

TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
May 16, 2019
(UNAPPROVED)

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

Visitors: Donna Engel, John Engel, Helen Fields, and Pat Sullivan.
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 additions to the agenda under correspondence, new business and an executive session was added. There were no changes to its order.

SUMMER GARDEN CAMP

1. Helen Fields is starting the first summer garden camp hosted by the library. The camp will run one day per week from July 10, 2019 through August 14, 2019 on the same days as the library summer program, with the reading program in the morning and camp in the afternoon. The School Board implied that anyone using the premises needed an insurance rider and Helen Fields asked if she and the children would be covered by the town's policy. Nancy Bushika wasn't sure and will contact the Vermont League of Cities and Towns (VLCT).
2. Helen Fields asked if the children could sell some of the produce they grow in garden camp. The money would be divided half to the children and half to the Seed Savers Group to reimburse them for materials provided. Nancy Bushika suggested they just have a bucket for donations. Helen Fields will talk to another resident who might be planning a farm stand in town first.

BULLYING

Helen Fields stated that bullying has been a large part of our culture and when she ran for the School Director position during the Act 46 proposed merger with Halifax and Readsboro, her campaign letter stressed the importance of addressing bullying. If there is a subject coming up tonight, she very strongly hopes that the board takes steps to prevent bullying in this town by both adults and children.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of May 2, 2019 as written. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

- WARRANT #19 \$7,609.78 payroll
- WARRANT #20 \$9,809.29 accounts payable

FINANCIALS

The Selectboard reviewed and confirmed financial statements for the month of April.

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. Allen Desautels has his CDL permit and has been driving.
2. Dave Tatro hopes to start the Collins Road project next week if weather cooperates.
2. The street sweeper should be here next week also, depending on the weather.
3. The highway department has been adding gravel to roads where stones are coming up and has done a lot of grading.

4. Chris Warren asked about an area on Boulger Road where the ditch is getting filled in from off road vehicles. Dave Tatro said he has spoken with the landowner and will be putting in a culvert this summer to protect the road and still allow access.
5. Nancy Bushika was approached by Jeanette Saie about replacing the sign at the bottom of Forgette Road that said Dead End. Dave Tatro asked if he had to put signs on all of the town's dead end roads because there are a lot of them. He only has \$500.00 per year for signage in the budget but will install one if the board wants him to. Nancy Bushika felt this is a replacement sign, not a request for a new sign. Chris Warren suggested if he has funds left at the end of the year, perhaps he could replace it since it is a special request. Dave Tatro said he will have to also replace the Forgette Road sign because non-compliant signs must be brought up to code when replaced. The Selectboard decided to hold off on the replacement.
6. Nancy Bushika recalled sending a letter to the Lawrences about repairing the entrance of Poplar Drive. Since the property has been sold, should the Selectboard send a similar letter to the new owner. The board agreed and will send a letter.

RECYCLING

1. TAM has not found a used compactor for the town yet.
2. The free Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day will be Saturday May 18, 2019 at the Bennington Transfer Station at 8 a.m.
3. Pat Sullivan announced that Green Up Day was very successful. There were 65 people who participated and all the kids were given certificates for helping out. The Seed Savers Group had a table there also.
4. Helen Fields stated that Athena Bradley from the Northeast Recycling Council (NERC) will be at the next Seed Savers meeting to discuss community composting. The Seeds Savers received a grant through NERC and will get a Jora composter.
5. Helen Fields stated that the Seed Savers' Digging in the Dirt day went well. 12 people showed up and helped finish five more beds.

BUILDING COMMUNITY GROUP FUNDS/COMMUNITY PROJECT COMMITTEE

The town office received the Building Community Group grant check from Ben & Jerrys in the amount of \$500.00 which was made out to the Town of Stamford. The auditors felt there was no reason for the town not to hold the funds and suggested that it may increase the receipt of donations because they will be tax deductible. Attorney Garrett Baxter from VLCT stated that the Selectboard could create a Community Project Committee. He suggested the Selectboard should provide a clear direction of what they want the group to do and spell out the number of members and their terms. Nancy Bushika was still not comfortable with the town holding the funds. Dan Potvin thought they agreed with the Building Community Group project a long time ago. Nancy Bushika was concerned with the liability of other groups forming if the Selectboard does not agree with their projects. Mike Denault felt the Selectboard can decide not to support other groups if they do not feel they are in the best interests of the town. Pat Sullivan stated that she has come to the Selectboard with fairly extensive details of each step of the project for the board to give a thumbs up or thumbs down, and each time the board has given a thumbs up. If at any time the Selectboard is not supportive, she will stop. Helen Fields felt the Seed Savers Group was already under the care, guidance and oversight of the Selectboard. The board hasn't formally appointed the Seed Savers as a committee, but that's why she regularly comes to meetings to keep the board up to date. The Seed Savers feel they are a working committee under the Selectboard, with their own budget and funding sources. They have two finance officers and spreadsheets and financial reports are available for review at any time. Chris Warren did not see the advantage of increasing the scope of town government. If they become an official committee, they would have appointed members and would have to follow the open meeting laws. They would also have the advantage of tax deductible donations, more grant opportunities and liability insurance benefits. Pat Sullivan was clear that the funding needs to go through the town for the project to move forward; she will not accept the money personally. Forming the Community Project Committee would provide a mechanism for all groups. The board discussed creating a working committee to support community oriented projects that are self-sufficient and not asking for town budgeted funds. The committee should have staggered terms and should promote ideas and facilitate communication between boards.

MOTION by Mike Denault to form a three member Community Projects Committee. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. 4 in favor, 1 abstained (Nancy Bushika). Motion APPROVED.

Anyone interested in serving on the Community Projects Committee should contact the town office or a member of the Selectboard. Details of the committee will be discussed at the next meeting.

CONSTABLE/SHERIFF

There does not seem to be much positive interest in appointing a constable. Mike Denault doesn't want to waste his time if there is no town support. He will contact Jim Stimpson and the other two residents who volunteered to serve on the sheriff/constable research committee.

SCHOOL/TOWN BUILDING

Bruce Richardson has been researching and hopes to have the results for the next meeting.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. Bill Levine and other Broadband representatives attended a meeting in Readsboro. There was a presentation by a company that designs, builds and operates high speed internet fiber lines. There may be substantial grant funding for this type of project. Speeds up to 100 Meg are attainable with a fiber network. The company researches criteria such as population density and number of households per mile. In Readsboro they would need at least a 50% sign up rate to make the project feasible. The Broadband Group will count telephone poles in Stamford and provide relevant data to the company to calculate the cost to run fiber in Stamford. Bill Levine thought the cost might be around \$400.00 for installation and \$95.00/month for 50 Mbps of speed up and down. The speed would be almost ten times faster than what the telephone company offers now.
2. On June 10, 2019 there will be a Point of Distribution exercise at the Bennington Hospital. FEMA will bring in supplies and set up a supply line. They will practice providing supplies to vehicles with a goal of 15-20 seconds per vehicle. They need volunteers to carry out the exercise.
3. Bill Levine purchased the town flags and the fire department will put them up. Although he was slightly over budget, they picked up the flags to save a large delivery fee.
4. Bill Levine mentioned an upcoming flagging class. Taking this training would help the fire department and highway department with traffic control.

CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENT NOTICE

Chris Warren said it doesn't look like the town needs to respond.

ADOPTION OF LOCAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

MOTION by Chris Warren to adopt the Local Emergency Management Plan which was approved at the last meeting. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. Nancy Bushika signed the form which will be mailed in.

MASS LINE SOLAR NET METERING PROJECT

The Selectboard received notice of a solar project from the Green Lantern Group. Nancy Bushika noted some errors in the report such as the statement that the project has been designated as a "preferred site" by the Selectboard, Planning Commission and the Bennington County Regional Commission. She also noted the plan reference stating that property lines were taken from tax maps provided by the town. The Green Lantern solar representative will attend the public hearing on the revised town plan and Selectboard meeting on June 6, 2019.

VERMONT PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT SURVEY

1. The survey has to do with telephone pole cited cell phone systems that service about 1/4 of a mile. The state took over about 400 devices and is surveying towns to see if they are interested in them. The cost is about \$1,800.00/year to support voice and text service, not data. Bill Levine thought the cost was very high for only 1/4 mile of service and did not recommend it. It was ultimately decided that the Selectboard will respond to the survey saying they might be interested if the cost was considerably less.
2. Dan Potvin discussed the high radiation and health hazards of the new 5G cellular phone towers.

TOWN BULLETIN BOARD

Helen Fields stated that the bulletin board which was donated through Seed Savers Grant funds has been installed on the school wall and thanked Stephen Greene for his work building it and adding the cork background tonight. Once the doors are installed, it will be complete. The Selectboard also thanked him for his hard work.

OLD BUSINESS

The letter was received from the bank indicating that the error has been corrected.

OFFER TO PURCHASE TOWN PROPERTY

Anthony Pitrone and Ryan Scranton emailed the town expressing an interest in purchasing Lots 176 and 178 in Alpenwald which were recently acquired from the May 2018 tax sale. They requested permission to have the lots perc. tested at their own expense prior to submitting an offer.

MOTION to permit the perc. testing on Lots 176 and 178 in Alpenwald at the proposed buyers' expense, with the stipulation that the holes will be backfilled to their original state and as property owner, the town is provided a copy of the perc. test results. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

A response will be sent with the board's decision.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to enter executive session pursuant 1 V.S.A. section 313(1)(F), confidential attorney-client communication, as well as discussion involving a minor. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board entered executive session at 8:02 p.m. and invited Lori Shepard to participate in a brief portion.

MOTION by Carol Fachini to exit executive session. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 8:18 p.m.

MOTION by Dan Potvin to sign the Tuition Contract Agreement. SECONDED by Mike Denault. 4 in favor, 1 abstained (Nancy Bushika). Motion APPROVED.

Chris Warren signed the contract and it will be returned to the superintendent of the North Adams Public Schools.

MOTION by Chris Warren to adjourn. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini
Clerk

CF/las

REMINDERS

1. Please visit the town's new official website: townofstamfordvermont.org.
2. 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.
3. Anyone interested in serving on the proposed Community Project Committee, please contact the town office or a member of the Selectboard.
4. The free Home Hazardous Waste Collection Day will be held on Saturday May 18, 2019 at the Bennington Transfer Station from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.