that there may be some exclusion clauses in our policy that the town should be aware of.

TOWN MEETING

The Vermont legislature will be meeting to discuss the March town meeting. The board discussed adjourning town meeting to a specific date in the spring where townspeople can gather outside.

WARRANT ARTICLES

The board will begin working on the warrant and hopes to be able to sign it at their next meeting.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini
Clerk

CAF/las

REMINDERS

1. The town office continues to be closed in accordance with the Governor's Stay Home – Stay Safe Order to slow the spread of covid-19. The town clerk is scheduling appointments and is willing to assist residents by email, regular mail, telephone or fax.
2. Please visit the town's official website: townofstamfordvermont.org for town information and updates.

PETITIONS FOR WARRANT ARTICLES & ELECTED POSITIONS

The deadline for filing petitions with the town clerk for warrant articles to be included in the town meeting warning is Thursday, January 14, 2021. These petitions must be signed by 5% of the registered voters or at least 35 signatures. V.S.A. 17:2642(a)

The requirement to submit Nominating Petitions to run for an elected office is waived due to Act 162 along with the requirement to obtain signatures of 1% of the registered voters. A Consent of Candidate form will be required to run for an elected office and the deadline to file the Consent is Monday, January 25, 2021 by 5:00 p.m. A Consent of Candidate form may be picked up at the Town Office. V.S.A. 17:2681(a) (b).

Elected positions to be filled this year are:

Town Moderator - 1 year term (*William Levine*)
School Moderator - 1 year term (*William Levine*)
Selectboard member - 2 year term (*Nancy L. Bushika*)
Selectboard member - 3 year term (*Christopher Warren*)
School Director - 2 year term (*Erika Bailey*)
School Director - 3 year term (*Kelly Holland*)
Auditor - 1 year term (*vacancy*)
Auditor - 2 year term (*vacancy*)
Auditor - 3 year term (*vacancy*)
Collector of Delinquent Taxes - 1 year term (*Sally A. Bohl*)
Cemetery Commissioner - 3 year term (*David McKay*)
Library Trustee - 5 year term (*Barbara Goldstein*)

Voting will be held on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Town of Stamford Community Room. Applications for addition to the checklist will be accepted at the town office and throughout election day.

Absentee ballots will be available until 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 1, 2021. Please call the town office at 694-1361.

Anyone interested in serving as an appointed board member, please review the expiring appointed positions in the town report and contact a member of that board or the Selectboard.