

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
August 1, 2019
(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Carol A. Fachini, Michael G. Denault, Daniel J. Potvin and Christopher Warren.

Visitors: Helen Fields and Tyna Senecal.
Sally Bohl, Assessor Clerk.
David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.
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. Updates to the agenda will include additional correspondence and snow season status. Helen Fields asked to change the order of the agenda and move the Community Projects Committee update to the beginning.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS COMMITTEE

Helen Fields reported that the committee met on July 23, 2019. Among other things, they discussed a plan to increase communication in town. They discussed creating captains of neighborhood groups to relay information on community projects around their area like a phone tree.

MINUTES

MOTION by Chris Warren to accept the regular meeting minutes of July 18, 2019 as written. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #31 \$7,584.15 payroll
WARRANT #30 \$5,440.49 accounts payable

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. The hard rains washed out areas which needed repair.
2. The highway crew has been repairing equipment.
3. There is no update on the Poplar Drive culvert.
4. Dave Tatro thanked the property owner who added stone and filled in potholes on Risky Ranch Road.
5. The well is in but Dave Tatro needs the electrician to come and finish.
6. The septic system installation has not started yet. Dave Tatro would like to finish some roadwork first.

RECYCLING

Nothing to report.

LINCOLN ROAD DISCONTINUANCE

The Selectboard reviewed the public notice and letters for the discontinuance of the small section from Main Road to the former Shippee house and the section from that point to the current Lincoln Road. The board was satisfied with the notice and signed the letters. Helen Fields has concerns about roads and trails that were used by the public which were previously given up by the town. She would like to see more walking areas created. Dan Potvin agreed and said in England there are trails everywhere, even through farmland. Helen Fields believes recreational spaces are an asset to Stamford and if there is anything left to salvage, she asked the board to consider it. Dan Potvin said snowmobilers, dirt bikers, hikers, and horseback riders like to use our trails. Mike

Denault noted that Pownal is discussing ATVs and Readsboro just passed an ordinance that allows ATVs on town roads. You can ride right up to the restaurant now.

TOWN ATTORNEY

The Selectboard reviewed the letter of interest and resume of Robert Fisher from Fisher & Fisher.

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept and hire Bob Fisher as our town attorney. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

ASSESSOR CLERK POSITION

Nancy Bushika recalled that the Selectboard increased the assessor clerk hours from 9 hours to 20 hours per week until the end of June and hired Eunice Rice to help. Mike Denault noted that the more work the assessor clerks do, the less we need to pay the NEMRC assessor. Sally Bohl felt the assessor clerks will be able to provide a lot of assistance when the reappraisal begins. The board agreed to keep the hours at 20 hours per week.

REAPPRAISAL COMPLIANCE PLAN/REVIEW REAPPRAISAL DRAFT BID

1. The town clerk and assessor clerk attended a recent seminar on town reappraisals. The clerk thanked the board for supporting their continued education. They learned at the seminar that the state wants to see the town moving forward with the reappraisal and will not allow the town to wait for the state's software bidding process before contracting with a reappraisal company.
2. The reappraisal compliance plan has been signed by John Tiffany, the town's assessor from NEMRC and forwarded to the state.
3. The board reviewed the new RFP with the reappraisal bid request bundled with the assessor position. Sancoucy Appraisals specializes in appraising utilities and has offered to bid only on reappraising the town's three utilities. The board will hold off on that for now. The board discussed the advantages of sending out two separate bid requests, one for the reappraisal work and one for the assessor work, adding a clause that appraisers could opt to bid them together. Since companies north of Rutland probably won't bid due to the distance, it was decided to send the two separate RFPs to all companies located in the Rutland area, southern Vermont and to Vision and NEMRC since they returned bids during the first round.

FOREST SERVICE AGREEMENT

Dan Potvin will review the Forest Service contract for the board at the next meeting.

DOGS

1. There are 17 dog owners who have not licensed their dogs. The due date was April 1st. The Selectboard will impose penalties in an effort to bring people into compliance.
2. It was suggested that if people could pay to register their dogs for two or three years at a time, that it may reduce this yearly struggle of getting everyone to license their dogs in a timely manner. The board will look into this and consider changing the ordinance.

2019 TAX RATE

Nancy Bushika reviewed a spreadsheet explaining the calculation of the 2019 tax rate. The board set the 2019 tax rate as follows: to accept the state education homestead rate of \$1.3106 and the non-homestead rate of \$1.5678 as calculated by the State of Vermont. The Selectboard set the municipal tax rate at \$0.3071 and the highway rate at \$0.4367. The total homestead tax rate will be \$2.0544 and the total non-homestead tax rate will be \$2.3116. The Selectboard signed the warrant authorizing the treasurer to send out tax bills and updated the tax bill insert. The 2019 tax bills will be mailed to property owners shortly.

SNOW SEASON STATUS

Dave Tatro agreed that the highway employees were available during the winter and came in when they were called to work. The board approved their extra four days with pay in recognition of outstanding service and being on call from November through April.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Nothing to report.

FINANCIALS

The board was given financial reports containing income and expenses through June 30, 2019. The treasurer is available to answer any questions.

PROPERTY DAMAGE

Mike Denault advised that damage was done on County Road to equipment owned by the forest service. The sheriff's department was notified. He asked if the town was billed for the sheriff's investigation time. So far, it has not. He asked residents to call 911 and the Vermont State Police for any emergencies instead of the sheriff.

MOTION by Dan Potvin to adjourn. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini
Clerk

CF/las

REMINDERS

1. The harvest supper will be held on Saturday, August 17, 2019 at 5 p.m. in front of the Stamford School.
2. A Board of Civil Authority meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 15, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. to review the checklist and challenge voters who have moved out of town.
3. A public site inspection is scheduled for Thursday, September 5, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. at 2581 Main Road to consider discontinuing a small section from Main Road to the former Shippee house and the section from that point to the current Lincoln Road. A public hearing will immediately follow on September 5, 2019 at 6 p.m. in the town office to receive comments concerning the proposed discontinuance. The regular Selectboard meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 5, 2019.
4. Please visit the town's new official website: townofstamfordvermont.org.
5. The town clerk's office hours are: Monday: closed; Tuesday: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.; Wednesday 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.; Thursday 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.; and Friday: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.