

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
September 5, 2019
(UNAPPROVED)**

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

Visitors: William Levine.
David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.
Lori Shepard, Selectboard Secretary.

Nancy Bushika called the meeting to order at 6:30 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 a few old business items.

MINUTES

MOTION by Carol Fachini to accept the regular meeting minutes of August 15, 2019 as written. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

- WARRANT #35 \$6,833.64 payroll
- WARRANT #36 \$9,436.20 accounts payable

FINANCIALS

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

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. Dave Tatro received the erosion inventory for the municipal roads general permit which was conducted by the Agency of Transportation. The report stated that Stamford has some very good roads, considering our steep slopes and terrain challenges. The technician said our Class 4 roads were some of the best he has seen and he was very impressed. The board commended Dave Tatro for a job well done. The state has created new laws for how the ditches need to be constructed along roads that are near streams. There are several areas that will have to have grass or stone-lined ditches. The highway department will have to report to the state which areas they plan to update each year. The state would like to see everything in compliance in the next 20 years.
2. The highway crew has been ditching.
3. The septic system project for the garage was started this week.
4. Nancy Bushika asked about Poplar Drive. Dave Tatro has some other projects he would like to complete first. The Poplar Drive culvert repair will not take that long.

RECYCLING

Nancy Bushika asked if Dave Tatro still wanted a used compactor for the town. Now that the compactor is emptied each week, it is not such a big deal. Nancy Bushika will ask Trevor Mance to keep looking since have a compactor will save the town money.

RESULTS OF PUBLIC HEARING TO DISCONTINUE A PORTION OF LINCOLN ROAD

Scott Lincoln requested that the town give up the two sections of roads on his property at 2581 Main Road (formerly the Shippee/Mills property). The sections of town road are described as follows:

1. approximately .03 mile from the intersection of Main Road also known as Routes 8 & 100 west to the Scott and Lisa Lincoln driveway.
2. approximately .14 mile from the intersection of the Scott and Lisa Lincoln driveway north to the

intersection of the 1963 new access to Lincoln Road. This section is a portion of Section 4 as shown on plan entitled, "State of Vermont Department of Highways Proposed Improvement", Survey of Highway Project Stamford S 0102 (3) prepared in connection with the certificate of relinquishment dated September 23, 1963 and filed in the Stamford, Vermont Land Records in Book 28, Page 145.

Nancy Bushika acknowledged a letter received from the Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation dated August 29, 2019. They state that it is their policy "...to encourage municipalities to keep highways as public rights-of-way for emergency, recreational, forestry, agricultural, and other purposes." But they have "reviewed the petition and have no comments." There were no objections from visitors. The two sections of road do not provide access to national forest and the board did not see a great benefit to keep them as a right-of-way. They are portions of the old Main Road and the sections immediately before and after were discontinued years ago. The board voted unanimously to discontinue the portions of the town roads at the public hearing and the right-of-way will revert back to the land owners.

FOREST SERVICE AGREEMENT

The board requested that a Forest Service representative comes to a future meeting to explain the contract. The Forest Service has not responded.

DELINQUENT DOGS

There are still 7 dog owners who have not licensed their dogs. The board discussed issuing tickets which would require the dog owners to appear in court in Bennington and pay additional fines. The board does not want to take this step but may have no recourse if people do not license their dogs. The board will give the dog owners one last opportunity to bring their dogs into compliance and will ask the Dog Officer to make personal visits.

TAX RATE UPDATE

1. It was discovered when preparing tax bills that the value of the firehouse was erroneously included in the grand list. The town votes to exempt the value every five years and the value should not be included. The correction reduced the grand list value which unfortunately caused a slight increase in the tax rate.

MOTION by Chris Warren to set the municipal tax rate at \$0.3088 and the highway rate at \$0.4390. The new total homestead tax rate will be \$2.0584 and the total non-homestead tax rate will be \$2.3156. SECONDED by Dan Potvin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

2. An Errors & Omissions statement is necessary to change the value of the grand list.

MOTION by Chris Warren to sign the Errors & Omissions statement to reduce the grand list by \$506,100.00 which is the value of the firehouse. SECONDED by Dan. Potvin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

3. The Selectboard also signed a revised warrant authorizing the treasurer to send out tax bills with the revised rates.

BETTER BACK ROADS GRANT

The total cost of the Collins Road rock wall project was \$11,180.00. The grant reimbursement amount is \$8,485.00 and the town portion is \$2,695.00. The town was able to request reimbursement for the employees' salaries and related benefits as well as the value of the town equipment used. The only actually cost paid by the town for an outside contractor was \$2,250.00. Dave Tatro noted that having our own excavator really saves the town a lot of money, especially with these grants.

MOTION by Carol Fachini to sign the invoice spreadsheet requesting grant fund reimbursement. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

REVISED PACIF GRANT

The normal town match for PACIF grants is 50% but VLCT is requiring a 60% match due to several outstanding safety items noted in the last inspection and recommended we apply only for items on their list. The PACIF insurance adjuster has not come down to perform a safety inspection in a couple years. Several of the outstanding safety items have been corrected. Dave Tatro does not want to waste money on items he doesn't

want and doesn't want to pay the higher town match, especially when many items on the list have been taken care of. Dave Tatro withdrew all of the highway items and the fire department cancelled most of theirs. A revised PACIF grant application was submitted for \$231.00 on behalf of the fire department.

TOWN CREDIT CARD

The treasurer contacted Berkshire Bank concerning a town credit card. They offer a company credit card program with no annual fee and no interest if the balance is paid each month. The town can set credit limits per employee. Employees will not be held personally liable for charges incurred on behalf of the town.

MOTION by Chris Warren to proceed with one highway credit card in the name of Dave Tatro and a town office card in the name of Lori Shepard. SECONDED by Dan Potvin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

UPDATE RECORDING FEES

The State of Vermont increased the recording fees for documents recorded in the Land Records from \$10.00 per page to \$15.00 per page. Our building permits, driveway permits and applications to the zoning board all include a \$10.00 recording fee. The board discussed the impact of increasing the fees another \$5.00 in accordance with the new recording fee law.

MOTION by Dan Potvin to increase all permit fees by \$5.00. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Bill Levine had nothing new to report.

TAX SALE

The town tax sale is scheduled for October 8, 2019 at 10 a.m. at the town office. At this time there are 12 Alpenwald lots and 3 other parcels of land in town which will be sold at auction if the taxes are not paid by the sale date: Lots 279, 308, 292, 220, 137, 321, 322, 288, 289, 264, 286, and 278 in Alpenwald, Lot 7 on Sparrow Drive, Lot 13 on Schenk Road and 5.5 acres off of Collins Road. Both Carol Fachini and Nancy Bushika are available to attend to accept properties that are not sold. Information on the lots available will be posted on the town website.

HIGH SPEED FIBER OPTIC PRESENTATION

Nancy Bushika acknowledged that the presentation by Chris Lynch from the Matrix Design Group was a lot of information to digest. She contacted members of the Broadband Group who would like more information on the proposal. Chris Warren would be interested in learning more as well. Chris Lynch will be contacted to write a proposal specific to Stamford with detailed costs, grant funding opportunities and what the town would be responsible for.

TOWN ATTORNEY

1. The new town attorney is back from vacation. A package of all available information was sent to him this week and he will provide an opinion as soon as possible.
2. Dan Potvin spoke to an advocate for charter schools and asked if anyone has investigated our school becoming a charter school instead of merging. Bill Levine said the idea was proposed when the Clarksburg merger group was formed but no one volunteered to form a charter school investigation group. Some thought it might be a good idea to have a backup plan in the event the merger with Clarksburg is voted down.

ANIMALS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

The school has not provided a copy of its policy concerning no animals on school grounds. Nancy Bushika will talk to the principal. She would like to review the school's policy and have the Selectboard adopt a similar policy.

TOWN OFFICE CLOSED

The town office will be closed on Thursday and Friday, September 12-13, 2019 to allow the town clerk and assistant to attend a two day training seminar. Nancy Bushika and the board were supportive.

CDL TEST

Allen Desautels was not able to complete his CDL test at the Department of Motor Vehicles in Bennington. The instructor said the truck could not have regrooved tires on the front and ended the testing session. Dave Tatro pointed out that they were not regrooved tires, they were recapped tires, which is acceptable. Dave Tatro found the law and showed the supervisor but they still would not allow Allen Desautels to continue the test. Dave Tatro was frustrated that time and money was wasted because the DMV worker didn't know what they were doing. Another test was scheduled for October 2, 2019. Dan Potvin would like to write a complaint to the DMV. The rest of the board preferred to wait until after Allen Desautels gets his license.

MOTION by Chris Warren to adjourn. SECONDED by Dan Potvin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini
Clerk

CF/las

REMINDERS

1. The town office will be closed on Thursday and Friday, September 12-13, 2019 to allow the town clerk and assistant to attend a two day training seminar.
2. Tax bills have been issued 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.
3. Please visit the town's new official website: townofstamfordvermont.org.
4. 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.