

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
February 20, 2020
(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Michael G. Denault, Daniel J. Potvin, Carol A. Fachini, and Christopher Warren.

Visitors: John Engel, Helen Fields, Kurt Gamari, Frederick Nazzewski, Sheila Pecor, CJ Vadnais, and Colleen Zajac.

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. The agenda was changed to add correspondence. There were no changes to the order.

HEARING OF VISITORS:

PLANNING COMMISSION APPOINTMENTS

Sheila Pecor said the Planning Commission resignations and the appointments that were made at the last meeting didn't look right. The resignations were accepted and the appointments were made on the same night and there was no way for the public to know that there were vacancies available in case others were interested. Nancy Bushika acknowledged that it is often difficult to find people to serve. The Planning Commission made the recommendations to the Selectboard who in turn made the appointments. Helen Fields noted that anyone who is interested can attend the meetings, voice their opinions and participate.

SCHOOL MERGER MEETING/BUILDING OWNERSHIP

1. Helen Fields attended the recent joint Stamford/Clarksburg merger meeting. They stated that Clarksburg will be starting asbestos remediation in their school. The Stamford School Directors expressed to the Clarksburg representatives and those present that they have worked out the issue of who owns the building and that the school owns everything. The first meeting between the Selectboard and School Directors to begin discussing the ownership of the building and grounds is scheduled for Thursday, February 27, 2020 at 7 p.m.
2. There was confusion surrounding the meeting time. It was posted on the school website to start at 6:30 p.m. but was warned and actually started at 6 p.m.

RESIDENCE ON CLASS 4 ROAD IN FOREST ZONE

1. CJ Vadnais asked if a ground water study was being done before changing the road classification on County Road. He noted that the water table in the village changed significantly when Boulger Road and Lesure Road were built up. The board responded that there are specific procedures to follow, but they have nothing to do with water. Sheila Pecor felt an increase in homes in the forest zone and mountain regions would decrease the water levels in town. Kurt Gamari felt that development of County Road and Klondike Road is inevitable and is concerned with the affect it will have on our forest and streams.
2. Dave Tatro said it will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars to upgrade the road to state standards and he will be taken away from working on the roads in the rest of the town. If a lot of development occurs on upper County Road, the lower part of County Road will not be able to support the added traffic. Nancy Bushika suggested the town start a road improvement fund and start doing a section each year. Dave Tatro estimated that from the Class 4 section to Klondike Road is about 1/4 to 1/2 mile. Dave Tatro suggested we wait until the Bennington County Regional Commission has finished its optimal growth/population density survey. Dave Tatro said our Road Ordinance already establishes that people can obtain insurance or a bond to protect the town and plow the road.
3. Kurt Gamari asked about establishing a private road and whether you could develop land off a private road. The

board agreed it was possible and would probably involve Act 250. If one person builds a house on the Class 4 part of County Road and starts plowing to their driveway, the next new house could obtain insurance and plow to their driveway and it could continue. The board needs to make sure the town is protected for the long term.

4. The board decided it would draft the terms under which they would allow the Class 4 road to be plowed on a full-time basis and would consult with an attorney. The town will require a bond/insurance policy, the town will not be held liable, the property owner cannot leave a large snow bank in the middle of the road, the owner can't prevent others from using the public way, an inspection will be included each spring by the Road Commissioner and Selectboard for damages, a clause to revisit terms such as amount of insurance coverage in the future, and binding arbitration to resolve differences will be included. It is important to the board to establish this procedure so it is fair and everyone is treated the same.

5. Dave Tatro acknowledged that if the Selectboard requested that he plow and maintain a Class 4 road that he would have to do it.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of February 6, 2020 as written. SECONDED by Dan Potvin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #7 \$ 9,206.25 payroll

WARRANT #8 \$47,550.66 accounts payable

BENNINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF

It was noted on the sheriff's invoice that the town is paying a sheriff to bring his dog in to visit with the school children. It is unclear whether the school requested this or if the sheriff is choosing to do this during his shift. A sheriff also spent time working on a Fish & Wildlife case over an illegal deer. Mike Denault has already contacted the sheriff's department to advise that they should only be acting at the request of the Selectboard. The town will not pay if residents call personally for their service. He will contact them again to discuss them not doing work on behalf of the Fish & Wildlife Dept. on our dime. It was requested that the sheriff patrol more on Friday nights. Mike Denault will pass that along but acknowledged that some residents want to see him in the center of town and others want them driving on the back roads and you can't make everyone happy.

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. There has been a lot of ice in the last two weeks. Dave has used a lot of sand.
2. The 2019 Freightliner broke down and had to be towed to the Freightliner shop in New Hampshire. It was fixed and covered under warranty.

CERTIFICATE OF HIGHWAY MILEAGE

Nancy Bushika is still working with the state over the legal trail error from the end of Lesure Road to Schenk Road and the classification of Schenk Road as a Class 4 road.

RECYCLING

1. As of July 1, 2020 no food scraps are allowed in the trash.
2. Last year when the school worked with TAM and used the two compost bins, the charge was \$15.00. The service was cancelled and it was recently started again. Casella is charging \$189.00 for the same service. Bill Levine recalled that the town was supposed to get the compost back. Helen Fields thought it would be great if someone wanted to start a Compost Committee. She would like to see the town start thinking about long term planning.

PREPARE FOR TOWN MEETING

The board feels prepared for town meeting.

MAPPING UPDATE

1. Susan Boswell, the mapper, and Lisa Wright, the assessor, met with Sally Bohl and Nancy Bushika. Nancy Bushika felt the meeting went well and a lot of progress was made. She asked the board to consider hiring the mapping company to complete the maps for Stamford since it will be a lot less money in the long run. The initial start up cost will be around \$5,000.00, \$3,000.00 to create the large paper maps, additional software and training, and then and a yearly maintenance fee of about \$1,000.00. We will also have to begin using the cloud.

MOTION by Chris Warren to use the cloud service for the town's NEMRC applications and pay for it using the reappraisal fund. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Dan Potvin to hire Susan Boswell from Cartographic Technologies to complete the data mapping for the town. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

2. The maps are not binding and will not hold up in court. They show the best data available to the town at this time and will be implemented by our assessor over the next year.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. Bill Levine attended the Emergency Planning meeting in North Adams. The Louison House could be used as a temporary shelter for one or two days if a family has been displaced due to a fire or some other emergency.

2. The Hoosac Tunnel collapse is not as disastrous as originally thought. They are already working to repair it.

3. As of this Sunday, it will be illegal to drive with a handheld device.

4. Bill Levine showed the board the emergency preparedness booklets that will be available at town meeting. It is a great resource for many types of hazards.

CORONAVIRUS/EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS LETTER

Dan Potvin recommended that people increase their vitamin intake, especially vitamins such as D3 and C, which boost your immunity. He said 97% of our antibiotics currently come from China. It is anticipated that there will be copper and aluminum shortages which will increase prices when supply can't meet demand. Factories are not able to produce goods where people are quarantined in China and this will have an impact on the economy.

PLANNING COMMISSION LETTER

Dan Potvin read the letter from the Planning Commission. A member of the Planning Commission has not attended any meetings since 2018. The Commission regrettably requests that the Selectboard revoke his appointment on the board due to lack of attendance. Chris Warren feels a responsibility to the board if a person is not showing up and it hampers the board to act effectively. Mike Denault noted that people on these committees are donating their time and out of respect, he would like to talk with the member before making any decision.

MOTION by Mike Denault to send a letter asking what his intentions are and if there is no response, it will be considered the submission of his resignation. SECONDED by Chris Warren. 4 in favor, 1 abstained (Dan Potvin.) Motion APPROVED.

UNIFORM MUNICIPAL EXCESS WEIGHT PERMIT

MOTION by Chris Warren to approve the Uniform Municipal Excess Weight Permit applications from Barrett Trucking Co., Inc., VELCO, Renaud Bros., Inc. and Valley Crane Services, Inc. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

The appropriate fees and insurance information were received from the applicants.

RESIGNATION OF HEALTH OFFICER

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the resignation of Kurt Gamari as Health Officer with gratitude for his service. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

Anyone interested in serving as the town Health Officer should contact a member of the Selectboard or the town office. The state will also be notified of the resignation.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to adjourn. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini
Clerk

CAF/las

REMINDERS

1. Anyone interested in serving on a high speed internet research committee should contact the town office or Chris Warren directly.
2. Anyone interested in serving as the town Health Officer should contact a member of the Selectboard or the town office.
3. Anyone interested in serving on the Compost Committee should contact the town office or Helen Fields directly.
4. Anyone interested in serving on the Fire Department roster committee should contact the town office, a Selectboard member or Paul Dupuis.
5. Please visit the town's new official website: townofstamfordvermont.org.
6. 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.