

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
December 19, 2019
(UNAPPROVED)**

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

Daniel J. Potvin was not present.

Visitors: Jim Stimpson.

David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.

William Levine, Emergency Management Director.

Tyna Senecal, Pat Sullivan and Heather Tietgens, Finance Committee.

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 no changes to the agenda or its order.

BUILDING COMMUNITY GROUP

1. Pat Sullivan stated the bulletin boards could not be installed due to the cold temperatures this week. They should be installed next week.
2. Pat Sullivan received a \$1,200.00 grant from Walmart.
3. Pat Sullivan showed the board a package with extensive information prepared by the students at Norwich University. She said the detail and presentation they provided was spectacular. The group needs to finish Phase I, the installation of the bulletin boards. Phase II is to complete the funding for the sign and benches and Phase III will be the gathering space. Pat Sullivan said she is waiting for the determination on who owns and has authority over the school/town building and grounds. Mike Denault said the attorney's letter seemed very clear that the town owns the building and grounds. The Selectboard has requested to meet with the School Directors to discuss the attorney's findings but they would like to wait until after the new year and the budget season is over.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of December 5, 2019 as written. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #51 \$13,208.96 payroll

WARRANT #52 \$77,181.60 accounts payable

FINANCIALS

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

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. The highway department has been very busy. There have been no equipment breakdowns.
2. Dave Tatro has turned up the gas heat in the garage to 47 degrees so the pipes won't freeze with the new bathroom. They use the wood stove also.

RECYCLING

The recycling container is back on automatic pick up again.

REVIEW DOG [AND WOLF HYBRID] ORDINANCE

The board reviewed the ordinance. Some minor language revisions were made. The board will review the final draft at the next meeting.

BENNINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S CONTRACT

The board discussed renewing the contract. Nancy Bushika stated that Lt. Mozzer from the VT State Police could offer short +/- three month contracts of a few hours/week. They would charge \$75.00/hour patrol time and a travel rate which would have to be determined. Mike Denault felt the townspeople have shown they want to keep the Bennington Sheriff's Department in the past. The board will request the hourly rate for 2020 and will talk to them about adding the town's radio frequency to their radios. In reviewing past bills it was noted that they don't always patrol 22 hours per week.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. Bill Levine has not heard back from Kinsley Power Systems concerning the generator maintenance and will get in touch with them.
2. Bill Levine felt the meeting requested by the Stamford Fire Department with the VT State Police and the Agency of Transportation was very productive. They were given phone contacts to the AOT status control unit if they need to request flaggers or need to temporarily close the road or re-route traffic. The Sr. Officer of the Shaftsbury police barracks said he could delegate more people during an emergency if they are not getting an adequate response. AOT hopes to increase their staff to improve road conditions in the winter.

REVIEW/SIGN APPRAISER CONTRACT

Lisa Wright forwarded a contract for assessor services for the Selectboard to review. She emailed Nancy Bushika explaining why tax maps are so important. She said acreage has been passed down through the years by records that often state "more or less" and from casual agreements. Now with ortho maps and aerial photographs, data can be calculated more accurately. The lister's handbook states that tax maps are an excellent tool for listers. The handbook gives surveys the greatest weight, followed by tax maps, and lastly, the recorded deeds. Mike Denault was very uncomfortable relying on tax maps and the fact that the state gives them more weight than a recorded deed. Dave Tatro said the town should hire a real surveyor, not a mapper. Chris Warren acknowledged that the reappraiser is requiring the tax maps in order to reappraise, and we are under state order to reappraise. Mike Denault does not like placing the burden on our residents to get a survey to prove their acreage if the tax map acreage differs from their deed. Chris Warren feels this will be a loss for the town.

MOTION by Chris Warren to accept and sign the contract to hire Lisa Wright from Wright Appraisals to be the assessor for the town beginning January 1, 2020. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

The ceremony for Wreaths Across America took place on Sunday and about 20-25 people attended the ceremony and placed wreaths on the graves of the veterans in both the Houghton and Millard Cemeteries. It was a very nice way to honor the veterans and the wreaths look nice in front of the town's honor roll.

DOG KENNEL

The dog kennel has been added to the town's insurance policy.

BUDGET WORK SESSION

The Selectboard and finance committee reviewed the budget.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Mike Denault to find that premature public discussion of employee matters would place the town at a substantial disadvantage. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Mike Denault to enter executive session to discuss employee reviews and salaries pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The Selectboard entered executive session at 8:15 p.m.

MOTION by Mike Denault to exit executive session. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 8:39 p.m. The new salaries will be given to the treasurer.

MOTION by Chris Warren to adjourn. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini
Clerk

CAF/las

REMINDERS

1. Anyone interested in serving on the Fire Department roster committee should contact the town office, a Selectboard member or Paul Dupuis.
2. Please visit the town's new official website: townofstamfordvermont.org.
3. 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.

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 16, 2020. These petitions must be signed by 5% of the registered voters or at least 33 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 7 signatures. The deadline for filing these petitions with the Town Clerk is Monday, January 27, 2020, at 5:00 p.m. Nominating papers 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*)
Town Clerk – 3 year term (*Lori A. Shepard*)
Treasurer – 3 year term (*Lori A. Shepard*)
Selectboard member - 2 year term (*Daniel J. Potvin*)

Selectboard member - 3 year term (*Carol A. Fachini*)
School Director - 2 year term (*Barbara Malinowski*)
School Director - 3 year term (*Cynthia Lamore*)
Auditor - 1 year term (*vacancy*)
Auditor - 2 year term (*vacancy*)
Auditor - 3 year term (*vacancy*)
Collector of Delinquent Taxes - 1 year term (*Sally A. Bohl*)
Cemetery Commissioner - 3 year term (*Sally A. Bohl*)
Library Trustee - 5 year term (*Danielle Smith*)

Voting will be held on Tuesday, March 3, 2020 from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Stamford Elementary School. Applications for addition to the checklist will be accepted during regular town office hours and throughout election day.

Absentee ballots will be available until 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 2, 2020. 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.