

TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
August 5, 2021
(UNAPPROVED)

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

Visitors: Scott Boettle, Sally Bohl, Robert Bouchard, Carolyn Brooks, Laura Champagne, Theresa Denault, John Engel, Helen Fields, Karen Kuranda, Michael Kuranda, Amal Lebbos, Marta Miller, Darryl Pecor, Sheila Pecor, Beth Phelps, Tyna Senecal, Jessica Tatro, Pamela Tworig, Marie Kelly-Whitney, Natalie York, Clay Zeller-Townson.
William Levine, Emergency Management Director.
David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.
Lori Shepard, Selectboard Secretary.

Nancy Bushika called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m., opened with the Pledge of Allegiance, welcomed everyone, and read a statement with procedural rules for the meeting. The agenda was amended to add correspondence.

HEARING OF VISITORS:

Robert Bouchard and Laura Champagne want to delay the ATV/UTV public hearing to allow more time to prepare. It was noted that once school starts it may be difficult to use the multi-purpose room. Many voiced concerns over how the meeting would be run and wanted maps and the proposal ahead of time. The Selectboard suggested 5 minutes per person and noted that this is not their idea, they are only setting this meeting to receive input. They will not be presenting any maps or material. The hearing was scheduled for Thursday, August 19, 2021 at 6 p.m. in the school multi-purpose room.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

- WARRANT #29 \$ 6,213.94 payroll
- WARRANT #30 \$16,551.58 accounts payable

FINANCIALS

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

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of July 15, 2021 as written. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. Allstate Asphalt has applied the shim coat layer and will be back to finish with the chip sealing.
2. The highway crew has been mowing and the new mower is excellent.
3. Dave Tatro went to Readsboro to view the roads after a weekend of ATV/UTV activity. He has a very strong opinion on the subject.
4. Our roads have held up very well with the rain we've had. A culvert plugged up and caused a wash out on Klondike Road.
5. The dump body should be arriving soon and will be installed on the truck chassis.

RECYCLING

1. Nancy Bushika reported that the Household Hazardous Waste Day held at the AOT highway garage in Heartwellville was very successful. She thanked Pam Tworig for volunteering to work.
2. The stated required a revision to the SWIP to include a wastewater facility, even though we don't have one.
3. Goodwill accepts T-shirts and towels and any that do not sell are cut into rags and sold in bulk. Nancy Bushika asked Dave Tatro if he would consider buying rags in bulk from Goodwill since it looks good for the town to use recycled materials.
4. The Alliance has received a grant for a Household Hazardous Waste Facility in Bennington and the Agreement needs to be signed by each town in the Alliance. The three Household Hazardous Waste Days cost the Alliance \$75,000.00 per year. Pam Tworig questioned how a permanent facility could save money. All the towns have signed the agreement except Stamford and one other.
MOTION by Mike Denault to accept and sign the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance Household Hazardous Waste Facility Agreement. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.
5. Nancy Bushika advised that there is an Asphalt Shingles Agreement in the works because the state is requiring that transfer stations accept them.

SUMMER CAMP FUNDING

Clay Zeller-Townson contacted Nancy Bushika a couple weeks ago after receiving new guidance from the grant program representative. The grant funds are distributed through a reimbursement process so they have to show payment of the \$30,000.00 in costs in order to be reimbursed. Nancy Bushika spoke with a grant official who advised that many were not able to take advantage of the program because of this stipulation. Some solutions were 1) have the town pay the outstanding costs and be reimbursed, 2) have the town cut all the checks, photocopy the checks and submit a reimbursement package and then release the checks once the town has received the grant funds, 3) find someone willing to pay the costs privately until the grant funds come in, or 4) have the town obtain a short-term loan for \$30,000.00 which would be paid off once the grant funds were received. The reimbursement requirement was part of the grant paperwork but was not noticed. The summer camp group has received some donations which could be used to cover the interest on the loan. Nancy Bushika stated that all paperwork and every receipt needs to be given to the town office in the event the town is audited. Helen Fields noted that any extra funds would remain in the town account for next year.
MOTION by Nancy Bushika to pay the outstanding summer camp costs with town funds which will be reimbursed when the grant funds are received. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

HARVESTSTAMFORD COMMUNITY SUPPER

Helen Fields reminded everyone of the HarveStamford Community Supper on August 28, 2021 at 6 p.m. in the back yard of the school. There will be a cookie contest.

TOWN WEBSITE

The board received a proposal from 10F Design in Brattleboro, Vermont. The bid was taken under consideration. A decision will be made when they have reviewed and compared the written proposal from Jason Morin and tonight's proposal.

DEERFIELD VALLEY FIBER COMMUNICATIONS UNION DISTRICT

Bill Levine gave an update on the CUD progress. The first buildout is still planned by the end of 2022.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. Bill Levine wants seat at the table when discussing the ATV/UTV matter since he feels future road conditions are a concern and could be a public hazard. Bill Levine suggested the Selectboard set ground rules at the beginning of the public hearing. Mike Denault felt 5 minutes is rather short and perhaps 10 minutes per person would better. It was suggested that everyone state their name and address before speaking.
2. The town clerk has taken the first steps in the Hazard Mitigation Grant process. The next step will be to obtain the Request for Proposal template.
3. The Vermont League of Cities and Town is requiring all towns to take a survey so they can assess cyber security levels. Towns that do not have strong enough security levels in place will be denied cyber security coverage due to the increasing amount of cyber-attacks, ransomware and breaches.

TOWN OWNED PROPERTY

1. The Selectboard signed the deed transferring Lot 279 in Alpenwald to Robert Bleau.
2. In April the Selectboard accepted an offer from Daniel Rainey to purchase the Stamford portion of the Desilets parcel on Main Road. Since that date the town clerk has attempted to contact him to complete the purchase by sending a letter in June and leaving a voice mail message in July. There has been no response.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to withdraw the acceptance of Mr. Rainey's offer and return the parcel to the list of property for sale by the town. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

WINDHAM SOUTHWEST SUPERVISORY UNION LETTER

The Selectboard received a letter from James Walker, the Operations Manager at the WSSU. The WSSU received a grant to purchase wood chips and Mr. Walker rented a small loader to spread out the chips. He would like the town crew to finish spreading the wood chips under the swing set and then move the remaining unused chips near the basketball court. He also requests that the town divert the water from the state's culvert along the northerly fence line into the field, all before school starts. Dave Tatro stated that with all the rain, he is behind on his summer work. He also noted that that the existing chip pile is blocking the drainage, forcing water into the school's leach field. The Selectboard will advise that the town's crew is unable to take on these projects due to its already full schedule, especially under the time frame given.

PROPERTY LINE DISPUTE

The town received a second legal letter advising that there is no longer a dispute on Lesure Road. They removed their request to hold the approval of the driveway permit. Bill Levine will draft a letter to determine whether a Lesure Road number should be given or if the property owner intends to establish a private right of way. Dave Tatro voiced concerns over the quality of the road and the potential drainage issues.

SELECTBOARD AGENDA REQUEST

Kevin Hoyt requested to be on the agenda to present his concerns about the integrity of elections in Vermont. Nancy Bushika felt there was too much planned for discussion at tonight's meeting and asked him to wait until September.

TOWN ASSESSOR/ASSESSOR CLERK

Nancy Bushika received a response from NEMRC concerning the vacant assessor position and would like to meet with him next week. Mike Denault is frustrated that the state requires certification for

appointed assessors, but not elected listers. The board agreed local assessors are best and will appoint temporary assessor clerks so they can begin training.

BUILDING PERMIT PROBLEM

It was noted that many people are building structures without permits and the town is losing a lot of tax money. Mike Denault feels there should be a penalty imposed if people build without a permit. The board will review the By-laws and Vermont statutes.

JOINT MEETINGS WITH SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Mike Denault would like to resume the meetings with the School Directors to discuss the ownership and authority of the building and grounds. The Selectboard will invite the new principal to a future meeting. The board also discussed holding Selectboard meetings in the gym from now on because the town room cannot hold the amount of people that have been coming to meetings. Many people have had to stand.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini
Clerk

CAF/las

REMINDERS

1. The town office is open with the following hours: Monday – Closed; Tuesday – 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Wednesday – 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Thursday – 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.
2. The HarveStamford Community Supper is scheduled for August 28, 2021 at 6 p.m. in back of the Stamford Elementary School.
3. The transfer station is open every Wednesday from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. during the summer.
4. Please visit the town's official website: townofstamfordvermont.org for town information and updates.