

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
December 16, 2021
(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Michael G. Denault, Brandon Field and Carol A. Fachini.
Daniel J. Potvin was not present.

Visitors: Debra Burchard, Karen Kuranda, Marta Miller,
Thomas Nazzewski, Tyna Senecal, Pamela Tworig, and Natalie Yorke.
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. The agenda was amended to add correspondence from the auditors.

HEARING OF VISITORS:

ATV COMMITTEE

1. The committee was not able to elect a chair and were not sure if the Selectboard members on the committee should be considered voting members. Mike Denault noted that in small towns the same person is often on more than one board or commission. The board did not feel it was a conflict. The ATV Committee provided two reports.
2. Marta Miller read the first report that allowing ATV use on town roads would increase road maintenance which could be a tax burden on our residents. She noted that enforcement is an issue. Opening a road to ATV use without a VASA designation could open the town to liability. She reported that using grant money for the improvement of the Sucker Pond trail is good. The National Forest is willing to build a connector trail from the Sucker Pond trail to Pownal without using any Stamford town roads. The parking lot was already turned down a year ago and can be turned down again. She reported that this would be a good compromise to allow ATV use without VASA involvement and this is about mutual respect and a long-term vision for our town.
3. Jessica Tatro reported on behalf of the Stamford Ridge Riders. She stated that all OHV riders must be registered, insured, and must purchase a trail access decal. She stated that the town could create an ordinance and allow riding without VASA, but the club could not afford the liability insurance which is why they need to be a member of VASA. She indicated that the National Forest wants the town's approval for the multi-purpose connector trail. There would be an agreement in writing and the town would need to commit to allow the trail for a certain number of years. She indicated that if the Selectboard has any specific questions, they would be happy to research and report back their findings. A National Forest map of the South of Route 9 project and proposed trail system was also provided. Mike Milazzo discussed the street-legal vehicle he owns. The committee will plan to report to the Selectboard at the Selectboard's second meeting in February.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of December 2, 2021 as written.
SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion **APPROVED**.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #49 \$ 9,640.00 payroll

WARRANT #50 \$179,411.81 accounts payable

FINANCIALS

The Selectboard reviewed and confirmed financial statements for the months of October and November.

ROAD CONDITIONS

None.

RECYCLING

1. The stairs have been installed for the demolition dumpster and look nice.
2. Since Christmas and New Year's both fall on a Saturday this year, Mike Lavarriere and Buzz Wheeler will work on Sunday. The recycling center will be open from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Sunday, December 26, 2021 and Sunday, January 2, 2022. The board thanked them for their dedication.

PURCHASING POLICIES

The Selectboard reviewed the revised policy and increased the spending amount from \$10,000.00 to \$20,000.00 after considering some of the highway purchases. The board will send the draft of the Purchasing Policy to the Cemetery Commission and Library Trustees.

TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

Nancy Bushika felt the night was very nice and noted there were about 60-70 people who attended. The board thanked the Fire Department for their traffic control, the Burchard family for donating the tree, the McKay family for the horse-drawn wagon rides, Carolyn Burch for leading the Christmas carols, the Shepard family, the Denault families and the cookie elves.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. None of the Selectboard were able to attend the Emergency Management Director overview webinar.
2. Bill Levine attended the Regional Emergency Planning meeting in North Adams and said they are dealing with an increased amount of COVID cases.
3. The Fire Department would like the townspeople to approve funding the Fire Truck Replacement account with \$50,000.00/year for the next five years.

UPCOMING ELECTION AND TERMS

Lori Shepard reviewed the expiring positions and deadlines.

OFFER TO PURCHASE TOWN-OWNED PROPERTY

Anthony Pitrone placed an offer to purchase a lot in Alpenwald.

MOTION by Brandon Field to accept the offer from Anthony Pitrone to purchase Lot 292 for \$400.00.

SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

2021 AUDIT

MOTION by Carol Fachini to sign the engagement letter for the firm of Love, Cody & Company to conduct the 2021 audit of town accounts. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

This confirmation agrees to provide the auditors with all information necessary to conduct the audit at a cost of \$12,000.00. Last year the cost was \$10,450.00. They will begin the week of January 24, 2022.

COMPUTER BACK UP SYSTEM

The town clerk would like to invest in a dual back up system to strengthen the town's data against ransomware and cyberattacks. The board was supportive.

TOWN WEBSITE

The town website has been designed and Jason Morin would like the Selectboard's input before finalizing it.

DOG ORDINANCE

The new Dog Ordinance which was approved in October is now in effect.

TOWN OFFICE

The town office will be closed on Friday, December 24, 2021 for the Christmas holiday. The office will also be closed for the week between Christmas and New Year's.

BUDGET WORK SESSIONS

The board set budget work sessions as follows:

12/30/21 – 6 p.m. – 7 p.m. budget work session, 7 p.m. executive session for employee reviews.

1/6/22 – Light agenda and budget work session

1/13/22 – Budget work session

SCHOOL USE

Karen Kuranda asked about using the gym in January for a project she is working on.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by Brandon Field. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini
Clerk

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REMINDERS

1. Anyone interested in helping Bill Levine review the contents of the Red Cross trailer or interested in forming a Citizen Response Group should contact Bill Levine directly or the town office.
2. Please visit the town's official website: townofstamfordvermont.org for town information and updates.

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 13, 2022. These petitions must be signed by 5% of the registered voters or at least 36 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 24, 2022 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 (*William Levine*)
School Moderator - 1 year term (*William Levine*)
Selectboard member - 2 year term (*Daniel Potvin*)
Selectboard member - 3 year term (*Michael Denault*)
School Director - 2 year term (*Barbara Malinowski*)
School Director - 3 year term (*Gary Bellows*)
Auditor - 1 year term (*vacancy*)
Auditor - 2 year term (*vacancy*)
Auditor - 3 year term (*vacancy*)
Collector of Delinquent Taxes - 1 year term (*Sally Bohl*)
Cemetery Commissioner - 3 year term (*Janice Farinon*)
Library Trustee - 5 year term (*Tyna Senecal*)

Town meeting will be held on Monday, February 28, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. with the town portion first, followed by the school.

Voting will be held on Tuesday, March 1, 2022 from 10 a.m. to 7 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, February 28, 2022. 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 Selectboard.