

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
September 5, 2024
(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Michael G. Denault, Kurt Gamari, Douglas Wright, and John Dunn.

Visitors: Debra Burchard, Laura Champagne, Jedidiah Gramlin, Lisa Gramlin, Patrick Kennedy, William Levine, Marta Miller, Thomas Nazzewski, Debra Righi, and James Righi.
David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.
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. Additional correspondence was added to the agenda.

HEARING OF VISITORS

1. Patrick Kennedy started a recycling company in Adams, MA called Dream Green Recycling in the Berkshires. He handles the tough to recycling items and is willing to pick up appliances from residences. He specializes in mattresses and tires. He is a certified recycling center so he does not anticipate any problems working in Vermont. His prices are cheaper than other disposal prices in the area. He will post his pricing flyer around town and at the transfer station.
2. Deb Burchard stated that there is a tremendous amount of activity on Mill Road and County Road. The power company is updating its infrastructure and she is frustrated that the town was not notified. She asked what the town and specifically the Selectboard was going to do to fix the road. Dave Tatro felt that truckers pay a road use tax and a fuel tax which the state puts toward its highway state aid the town receives. Dave Tatro intends to grade the roads when he can but it has been too dry. Discussion ensued regarding the town roads and future development of the town. Dave Tatro said there is enough traffic on Mill Road to warrant paving it. Mill Road, County Road and Jepson Road would all benefit from paving. Paving would reduce the road maintenance needs and then the highway crew wouldn't need a third person. Deb Burchard feels the power line infrastructure upgrade project should have funds available for road remediation. Dave Tatro will contact the Bennington office and he was asked to take pictures of the condition of the road.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of August 15, 2024 as written.
SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

- WARRANT #33 \$ 7,603.30 payroll
- WARRANT #34 \$11,622.83 accounts payable
- WARRANT #35 \$ 7,510.63 payroll
- WARRANT #36 \$10,889.29 accounts payable

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. Dave Tatro advised that the tree cleanup from the July 2024 storm is complete. The company will provide a quote to cut the trees at the intersection of The Lane and East Road.
2. The Freightliner is in the shop for transmission repair.

3. The road crew has been ditching Mill Road and County Road.
4. When Dave Tatro retires it will be easier for the new road crew to maintain the roads if they are paved. Dave Tatro thought they should consider paving the school bus routes in the future.

HIGHWAY GARAGE

The Selectboard considered the quotes they received to repair the highway garage roof. Dave Tatro said it is leaking, it's in bad shape, and feels something should be done before winter. The board agreed to use ARPA funds to cover the cost.

MOTION by John Dunn to hire Stevens Roofing to install a screwed-on metal roof without insulation for \$38,000.00. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

DECLASSIFICATION OF PORTION OF COUNTY ROAD

The board previously decided to keep the classification of the 0.3 mile portion of County Road a Class 4 road unless they received new information. Nancy Bushika provided information about a law suit in Tunbridge, Vermont over whether the town retains its control over a legal trail. The case was defeated and is being appealed. Dave Tatro believes it was defeated because the plaintiffs don't have a case. He feels with a legal trail, the town is relieved of its responsibility to maintain the road but retains its full authority over the legal trail. Nancy Bushika confirmed that jeeps will still be able to ride on the trail. Tom Nazzewski said the ATV club has no opinion regarding the classification. The club is looking for grant funding to improve that section as well as trail 301. Tom Nazzewski acknowledged that the club would work with the Selectboard and Road Commissioner before doing any work.

MOTION by Mike Denault to change the classification of the 0.3 section of County Road from the intersection of County Road and National Forest Trail No. 301 to the Pownal, Vermont town line from a Class 4 road to a legal trail. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. 4 in favor, 1 opposed (Doug Wright). Motion APPROVED.

Nancy Bushika asked about the "U" designation on some of the Agency of Transportation maps which could be either roads that are marked Untraveled or Unpassable.

RECYCLING

1. Dave Tatro described the trouble he had with Casella when they dropped off the wrong compactor at the transfer station.
2. Vermont is implementing a law that will make it more expensive to dispose of household hazardous waste items.
3. Nancy Bushika attended the Alliance meeting yesterday. The new household hazardous waste facility was inspected and a few improvements will be made.
4. The Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance is working with the Bennington Chamber of Commerce to create a Memorandum of Understanding with the vendors at the Garlic Fest and other Bennington events to use only compostable products.
5. The Bennington Library will hold a Fix it Fund Event on November 9, 2024. People can bring broken items for repair on that day.

NEW FIRE TRUCK LOAN

Bill Levine and Paul Ethier have worked with Adams Community Bank to obtain a loan to purchase the new fire truck for the Fire Department. The bank is willing to reduce the term to five years so the town does not need to be bonded. We will wait until the fire truck is ready and the funds are needed to sign the paperwork.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

No report.

DELINQUENT DOG LIST

Luke McKay has been working to bring dog owners into compliance. One person came in today and another will be in next week. Nancy Bushika read the delinquent dog owners aloud:

Stacy Abuisi: one dog, the town has a valid rabies certificate on file;

Ailynn Bascom: one dog, the rabies certificate on file has expired;

Doreen Bentley: one dog, the rabies certificate on file has expired;

Megan Bouchard: two dogs, one rabies certificate is valid, the other has expired;

Ryan Clark: one dog, the rabies certificate on file has expired;

William Primmer: one dog, the town has a valid rabies certificate on file; and

Clay Zeller-Townson: two dogs, one rabies certificate is valid, the other has expired.

The board discussed their options to bring the dogs into compliance. It is a public health hazard if someone is bit and the dog is not up to date on its rabies vaccine. The Dog Officer will be asked to take steps quickly to get these dogs registered.

TOWN WEBSITE

The state passed a new law requiring that either video or audio recordings of certain meetings need to be on the town website. The audio file is so large it could not be uploaded. The web designer said this increased storage capacity will cause an increase in the cost for website maintenance. It was suggested that the town look into cloud-based storage for the files and just provide a link on the website.

TRANSFER OF TOWN OWNED PROPERTY

The sale of Lots 188 and 294 was previously approved. The funds have been received from the buyer and the two deeds transferring each lot were signed.

UNIFORM MUNICIPAL EXCESS WEIGHT PERMIT

The Selectboard approved the uniform municipal excess weight permit application from Riggs Distler. The appropriate fee and insurance information was received from the applicant.

STAMFORD SIGN

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the final sign design and signed the municipal permit application. The sign will be 11.25 square feet which is allowable in the town By-laws and Deb Burchard asked that it be placed 51 feet in from the road just to be sure.

CDL DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING

Wade Masure from The Vermont League of Cities & Towns (VLCT) responded to the town's complaint. The town does not want our employees to travel to Bennington for its random CDL testing. They used to come to the highway garage to conduct the testing on site. VLCT hopes the problem will be resolved in mid-September, but the testing company has not wavered from its position to test employees in Bennington. Wade Masure will be contacted again to reinforce the town's position.

DVFIBER

No one has applied for financial assistance to help with their DVFiber installation costs.

USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES FORM

Nancy Bushika reserved the use of the community room on the first and third Thursdays in case Selectboard meeting attendance exceeds the town office space.

250TH ANNIVERSARY OF VERMONT

The state would like to see all communities do something to celebrate the anniversary which will be spread over a three-year period. Anyone interested in forming a group to plan for the celebration should contact a Selectboard member.

VLCT SEMINAR

VLCT will be holding a Budget, Spending and Borrowing seminar on September 18, 2024. Nancy Bushika would like to attend and she encouraged other board members to attend if they were available.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. MOTION by Nancy Bushika to find that premature public discussion of a contractual matter and 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 contractual matter pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(2) and 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 8:00 p.m. Dave Tatro was briefly invited to participate. Lori Shepard was also invited to participate. MOTION by Nancy Bushika to exit executive session. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 9:18 p.m. Action: Sally Bohl will be invited to the next Selectboard meeting. The rate of pay was established for the Assistant Clerk/Treasurer position.

ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK/TREASURER

Lori Shepard stated that Theresa Denault is retiring. The Selectboard thanked her for her service to the town and acknowledged that she will be missed. The open position has been posted for two or three weeks now and there has been one applicant.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting ended at 9:20 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 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. 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.