

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
June 20, 2024
(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Michael G. Denault, Kurt Gamari, Douglas Wright, and John Dunn.
Visitors: Richard Cristofolini, Jedidiah Gramlin, Lisa Gramlin, Marta Miller, Sheila Pecor, Debra Righi, and James Righi.
David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.
Robert Briggs, Emergency Management Director.
Lori Shepard, Selectboard Secretary.

Nancy Bushika opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance, welcomed everyone, and read a statement with procedural rules for the meeting. There were some updates for the Selectboard that were not available at the time the agenda was posted. Nancy Bushika stated that Jed Gramlin was video recording the meeting.

HEARING OF VISITORS

Rich Cristofolini is concerned that overgrown brush and trees are causing a safety hazard when pulling out of The Lane onto East Road because you cannot see to pull out safely. The town does not have a policy on trees but Dave Tatro noted that the trees are in the town's right-of-way. A letter will be sent to the property owners and the board will consider adopting a policy.

MINUTES

1. MOTION by Kurt Gamari to accept the regular meeting minutes of June 6, 2024 as written. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.
2. MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the minutes from the joint meeting with the School Directors on May 29, 2024 as written. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

- WARRANT #23 \$ 7,977.73 payroll
- WARRANT #24 \$23,055.57 accounts payable

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. The guardrails on Mill Road that were damaged in last July's flood were finally replaced.
2. The highway crew continues the road-side mowing.
3. Dave Tatro plans to work on ditching and culverts when the mowing is complete.
4. Dave Tatro will meet with Jim Henderson from the Bennington County Regional Commission to choose the next road project for the Grants-in-Aid program.
5. Dave Tatro received the hydraulic study for a culvert on East Road. He expects it will be an expensive replacement and will seek a structures grant for funding.

6. Dave Tatro stated that he met with Josh Carvajal, the state river engineer, concerning the Suzanne Drive culvert. It will not be an easy project and will require the realignment of the stream and both the town and Alpenwald installing large culverts.

JULY 2023 FLOOD FEMA UPDATE

Lori Shepard and Dave Tatro explained the difficulties they are having with FEMA. Lori Shepard contacted the state emergency representative who was very helpful and instructed the town to write a letter to FEMA to move the projects forward.

MUNICIPAL ENERGY RESILIENCE PROGRAM

The state approved over 600 municipal buildings for energy assessments under the program and has been working with contractors to conduct the assessments. Our town has been assigned a contractor so our assessment should take place soon. Dave Tatro indicated that the lower panels on the garage doors are rotting. He said the roof is starting to rust badly in the front and also leaks in the back. He feels the garage needs attention before winter.

COUNTY ROAD DECLASSIFICATION

The Selectboard scheduled the site visit and public hearing to consider the declassification of the 0.3 section at the end of County Road to the Pownal line from a Class 4 road to a legal trail. The site visit will be on August 1, 2024 at 4:45 p.m. and will begin at the Town Office. The public hearing will follow at 5:30 p.m.

RECYCLING

Nothing to report.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Nothing to report.

DVFIBER

The board discussed the funding criteria and voted to offer financial assistance to defray the cost of the DV Fiber connection expenses and/or conduit installation expenses up to \$500.00. The application form will be completed and residents can apply by sending the application to the town office in a sealed envelope addressed to the Selectboard. The Selectboard will review and approve applications privately as they are received.

DELINQUENT DOG LIST

Nancy Bushika advised that the dog fine notices will go out tomorrow.

TENNIS COURT

The Selectboard received a response from Helen Fields. The board felt the picnic tables could be brought up toward the school building. They would like to leave the blueberry bushes and the shed. Dave Tatro said the wood on the raised beds was rotting and there really wasn't much there worth keeping. He will remove the fence and Dave Tatro will truck in some top soil to cover the tennis court surface and seed it. Dave Tatro felt he could get it done before school starts.

TAX ANTICIPATION LOAN

The treasurer contacted Adams Community Bank but they could not match or come close to Berkshire Bank's rate of 4.6%. The promissory note was signed with Berkshire Bank and the \$300,000.00 has been deposited in the town's account.

POLICE PATROLS

Kurt Gamari was approached by a resident asking to have the state police patrol the main highway. Mike Denault will contact the police. Mike Denault has been approached by residents in the past and he is only one member of a five member board who can't do anything individually. He asked residents to either put their concerns in writing or come to a Selectboard meeting.

TOWN SIGN

John Dunn brought up the sign at the last meeting. Some felt the town should be exempt from the By-Law regulations. John Dunn feels we are a small town and we should lead by example and install a sign that meets the current By-Laws. Discussion ensued and John Dunn will put together a model for the next meeting.

ELECTED LISTERS/APPOINTED ASSESSOR

Although the board voted at the last meeting to hold a special meeting to return to elected listers, Nancy Bushika is not in favor of a special meeting. She feels special meetings bring a stacked audience. If the Selectboard appoints an Assistant Assessor Clerk, they could oversee the position better. This person could learn on the job, become familiar with the software and duties. The available positions will be posted on the website and the board will work on a job description.

MOTION by Mike Denault to not have the special town meeting and to try to appoint an Assistant Assessor Clerk. SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

ASSESSOR CONTRACT

The assessor contract with NEMRC will expire when the Board of Civil Authority hearings are complete. Nancy Bushika will review the contract with the current Assessor Clerk to determine what duties can be done in house and what duties the town will contract with NEMRC.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to find that premature public discussion 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 a personnel matter pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The Selectboard entered executive session at 7:48 p.m. Luke McKay participated remotely by telephone during a portion of the executive session.

MOTION by Mike Denault to exit executive session. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 8:30 p.m. Action: A letter will be sent to the mowing contractor.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by John Dunn. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting ended at 8:35 p.m.

Kurt Gamari
Clerk

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REMINDERS

1. Townspeople should sign up with the state's free communications network, VT-Alert. You can sign up at vtaalert.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. The transfer station is open on Wednesday afternoons from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. for the summer months.
3. 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.