

TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECT BOARD MEETING
December 5, 2024
(UNAPPROVED)

5:00 p.m.

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

Douglas Wright was not present.

Visitors: Jedidiah Gramlin, Lisa Gramlin, Peter Greenbush, Sheila Pecor, Debra Righi, and James Righi.

Lori Shepard, Select Board Secretary.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. MOTION by Nancy Bushika to find that premature general public knowledge of a personnel matter would place the town at a substantial disadvantage. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to enter executive session for employee reviews pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B). SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The Selectboard entered executive session at 5:00 p.m.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to exit executive session. SECONDED by John Dunn. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 6:10 p.m.

Nancy Bushika opened the meeting at 6:10 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance, welcomed everyone, and read a statement with procedural rules for the meeting. Additional correspondence and preparation for the special town meeting was added to the agenda. Jed Gramlin recorded the meeting.

HEARING OF VISITORS

1. Sheila Pecor asked about the Green Mountain Express bus that has been in town. It is a company out of Bennington that provides transportation assistance.

2. Peter Greenbush asked about the conflict of interest matter he brought up at the last meeting. Nancy Bushika contacted the Vermont League of Cities & Towns. There is no statutory conflict but they were going to consult to their legal department and Nancy Bushika has not received a response back yet. The board discussed the matter further.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of November 21, 2024 as written. SECONDED by John Dunn. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECT BOARD ORDERS

The Select Board reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #47 \$ 8,670.84 payroll

WARRANT #48 \$84,717.97 accounts payable

ROAD CONDITIONS

The last storm brought a lot of snow and there was a truck breakdown during the storm.

RECYCLING

An Agency of Natural Resources representative conducted a surprise inspection of the transfer station. He found everything in order and commended the town for its tidiness and good work. A copy of the report will be given to Dave Tatro and the two recycling monitors.

HIGHWAY ORDINANCE

The Select Board briefly reviewed the ordinance. Dave Tatro has not had a chance to review the proposed changes. Nancy Bushika will seek his input.

MUNICIPAL ENERGY RESCILIENCY PROGRAM (MERP)

The Select Board reviewed and signed the Affirmation of Use of Funds confirming that all grant funds awarded will be used for the replacement of the highway garage doors project.

BETTER ROADS CATEGORY A GRANT-ROAD EROSION INVENTORY

The Select Board reviewed and signed the Letter of Intent to participate in the grant. This grant will provide funds to hire the Bennington County Regional Commission to assist the Road Commissioner in conducting the road erosion inventory reassessment.

SPECIAL TOWN MEETING

Nancy Bushika summarized the decisions leading up to the purchase and financing of the new firetruck. A town vote is needed to complete the purchase and authorize the town to borrow the funds. The estimated cost of the new fire truck is \$526,515.98. The town plans to finance \$270,000.00 and the rest will come from the fire truck replacement fund.

DVFIBER ASSISTANCE

The town donated \$7,500.00 in ARPA funds to DVFiber to help with set up costs for people in need. No one has applied for the funds. The town will request that DVFiber return the ARPA funds and the Selectboard will redirect their use. The funds could be used for transfer station or highway garage improvements or for the East Road resurfacing project.

PACIF GRANT

The town applied for an eye wash kit and exit sign for the highway garage which were items that were noted on the recent insurance inspection of the garage. The eyewash solution will not be covered by grant funds.

AUDITORS

The new auditing firm will be contacted to schedule the audit for 2024.

DOG FEES

The state is raising their portion of the dog licensing fee \$2.00. In reviewing last year's minutes, the Select Board made a motion to increase the town's portion of the fee by \$10.00 beginning in 2024 but the increase was never implemented. The plan was to create a reserve fund to cover unanticipated dog expenses.

MOTION by John Dunn to go up \$5.00 on dog licensing fees starting in 2025. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Nancy Bushika received an email from the state concerning the new ethics law that was passed and will take effect in January. Each town will have to appoint an Ethics Liaison and Select Board members will have to attend training. Nancy Bushika would like to appoint Doug Wright.

TOWN CHRISTMAS TREE

Mike Denault thanked John Dunn for donating a Christmas tree.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Not needed.

SELECT BOAR MEETING SCHEDULE

The board planned an Executive Session for employee reviews at the beginning of their budget work session meeting which will be on December 12, 2024 at 6 p.m.

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

Kurt Gamari
Clerk

/las

REMINDERS

1. Townspeople should sign up with the state's free communications network, VT-Alert. You can sign up at 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.

PETITIONS FOR WARRANT ARTICLES & ELECTED POSITIONS

The deadline for filing petitions with the town clerk for warrant articles to be included in the town meeting warning is Thursday, January 16, 2025. These petitions must be signed by 5% of the registered voters or at least 38 signatures. V.S.A. 17:2642(a)

The required signatures on a petition to run for an elected office are 1% of the registered voters or at least 8 signatures. The deadline for filing these petitions with the Town Clerk is Monday, January 27, 2025 by 5:00 p.m. Nominating papers and the Consent of Candidate form may be picked up at the Town Office. V.S.A. 17:2681(a) (b).

Elected positions to be filled this year are:

Town Moderator - 1 year term (*Paul Dupuis*)
School Moderator - 1 year term (*Paul Dupuis*)
Selectboard member - 2 year term (*Nancy Bushika*)
Selectboard member - 3 year term (*Michael Denault*)
School Director - 2 year term (*Erika Bailey*)
School Director - 3 year term (*Gary Bellows*)
Collector of Delinquent Taxes - 1 year term (*Sally A. Bohl*)
Cemetery Commissioner - 3 year term (*Sheila G. Lawrence*)
Library Trustee - 2 year term (*Danielle Smith*)

Town meeting will be held on Monday, March 3, 2025 at 7:00 p.m. with the school portion first, followed by the town.

Voting will be held on Tuesday, March 4, 2025 from 10 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Town of Stamford Community Room. Applications for addition to the checklist will be accepted at the town office up to and throughout election day.

Absentee ballots will be available until 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 3, 2025. Please call the town office at 694-1361.

Anyone interested in serving as an appointed board member, please review the expiring appointed positions in the town report and contact a member of that board or the Select Board.