

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
March 16, 2023
(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Michael G. Denault, Pamela Tworig, Marie Kelly-Whitney and Kurt Gamari.

Visitors: Carolyn Brooks, Eleanor Derby-Kilfoyle, Helen Fields, Karen Kuranda, Deborah Righi, James Righi, James Stimpson, and Natalie Yorke.
Luke McKay, Dog Officer.
David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.
William Levine, Emergency Management Director.
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. There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #9 \$11,707.80 payroll
WARRANT #10 \$33,424.43 accounts payable

REORGANIZATION OF BOARD

MOTION by Pam Tworig to nominate Nancy Bushika as Selectboard Chair. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Kurt Gamari to nominate Mike Denault as Vice Chair. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Pam Tworig to nominate Marie Kelly-Whitney as Clerk. SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

JUDICIAL BUREAU APPOINTMENTS

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to remove Dan Potvin and Carol Fachini as an Issuing and Appearing Officials and add Kurt Gamari and Marie Kelly-Whitney as Issuing and Appearing Officials. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

DESIGNATION OF MEETING DATES

MOTION by Pam Tworig to meet on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of each month at 6:00 p.m. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. Meeting dates are subject to review and may be changed.

DESIGNATION OF NEWSPAPER FOR PUBLICATIONS

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to designate The Berkshire Eagle as the newspaper for publications. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. It was noted that the board has looked into the Bennington Banner and determined that more people in town subscribe to the Berkshire Eagle.

DESIGNATION OF SELECTBOARD MEMBER TO REVIEW WARRANTS

MOTION by Mike Denault to designate Nancy Bushika to review bills and have the authority to approve payments prior to Selectboard meetings. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

DESIGNATION OF HIGHWAY LIASON

MOTION by Mike Denault to appoint Pam Tworig as liaison to the highway department. SECONDED by Marie Kelly-Whitney. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

DESIGNATION OF SHERIFF/STATE POLICE LIASON

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to appoint Mike Denault as liaison to the sheriff's department/state police. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

CEMETERY POSITION

Luke McKay was on the ballot and received the most votes for the three year term on the cemetery commission. He has accepted this position. No one ran for the second open position with two years remaining on a three year term. Luke McKay also won as a write-in for this position. Since he cannot hold both positions, this creates a vacancy on the cemetery commission. Pam Tworig asked if the runner-up should automatically be appointed. Nancy Bushika felt, in fairness to all, anyone wishing to be appointed to fill this term should send a letter of interest to the Selectboard or town office.

MOTION by Mike Denault to advertise this position opening for two weeks. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

APPOINTMENTS

1. Zoning Administrator. The Planning Commission has not made a recommendation to reappoint the current Zoning Administrator so the board will wait to hear from them. Kurt Gamari felt the town should not be without a Zoning Administrator and the board should consider appointing someone a temporarily. Jim Stimpson offered to act as a temporary Zoning Administrator.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to appoint Jim Stimpson Zoning Administrator on a temporary basis until they appoint a permanent one. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

2. MOTION by Mike Denault to appoint Theodore N. Dobbert to the Zoning Board of Adjustment, 3 year term. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

3. MOTION by Kurt Gamari to appoint William H. Levine as Emergency Management Director, 1 year term. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

4. MOTION by Mike Denault to appoint Sheila G. Lawrence as Emergency Management Coordinator, 1 year term. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

5. MOTION by Pam Tworig to appoint Luke McKay as Dog Officer, 1 year term. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

6. MOTION by Kurt Gamari to appoint Jenifer Hughs as Energy Coordinator, 1 year term. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

7. MOTION by Pam Tworig to appoint Maura Hawkins as Septic Officer, 1 year term. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

8. MOTION by Kurt Gamari to appoint Daniel J. Potvin to the Planning Commission, 4 year term. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

9. MOTION by Kurt Gamari to appoint Carolyn Brooks to the Planning Commission, 4 year term. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

10. MOTION by Pam Tworig to appoint David L. Saldo to the Conservation Commission, 4 year term. SECONDED by Marie Kelly-Whitney. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

11. MOTION by Pam Tworig to appoint David R. Tatro as Road Commissioner, 1 year term. SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

12. MOTION by Pam Tworig to appoint Bruce Richardson as Tree Warden, 1 year term. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

13. MOTION by Mike Denault to appoint Debra Burchard and Daniel J. Potvin as town representatives to the Bennington County Regional Commission, 1 year term. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

14. MOTION by Pam Tworig to appoint Susan Flash as Green Up Day Coordinator, 1 year term. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

15. MOTION by Pam Tworig to appoint Clay Zeller-Townsend to the Community Projects Committee, 3 year term. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

16. The town has received one letter from Luke McKay expressing an interest to serve as Health Officer. MOTION to recommend to the state that Luke McKay be appointed Health Officer. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

HEARING OF VISITORS

1. Karen Kuranda brought in a warm blanket to show the Selectboard and discussed the year-long project she has spearheaded. The blankets have been stitched together by Sue Landry, Mary Johnson, Eleanor Derby-Kilfoyle and Joanne Irace and have been donated anonymously.
2. Carolyn Brooks thanked Dave Tatro and Mike Brothers for their outstanding service during the last three-day snowstorm.

LAW ENFORCEMENT BUDGET

Jim Stimpson stated that at town meeting Article 3 was passed quickly as money for general operational costs. Then the article to vote an additional \$40,000.00 for the sheriff came up. The Selectboard report listed the wrong article number and it was confusing. He asked the board to reconsider hiring the sheriff's department. He has talked to state troopers who said if the town did not have a contract with the sheriff, they would patrol here more. It was guesstimated that 11 hours at the new rate might give 7 or 8 hours of actual patrol time. Jim Stimpson suggested organizing a safety committee to gather public opinion and bring their views back to the board. The board discussed their options at length and decided in the past the townspeople have voted in favor of having a sheriff's presence in town and the board should give the new administration a chance. Mike Denault was directed to contact the sheriff to negotiate. The board would like a contract through December 31, 2023 for 13 hours/week, with 1 weekend night and 2 days during the week with one time during school drop off or pick up.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of February 16, 2023 as written. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of March 2, 2023 as written. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. Dave Tatro would like the board's assistance with a few residents who are leaving their trash containers out in the road for several days at a time. He has moved them back a few times but it is becoming a problem with the snow plowing season. The board agreed residents cannot leave items within the road right-of-way. Marie Kelly-Whitney will contact the residents.
2. Dave Tatro noted that the snow from the school's front walkway is being pushed toward the parking lot. If the work was done early enough Dave Tatro could plow it away when he plows the school yard, but it is done afterwards and is creating an icy area right where the kids are getting off the bus. It was also stated that the discharge from the snow blower has hit cars in the parking lot and the windows and side of the building. The board was concerned with the liability of a slip and fall hazard at the entrance and the damage this could cause to the side of the building and windows. A letter will be sent to the School Directors.

3. The chimney fell off the garage again. Dave Tatro will have someone fix it.
4. Lori Shepard is working on a grant to weatherize the garage.
5. Nancy Bushika asked Dave Tatro to put up caution tape and cones at the back entrance to the town office. The area is not safe where the snow falls off the roof.
6. The board signed the Notice of Intent in connection with the Municipal Roads General Permit. The fee of \$640.00 is due.
7. Both Dave Tatro and Mike Brothers have been called for jury duty service on April 4, 2023. A letter was sent asking that the court excuse both employees since their absence at the same time could be problematic for the town.

SCHOOL LIASION

Pam Tworig suggested that the board appoint a school liaison and thought Kurt Gamari would be an excellent choice. The meetings are hybrid so he could zoom in and could increase communication between the two boards.

MOTION by Pam Tworig to appoint Kurt Gamari as school liaison. SECONDED by Marie Kelly-Whitney. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

RECYCLING

Nancy Bushika advised that all known haulers have registered with the town and she has submitted copies to the state.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. Bill Levine set up one of the automatic external defibrillators and showed the Selectboard. A training session was tentatively scheduled for April 10, 2023.
2. Bill Levine talked about the snowstorm this week. He recommended a new message on the town answering machine informing people to call 911 in an emergency. Paul Ethier called him on Tuesday to see if he intended to open the emergency shelter at the school, but he never expected to have a situation with no electricity and no phones. Some houses got down to 50 degrees. He would like to put together a list of people with special needs and the elderly who might have difficulty in an emergency. He asked if the school could be plowed in case the school emergency shelter needed to open. Dave Tatro said in a snowstorm like we had he cannot devote the time to keep the school parking lot open. His main concern needs to be keeping the roads plowed. Bill Levine acknowledged that he has authority to hire a contractor to plow the school. Carolyn Brooks offered to help organize the shelter in the event of an emergency. Bill Levine will work on a better system.

MOWING BID

The board finalized the lawn mowing bid and the list of contractors it will be sent to. Bids will be due April 20, 2023.

DOG ORDINANCE

Discussion was moved to the next meeting.

RABIES CLINIC

Luke McKay was disappointed with the rabies clinic turnout of only 14 residents as well as the vet hired to conduct the clinic. The low attendance may be because several other towns also offer clinics as well as Tractor Supply so people have many options. Luke McKay will consider whether it makes sense to continue to offer the clinic.

UNIFORM MUNICIPAL EXCESS WEIGHT PERMITS

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to approve the uniform municipal excess weight permit applications from ABC Supply Co., Inc., R.K. Miles, Inc. and Cardinal Logistics Management. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The appropriate fees and insurance information were received from the applicants.

MAIL SLOT

Lori Shepard will follow up with the contractor concerning the security of the mail slot.

WEBSITE

Marie Kelly-Whitney offered to help with the website. Nancy Bushika would like to begin reviewing the town's policies and ordinances and will start with the website policy.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR

Pam Tworig asked about a job description for the Zoning Administrator. There is an Administrator's Handbook that gives all the necessary information. Pam Tworig stated that the Selectboard is in charge of the Zoning Administrator's performance. Kurt Gamari would like more transparency with the permits, like a quarterly report of what has been issued. Carolyn Brooks advised that the Planning Commission is discussing a new permit fee schedule and an hourly rate for the Zoning Administrator to provide an incentive to follow up on the permits. The Planning Commission will advertise for the position and will make a recommendation to the board.

COMPLAINTS

Nancy Bushika would like to remind all residents that complaints should be made to the Selectboard in writing or in person at a Selectboard meeting, not through the town clerk.

MOTION by Pam Tworig to adjourn. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting ended at 9:07 p.m.

Marie Kelly-Whitney, Clerk

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REMINDERS

1. All dogs 6 months and older must be licensed by April 1st of each year. State law requires a valid rabies vaccination certificate to be filed with the Town Clerk's office. Licensing your dog is very easy. Rabies certificates can be faxed to the town office at 802-694-1636 or emailed to the town office at townclerk@stamfordvt.net. Once the current rabies certificate is on file, license renewals can be handled in person, by mailing a check, by utilizing the mail slot in the back wall of the town office or by telephone with a credit card. License fees are \$9.00 for each spayed/neutered dog or \$13.00 for each intact dog. Checks should be made payable to the Town of Stamford.
2. 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.
3. Anyone interested in being appointed the Zoning Administrator should send a letter of interest to the Planning Commission at the town office by March 31, 2023.
4. Anyone wishing to be appointed to fill the vacant cemetery position should send a letter of interest to the Selectboard or town office.