

TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
June 18, 2020
(UNAPPROVED)

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Christopher Warren, Carol A. Fachini, and Michael G. Denault.
Daniel J. Potvin was not present.
Visitors: Robert Briggs, Theresa Denault, Lt. Lloyd Dean, Lt. Joel R. Howard Jr., Sgt. Wayne Godfrey,
and Sgt. Jesse Bravata.
William Levine, Emergency Management Director.
David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.
Luke McKay, Dog Officer.
Lori Shepard, Selectboard Secretary.

Nancy Bushika called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Nancy Bushika led with the Pledge of Allegiance and welcomed everyone. She read a statement with procedural rules for the meeting. The agenda was revised to add some correspondence, an executive session and a request to use the school parking area. The order of the agenda was changed to move the Communication Union District (CUD) update to the beginning.

HEARING OF VISITORS:

1. Bob Briggs attended the recent Deerfield Valley Communications Union District (CUD) meeting. Ten towns have formed the district and three more have asked to join. The CUD is working toward putting together enough people with a common desire to have fiber to homes and broadband internet. They are interviewing vendors and are preparing for funding that should be available this fall. \$400,000.00 or more could be available for Stamford. Bob Briggs said we definitely made the right choice in joining the CUD.
2. Lt. Dean spoke to the Selectboard about the Bennington County Sheriff's Department patrols. Mike Denault said Sheriff Chad Schmidt used to be willing to work with the town when the Selectboard requested a particular type of patrol. Lt. Dean asked for the Selectboard's definition of community policing. He feels it's important for the sheriff to stop at the town office, the school, the store etc. to be part of the community and allow the public to see that they are not what the media portrays them to be. Mike Denault said budgeting is difficult for a small town and they are accountable for getting the best bang for the buck. It's hard when the bills say we are paying for a neighborly dispute over chickens instead of patrol time. Lt. Dean said if a call comes when they are on duty, they are not going to refuse it. If the state police receive a non-emergency call at night, they will ask the sheriff to investigate next time they are in Stamford. They brought the K-9 unit so the Selectboard could meet the dog and see that he is very mild-mannered. Lt. Howard provided stats for the board indicating what type and how many calls they received since last summer. Chris Warren noted that the Selectboard received much less actual patrol time than was budgeted and contracted for. He will look into that. The board also stated that the town was billed for an officer finding a squirrel on the roadside and bringing it to rehab. The lieutenant will look into that as well. Mike Denault felt the board should be notified of any time-consuming or large events. The lieutenant will work with Mike Denault.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of June 4, 2020 as written. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #25 \$ 8,239.87 payroll

WARRANT #26 \$51,246.98 accounts payable

FINANCIALS

The board reviewed and confirmed bank statements for the months of March, April and May.

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. The highway crew has finished the culvert repair work on Mill Road through the Clean Water Act grant. They are just waiting for the final inspection by Jim Henderson. Although the town has a 20% match, we don't really have to come up with any money because we will be reimbursed for our time and equipment costs. This grant helped the town complete an \$8,000.00 project. Since the summer road maintenance budget is \$20,000.00, this project would have consumed almost half of the budget if it weren't for this grant.
2. The road crew has been ditching.
3. Dave Tatro stated that they have begun the road side mowing.
4. Dave Tatro received a quote to replace the Lincoln Road culvert for over \$340,000.00. This culvert needs attention at least once a year and will fail at some point in the near future. The town will apply for a structures grant.

RECYCLING

1. Dave Tatro is having problems with Casella again. Somehow the town was taken off automatic pickup. Dave Tatro called and Casella has a call center where it's hard to speak to an actual person. This is why the town stopped using Republic Services and went with TAM. Dave Tatro was very happy with TAM. Dave Tatro will provide a list of what the town needs and the board will contact prospective haulers.
2. Nancy Bushika spoke with Mike Lavariere who said he would prefer to keep the social distancing and not collect money for a while longer.
3. The state law banning food scraps in the land fill begins July 1, 2020. Residents can compost their food scraps at home or separate them from the trash and bring them to the transfer station for composting.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Selectboard approved and signed the Local Emergency Management Plan.

CENSUS REQUEST TO USE PARKING LOT

The U.S. Census is requesting permission to use the school parking lot for a scavenger hunt on July 1st to promote the census, increase response rates and have a little fun. They do not want to sign the school use form because it has a hold harmless clause. They have asked to use the facilities without being required to sign the form. Dave Tatro found it frustrating that the government is not allowing many businesses to reopen and is not letting people go back to work, but they want to hold a scavenger hunt and bring strangers into our town to promote their own agenda. The board agreed that the public can't even shop normally yet and this doesn't seem essential. The Selectboard decided to back the School Directors due to the refusal to sign the school use form and in acknowledgement of the COVID-19 pandemic, will not grant the permission.

STAMFORD BYLAWS

The Planning Commission has completed the final draft of the Stamford Bylaws and scheduled the first public hearing for Monday, July 27, 2020 at 7 p.m. Hopefully Dan Potvin will be able to provide an overview of the changes at the next meeting.

GREEN UP DAY

Nancy Bushika reviewed the report from Pat Sullivan indicating that Green Up Day was very successful. There were more participants than last year and less trash, which is a good thing. Pat Sullivan thanked Dave Tatro for having the town truck available at the school.

OPEN MEETING LAWS

The board received an email stating that holding Selectboard meetings in the gym was a violation of the open meeting laws since people who call in remotely cannot hear with the gym acoustics. Mike Denault feels it is not a violation and the board is doing the best it can under the circumstances. Nancy Bushika stated that the joint

meeting between the Selectboard and School Directors to discuss the ownership of the school building and grounds will be held in the middle school class room to accommodate more people. It was noted that meetings are held in the public, but are not of the public.

RABIES CLINIC

Luke McKay, the Dog Officer, has scheduled the rabies clinic for Saturday, June 20, 2020 from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Stamford highway garage at 610 Mill Road. The town clerk will be available to license dogs at the clinic.

GOVERNOR'S ORDER

The Governor extended the Stay Safe, Stay Home order for another month, encouraging anyone with the ability to work from home to do so. Unfortunately, the town office will have to remain closed to the public. Work is still continuing behind closed doors and most business can be conducted by mail or email. Appointments are being made to accommodate anyone who needs to come to the office in person or for attorneys or realtors to search the records.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to find that a premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to enter executive session pursuant 1 V.S.A. section 313 (1) (E): pending or probable civil litigation or a prosecution, to which the public body is or may be a party. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board entered executive session at 7:26 p.m. and invited Luke McKay, Dog Officer, to participate.

MOTION by Mike Denault to exit executive session. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 8:03 p.m. The board will send letters to all parties involved.

MOTION by Chris Warren to adjourn. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Carol A. Fachini
Clerk

CAF/las

REMINDERS

Please visit the town's new official website: townofstamfordvermont.org.