

**TOWN OF STAMFORD**  
**SELECT BOARD MEETING**  
**November 21, 2024**  
**(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Select Board: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Michael G. Denault, John Dunn, and Douglas Wright.

Kurt Gamari was not present.

Visitors: Debra Burchard, Laura Champagne, Carol Ethier-Kipp, Peter Greenbush, Marta Miller, and James Stimpson.

Lori Shepard, Select Board Secretary.

Nancy Bushika opened the meeting at 6 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance, welcomed everyone, and read a statement with procedural rules for the meeting. Additional correspondence was added to the agenda. Peter Greenbush recorded the meeting.

#### HEARING OF VISITORS

1. Marta Miller was heartened by the fact that Bob Briggs offered water to people who are without and she thought it was wonderful to see community members come together to assist a person in need. She wondered if the Conservation Commission or Emergency Management could organize something more. Mike Denault said the Fire Department helped him in the past by filling his well when he ran out of water. He said the Fire Department was a great help.

2. Peter Greenbush asked the Select Board about conflicts of interest. The board noted that Vermont is lenient on small towns where people often wear many hats. The Delinquent Tax Collector is paid 5% of the taxes that are collected. He feels if the same person sits on the Board of Abatement and Board of Civil Authority, the decisions made on those boards could affect the salary as a Delinquent Tax Collector. It is also more complicated if the same person also participates in setting the values of properties in town. Mike Denault said it could sound like a conflict of interest on the surface. He and Nancy Bushika have both driven the assessors around to give them access to properties; it does not mean there is a conflict of interest. Nancy Bushika asked if it was a conflict as defined in the statutes. Deb Burchard said the laws are very vague. Peter Greenbush has consulted with the Vermont League of Cities & Towns and the Board of Ethics and is waiting for a response. Mike Denault agreed that the board would look into it. Jim Stimpson suggested that the Select Board eliminate the delinquent tax collector position and the duties would fall on the current treasurer to perform. Mike Denault believes the position can't be eliminated mid-term because it is an elected position. Deb Burchard mentioned the issue in Pownal in 2017 that went all the way to Burlington. She feels now that the matter has been brought to the board's attention, the Select Board has a duty to look into it.

#### MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of November 7, 2024 as written. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### SELECT BOARD ORDERS

The Select Board reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #45 \$ 7,174.13 payroll

WARRANT #46 \$316,500.61 accounts payable

#### ROAD CONDITIONS

The Select Board discussed the MERP Implementation Grant. The grant is for \$33,000.00 to replace the large garage doors and side door with insulated doors. This grant follows an energy assessment of the highway garage. The Bennington County Regional Commission has offered to assist the town with the Request for Proposal process and has provided a list of companies that do this type of work. Mike Denault would rather hire people in town and have local control.

#### RECYCLING

Buzz Wheeler has not been able to work due to health reasons. Roy Gibson, the transfer station substitute, has been too busy to help out. Joseph Fachini submitted a letter offering to help as another alternate for the transfer station. Anyone else who would like to work as a backup monitor at the transfer station should submit a letter of interest.

MOTION by Mike Denault to hire Joseph Fachini, Jr. as the recycling monitor alternate.

SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### HIGHWAY ORDINANCE

This will be discussed at a later meeting. The town office has had a great deal of problems with the internet access through the school. It was suggested that the town get internet through DVFiber. The town will need its own firewall and it may be costly. The board discussed using the ARPA funds set aside for DVFiber installation assistance since it has not been used.

#### PREPARATION LETTER

Dan Potvin wanted to come to the Select Board meeting but he needed to attend another meeting with other Planning Commission members. His letter was acknowledged and read aloud. With the United States, France and England joining to allow Ukraine to shoot our long range missiles into Russia, it could start World War III. He again asked people to prepare in case the grid goes down or the markets collapse and referred to his prior May 2024 letter which gave resources for a manual well water pump, garden seeds, water filters, etc. and recommended storing three months of food and water.

#### FINANCIAL REPORTS

The treasurer provided 3rd quarter reports for the town and highway finances. She is willing to answer any questions the board has.

#### TOWN CHRISTMAS TREE

No one has come forward to organize a tree lighting ceremony. John Dunn is willing to donate a tree. The town clerk offered to decorate it. Mike Denault will help set it up. The board discussed planting a live tree.

#### ST. JOHN BOSCO CHURCH

The town received its \$10,000.00 deposit back from the realtor.

#### DECEMBER 2 RUNOFF ELECTION

The town clerk asked the Select Board members to help count votes on Monday night when the polls close.

#### BUDGET SEASON

Employee reviews will begin on Thursday, December 5, 2024 at 5 p.m. before the regular 6 p.m. meeting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Not needed.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by John Dunn. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting ended at 6:55 p.m.

Nancy L. Bushika  
Clerk pro tempore

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REMINDERS

1. Townspeople should sign up with the state's free communications network, VT-Alert. You can sign up at [vtalert.gov](http://vtalert.gov) to receive notifications. You can choose how you would like to be alerted (phone call, text or email) and can choose what type of alerts you would like to receive, i.e. weather, road closures, public health, etc.
2. Anyone interested in applying for the part-time Assistant Assessor Clerk position should submit a letter of interest to the Select Board.
3. Anyone interested in applying for the transfer station substitute position should submit a letter of interest to the Select Board.
4. The town office is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and on Thursdays from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. Closed Mondays.