

**TOWN OF STAMFORD  
SELECTBOARD MEETING  
July 11, 2019  
(UNAPPROVED)**

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

Visitors: Jennifer Dowling, Helen Fields, Kyle George, Luke McKay, and Elizabeth Thorensen.  
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. Updates to the agenda will include additional correspondence and discussion of the assessor clerk position. There were no changes to the order of the agenda.

**HEARING OF VISITORS:**

**POPLAR DRIVE**

Kyle George purchased property on Poplar Drive in February including the private drive. He received the town's letter stating that the culvert at the entrance of Poplar Drive from The Lane needs to be replaced. If the property owners did not fix it on their own, the town would have no recourse but to make the repairs and bill the residents. He has talked with the other homeowners who have mixed feelings about it and have not been able to agree. Dave Tatro does not think a full 15" culvert is necessary. He feels a 4"-6" pipe which will attach to the 4" under drain system on the lower side of Poplar Drive would be appropriate. Dave Tatro does not think it will cost more than \$1,000.00. Mike Denault stated this is not a situation where the town is being hired by a resident to do work. This is a situation that has gone on for years and has reached a point where the town needs to step in and resolve the matter to protect its road in accordance with our Road Ordinance and state statute. The Selectboard will have Dave Tatro complete the work and the Poplar Drive residents will be billed accordingly. Nancy Bushika said if the Selectboard had recorded their letter to the Poplar Drive residents concerning the damaged culvert in the Land Records, the issue would have been picked up when the buyer's attorney did his title search and could have been resolved prior to the sale.

**STEBBINS LANE**

Elizabeth Thorensen said there is a large tree across from her house that is rotted and she is concerned that it will fall toward her house. It is along the road. Dave Tatro clarified that the town has a right-of-way but does not own the property. The board recommended that she contact either the church or Green Mountain Power who may want to cut the tree down to protect their power lines.

**RODEO**

Luke McKay would like to hold a rodeo in town on August 10th and 11th at John Tietgens' property near the driving range. He asked if any town permits were required. He will have Vermont licensed and insured food trucks, porta-pottys and is planning for first aid, veterinarian services, trash collection, and parking. He will be offering space for vendors as well. The board suggested he talk with Jim Stimpson, our Administrative Officer, but did not think we had any regulations in place to be followed. Helen Fields would like to discuss event planning at the next Planning Commission meeting on July 15, 2019. The rodeo will begin Saturday at 8 a.m. and on Sunday at 12 p.m.

**DOGS**

1. Luke McKay has contacted the delinquent dog owners by phone and has sent them a letter. Many residents have licensed their dogs in the last few weeks. There are still about 18 people who have not come in.

2. Nancy Bushika asked if Luke McKay had put up the Beware of Dog signs at the kennel. Luke McKay has the signs and said he will put them up.
3. Dogs or other animals are not allowed on school grounds. Helen Fields saw two citizens walking their dogs on school property. One dog was off leash which was concerning since it was during the children's garden camp. Mike Denault feels the rules need to be enforced or there is no sense in having them. The Selectboard discussed an enforcement process. The first step would be to make a phone call to request compliance, then a letter would be sent, then tickets can be issued through the Bennington Court system. Helen Fields will submit a complaint in writing.

#### SUMMER GARDEN CAMP

The Growing Thyme Garden Camp started yesterday. Helen Fields had 16 children out of the 20 who signed up and 5 volunteers. The morning library program and afternoon garden camp were both a great success. The gardens at the tennis courts look fabulous and Helen Fields invited the Selectboard to visit. There are canopies for shade. A chicken coop was donated by Pamela Tworig and will be used as a locked tool shed. She has rented a porta-potty which is set up near the gardens through August. She will meet the truck driver to be sure he drives along the designated edge. CJ Vadnais will drive his tractor and pull Luke McKay's wagon so that residents can see the gardens during the Stamford Harvest Day meal in August.

#### SCHOOL/TOWN BUILDING

Attorney Laurie Rowell was contacted concerning the ownership and authority of the school/town building and grounds. She is downsizing her practice and will no longer be doing municipal work. She recommended another attorney in Brattleboro. The board will search for a municipal attorney in Bennington or Wilmington also. Mike Denault recalled that ownership of the school/town building was discussed at the recent special town meeting. He would like to invite the School Board to an upcoming meeting to discuss the matter further.

#### COMMUNITY PROJECT COMMITTEE

Pat Sullivan has volunteered to serve on the Community Project Committee as well as Helen Fields and Lori Shepard.

MOTION by Mike Denault to appoint Lori Shepard for a 1 one year term, Helen Fields for a 2 year term and Pat Sullivan for a 3 year term, on the Community Project Committee. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The guidelines were reviewed and can be discussed further after the committee meets.

#### INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR SUMMER GARDEN CAMP AND TILE PROJECT

The Selectboard received letters from the library trustees stating that the Garden Camp and Tile Project are both Stamford Community Library-sanctioned programs, under the auspices of the Board of Trustees, and as such, should be covered by the same insurance in place for the library.

#### MINUTES

MOTION by Carol Fachini to accept the regular meeting minutes of June 20, 2019 as written. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #27 \$ 7,873.76 payroll

WARRANT #28 \$36,735.21 accounts payable

#### ROAD CONDITIONS

1. There were some problems with the tractor this week. The hydraulic piston needed repair and the cost was \$1,100.00 for a new piston. Dave Tatro did some research and found a cylinder for \$160.00. A tire blew out which will cost about \$800.00 to repair. Dave Tatro is only doing what is absolutely necessary, but wanted the

board to know that he will probably be over budget this year in repairs. Chris Warren and Nancy Bushika agreed that the maintenance and repair line item should be increased.

2. Dave Tatro has reviewed the new Road and Bridge Standards. The state has been updating the Code & Standards because of the new requirements of Act 64, the Clean Water Act. The only item he feels the town does not need to comply with is not following the code on Class 4 roads that are not hydraulically connected. The board agreed with excluding this section and signed the new Road and Bridge Standards.

3. The highway crew has been ditching and doing equipment repair.

4. The town received a response from the VLCT PACIF grant coordinator stating that they do not want to fund the items Dave Tatro picked out. They want the town to resubmit the application and choose from the list of 18 open items they have found during their last insurance inspection. Dave Tatro said the last inspection was in 2017 and several of the items they listed have been updated. It is frustrating because he requested safety vests, road cones and a road barrier that is required by law. The items listed in the insurance inspection are not required by law and Dave Tatro doesn't have money in the budget for extras. Mike Denault does not want the insurance company to cancel our insurance. A letter will be sent noting the items that have been corrected. The board will decide whether they want to re-apply for the grant if we cannot purchase the items Dave Tatro needs. Fixing the railings in the recycling area was listed on the inspection report and if there are funds available in the recycling budget, Dave Tatro could repair them. Another item was to develop a written energy control program and a written hazard communication program. Dave Tatro finds it difficult balancing the paperwork the state wants with the time needed on the roads. If he followed everything the state wants, there would never be time to work on the roads.

5. The state will be resurfacing the Main Road this August. Carol Fachini asked if they were going to repair the Main Road area at the entrance to Sumner Road. Dave Tatro spoke with Chris Taft about it but doesn't know for sure.

6. The 2019 Grant-In-Aid Program application was due in early July. Nancy Bushika was contacted by Jim Henderson at the Bennington County Regional Commission because they had not received our application. She contacted Dave Tatro who suggested continuing the stone-lined ditching on Mill Road as a project and the paperwork was sent in on time.

#### RECYCLING

Nothing to report.

#### REAPPRAISAL COMPLIANCE PLAN/REVIEW REAPPRAISAL DRAFT BID

1. The town received a formal order to reappraise from the state requesting our written plan within 30 days. Some minor changes were made to the bid draft. Chris Landin, our PVR District Advisor, indicated that waiting for the outcome of the state's bidding process could be an option worth considering. The board discussed sending out the reappraisal and assessor bid or waiting to see what contractor the state chooses for their grand list software. Our response to the state will be prepared.

2. When Eunice Rice was hired and the Assessor Clerk hours were increased to 20 hours/week, the board agreed to review the position and hours in July. The town's contract with Nemrc runs out in December. The Selectboard discussed appointing Assessors to do the work. If a building is difficult to assess, the town can rely on Chris Landin for assistance. Salary will also be discussed if the board decides to move in this direction.

#### REAPPRAISAL SEMINAR/NEW DATE FOR MEETING

Chris Landin recommended that Sally Bohl and Lori Shepard attend a reappraisal seminar held in Montpelier on July 18, 2018. This is the same night as the next Selectboard meeting. Nancy Bushika and Carol Fachini also considered attending. The regular Selectboard meeting will be moved to Wednesday, July 17, 2019 at 6 p.m. so it won't conflict with the seminar.

#### EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Nothing to report.

#### FOREST SERVICE AGREEMENT

The forest representative is from Pennsylvania and cannot come to a meeting. He is willing to review the agreement in a daytime teleconference. Dan Potvin is familiar with Forest Service contracts and is willing to look the contract over. The board will discuss this further at the next meeting.

#### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The treasurer submitted the Financial Management Questionnaire to the Selectboard as is required by state law. The Selectboard reviewed and agreed with the representations and signed the form.

#### UNIFORM MUNICIPAL EXCESS WEIGHT PERMIT

MOTION by Mike Denault to approve a Uniform Municipal Excess Weight Permit application from Riggs Distler. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The appropriate fee and insurance information was received from the applicant.

#### EDUCATION TAX RATES

The Selectboard received notice that the Agency of Education has set the school tax rates. The homestead rate is 1.3106. Last year's rate was 1.3031. The non-homestead rate is 1.5678. Last year's rate was 1.4873.

#### POST OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

The Selectboard acknowledged a letter received from the United States Postal Service dated July 3, 2019 requesting that builders check with the post office for mailbox and mail delivery regulations prior to building.

#### TREE ON TENNIS COURT

Dave Tatro took down the tree that fell on the tennis court fence and the tree next to it that was leaning. The board thanked him for taking care of it.

#### NEW BUSINESS

1. Nancy Bushika asked if residents had access to the Vermont League of Cities & Towns assistance center. The board agreed that VLCT provides assistance to municipalities but could not control telephone inquiries from residents.
2. Nancy Bushika asked Mike Denault, the police liaison, to contact the Bennington Sheriff. There have been a lot of side by sides driving up the Main Road on Saturdays between 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. Mike Denault said Maine allows ATVS to ride on their roads and he thinks it's great. The towns make a lot of money. He said he has organized rides in the past with rules about driving slow and being courteous and anyone who doesn't obey the rules isn't invited back the following year. Riders are usually going fast because they're not supposed to be on the road.
3. Nancy Bushika reviewed the process for discontinuing a town road. The public hearing will be set at the next meeting. Nancy Bushika suggested calling Bruce Richardson for the history of the roads but the board did not feel it was necessary.
4. The board reviewed a letter from Bruce Benson date July 5, 2019. He complained that his large blue spruce tree was hacked very badly by the highway mower. The Selectboard sympathized with him, but it was the state highway mowing crew not the town. Mr. Benson will be contacted and referred to the Bennington Agency of Transportation District Office.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to find that premature public discussion of an employee matter would place the town at a substantial disadvantage. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

Lori Shepard was invited into executive session. The board entered executive session at 8:35 p.m. MOTION by Nancy Bushika to exit executive session. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 9:02 p.m. Results: The board will have an executive session at the next meeting. The executive session will begin at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, July 17, 2019 and the regular meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini  
Clerk

CF/las

#### REMINDERS

1. The next Selectboard meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 17, 2019.
2. Please visit the town's new official website: [townofstamfordvermont.org](http://townofstamfordvermont.org).
3. 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.
4. Anyone interested in serving on the proposed Community Project Committee, please contact the town office or a member of the Selectboard.