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**TOWN OF SWANTON
SELECTBOARD
SPECIAL ANNUAL MEETING
INFORMATIONAL SESSION
DRAFT MINUTES**

**Swanton Village Complex Meeting Room
120 First Street, Swanton, VT 05488
*Monday, February 25, 2013 @ 7:00 p.m.***

11 Present: John Lavoie, Selectboard Chair; Dan Billado, Selectboard Vice Chair; Dick Thompson,
12 Joel Clark, and Harold Garrett, Selectmen; Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk; David Jescavage,
13 Town Administrator; Yaasha Wheeler, Secretary; Brent Coon, School Principal; John
14 McCarthy, Superintendent; Sara Raabe, Assistant Principal; John Creelman, School Director;
15 Jay Cummings, School Director; Patti Jo Walker, School Director; Becky Hart, Business
16 Manager; Allyn MacDonald, Library Trustee Chair; Brian Savage; Ronald Kilburn, Zoning
17 Administrator; various members of the public.

18
19 **A. Call to Order**

20 Mr. Lavoie called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

21
22 **B. Pledge of Allegiance**

23 Mr. Lavoie led those present in the pledge of allegiance.

24
25 **C. Meeting Topics:**

26
27 **1. Warning**

28 Mr. Savage read the following warning:

29 The legal voters of the Town of Swanton, and the Town of Swanton School District, who
30 are legal voters in Town Meeting, are hereby notified and warned to meet at the Swanton
31 Village Municipal Complex, First and Elm Streets, Swanton on Tuesday, March 5, 2013 at 7:00
32 a.m. to vote on the articles herein set forth. All articles are to be voted by the Australian Ballot
33 system. The polls open at 7:00 a.m., and close at 7:00 p.m.

34
35 **Article 1:** To elect from the legal voters of said Town the following officers:

36
37 Moderator, Town and Town School District
38 One Selectman for a 3 year term
39 One Selectman for a 1 year term
40 One Selectman for a 1 year term
41 One Lister for a 3 year term
42 One Lister for a 1 year term
43 One Auditor for a 3 year term
44 One Auditor for a 1 year unexpired term
45 One School Director for a 3 year term
46 One School Director for a 2 year term
47 One Trustee of Public Money for a 3 year term
48 One Library Trustee for a 3 year term
49 One Library Trustee for a 2 year unexpired term
50 One Cemetery Commissioner for a 5 year term
51 Town Grand Juror
52 Town Agent
53 Collector of Delinquent Taxes

54
55 **Article 2:** Will the Town appropriate \$935,111.18 for the operation and maintenance of the
56 Town Highway Department?

- 1
2 **Article 3:** Will the Town appropriate \$164,258.00 for fire protection, \$43,608.00 of which
3 is for a fire truck replacement fund?
4
- 5 **Article 4:** Will the Town appropriate \$113,358.00 to provide police protection to the
6 residents of the Town of Swanton?
7
- 8 **Article 5:** Will the voters of the Swanton School District appropriate \$8,236,464.00
9 necessary for the support of the Swanton Schools for the school year July 1, 2012
10 through June 30, 2013?
11
- 12 **Article 6:** Will the voters of the Swanton School District authorize the School Directors to
13 borrow money in anticipation of taxes?
14
- 15 **Article 7:** Will the voters of the Swanton Scholl District authorize the Board of School
16 Directors to borrow a sum not to exceed \$200,000.00, to be repaid over a term of
17 three (3) years, for the purpose of addressing certain building issues, such as
18 HVAC improvements in the Babcock Building, Central School parking lot traffic
19 flow improvements and safety, and other capital improvements as needed?
20
- 21 **Article 8:** Will the Town appropriate \$608,339.64 for the Town General expenses?
22
- 23 **Article 9:** Will the Town set October 15, 2013 as due date for 2013 taxes?
24
- 25 **Article 10:** Will the Town appropriate \$191,685.00 to provide rescue services to the residents
26 of the Town of Swanton?
27
- 28 **Article 11:** Will the Town appropriate \$86,100.00 towards the Operating and Maintenance
29 Budget of the Recreation Department?
30
- 31 **Article 12:** Will the Town appropriate \$124,577.00 towards the Operating and Maintenance
32 Budget of the Swanton Public Library?
33
- 34 **Article 13:** Will the Town appropriate \$30,000.00 to rebuild the front steps of the Swanton
35 Public Library?
36
- 37 **Article 14:** Shall the Town of Swanton issue notes or general obligation bonds in an amount
38 not to exceed \$800,000.00 (Eight Hundred Thousand Dollars), less any grant
39 monies or private donations, for the funding of construction of a consolidated
40 Town Garage Complex at 221 First Street, the source of payment to be the
41 application of capital reserve funds and the proceeds derived from the sale of
42 town properties?
43
- 44 **Article 15:** Shall the Town of Swanton issue bonds or notes in an amount not to exceed
45 \$2,367,200 (Two Million Three Hundred Sixty Seven Thousand Two Hundred
46 Dollars) for the purpose of funding its share of recreational facility improvements
47 located in the Town of Highgate to be owned, operated, and managed under the
48 terms of an interlocal contract to be approved by the selectboards of the Towns of
49 Swanton, Highgate, and Franklin. The facility improvements include a finished
50 ice skating rink surface measuring 200 feet by 85 feet.
51
- 52 **Article 16:** Shall the Town change the two 1-year Selectboard terms to two 2-year terms
53 pursuant to 17 V.S.A. Section 2650 (B)?
54
55

56 The legal voters of the Town of Swanton are further notified that an Informational Meeting will
57 be held at the Swanton Village Municipal Complex on Monday, February 25, 2013 at 7:00 p.m.
58 for the purpose of explaining all budget items to the voters.
59

60 Dated at Swanton, Vermont this 22nd day of February 2013.
61

1 (Signed by the Swanton Selectboard—L. John Lavoie, Chair; Harold R. Garrett; Daniel E.
2 Billado, Richard J. Thompson; Joel A. Clark. Also signed by the School Board Directors—Toby
3 Maguire, Chair; Patti Jo Walker; Mary Wood; Jay Cummings; and John Creelman. Attested to,
4 dated, and filed on the 22nd day of January 2013 by Cathy L. Fournier, Town Clerk.)
5
6

7 2. Powerpoint Presentation & Discussion of Swanton School District 2013
8 Budget.

9 3.

10 The Selectboard yielded to the school district to present first. Brent Coon presented the school
11 PowerPoint, as follows:

12
13 A. The Swanton School Proposed Budget 2013-2014: \$8,236,464. This represents an
14 increase of 3.56% or \$282,790 from FY2012-2013.

15
16 B. The Budget Priorities

- 17 • Respect the current economic and social circumstances of our community
18 • Implement new initiatives to increase student achievement
19 • Build capacity to support the social and emotional needs of students
20 • Continue a commitment to technology and 21st century learning by creating the
21 infrastructure necessary to move towards a 1:1 initiative
22 • Continue to maintain the physical plant of both the Babcock School and the Swanton
23 School
24 • Continue to seek energy efficiency
25

26 C. Plans to Accelerate Growth in Student Achievement

- 27 • Our efforts to respond effectively to the instructional needs of our students are showing
28 positive results. With this said we are aware that there continues to be work to be done.
29 • During the 2013-2014 school year, we will continue our focus on improving students ability
30 to share their understanding of the world around them through a renewed emphasis on
31 writing in all curricular areas with the use of technology tools such as Young Writers Project
32 and Voice Thread.
33 • We continue to focus on closing the achievement gap between all students and those with
34 IEPs or those with limited economic resources. We will be continuing the state wide co-
35 teaching model with classroom teachers and special educators during the 2013-2014 school
36 year. We will also continue looping across a number of grade levels.
37

38 D. Technology and 21st Century Teaching and Learning

- 39 • Resources for ongoing professional development to ensure all staff have current skills to use
40 technology wisely as an instructional tool.
41 • Funds for maintenance of current information technology (IT) structure and replacement of
42 computers on a planned cycle based on inventory. Including the purchase of netbooks and
43 laptops.
44 • Equipment such as SMART Boards, Netbooks and Tablet devices that will allow teachers to
45 move towards flexible learning environments supported by the technology integration
46 specialist.
47

48 Mr. Coon noted that at the Swanton School, Project Ignite had recognized one of the teachers
49 as an innovative educator. The students were also involved in the Verizon App Challenge.
50

51 E. Technology Integration

52 With the support of our Technology Integration Specialist students are exploring their
53 community and world around them. Our goal is to increase student engagement and allow for
54 creativity and exploration of topics that are meaningful to our students and connected to our
55 local curriculum and the Common Core. The introduction to tablets (ipads, etc.) will allow us to
56 begin to explore the possibility of a 1:1 initiative at Swanton School.
57

58 F. Staff Salaries

- 59 • The current professional staff contract does not end until June 2014; however the support
60 staff contract terminates June 2013 and negotiations are underway. As requires by law,
61 negotiations are conducted jointly with all schools in the Supervisory Union.

- 1 • The professional staff salary scale increased by 3% from 2012-2013 – teachers received no
2 step increase.

3
4 **G. Staff Benefits**

- 5 • The School District group-purchases health insurance with other school districts through
6 the VT School Boards Insurance Trust (VSBIT) – a 14% increase in premiums has been
7 budgeted for 2013-2014. This is significantly higher than the increases over the past 5 years.
8 This increase accounts for approximately \$150,000 or 1.92% of the proposed overall budget
9 increase.
10 • Changes in staffing and participation may also have an impact on overall cost.

11
12 **H. Physical Plant—General Fund**

- 13 • Shift from a Head Custodian to a Director of Building and Grounds
14 • Purchase a new tractor to replace the over 10 year old current equipment
15 • Renew a cycle of carpet/ floor replacement at both buildings
16 • Improvements to Central School gymnasium
17 • Replace bathroom partitions in boys bathrooms at the Babcock building

18
19 **I. Physical Plant—Special Articles**

- 20 • Study and make improvements to the drainage issues on both the playground and soccer
21 field.
22 • Follow through with solutions to our parking and traffic pattern issues at both buildings
23 now that studies have been completed.
24 • Develop a plan to upgrade the HVAC system at the Babcock school to gain efficiency;
25 current equipment is original to building.

26
27 **J. Energy and Purchasing Efficiencies**

- 28 • We continue to be a member of a custodial supplies buyers group with 100 plus schools
29 throughout the state. We anticipate savings of 20-30% on our most used supplies
30 • The replacement of the Babcock roof has eliminated leaks into the building and with a
31 higher level of insulation should lead to energy savings
32 • Classroom teachers inventory and collaborate in purchasing to create shared libraries of
33 books, math manipulatives, science materials, and other non-consumable items.

34
35 **K. Capital Reserve Projects**

- 36 • The Central School Boiler replacement project was completed in 2011 and the Babcock
37 School Roof Replacement project was completed in the Summer of 2012.
38 • The remaining Capital Reserve fund balance of approx. \$40,185.00 will be returned to the
39 voters as revenue in FY14.

40
41 **L. Changes from 2012-2013**

42 The board and administration have worked hard to present a budget that meets the needs of
43 students. Throughout this process the board and administration worked to develop a budget
44 that respects the impact on the taxpayers of Swanton.

45
46 **M. How Will This Affect Taxes?**

- 47 • Swanton Schools' Homestead Tax Rate after CLA adjustment for the 2012-2013 school year
48 was \$0.510.
49 • Swanton Schools' Homestead Tax Rate after CLA adjustment for the 2013-2014 school year
50 is projected to be \$.587.
51 • An increase of \$0.077.

52
53 **N. Where to Learn More**

- 54 • Call either administrator at 868-5346 or email: bcoon@fnwsu.org
55 • Visit the school homepage at www.swantonschool.org
56 • Call the Superintendent of Schools at 868-4967 x 17
57 • Contact your elected School Board members

58
59 Mr. Coon accepted questions and comments from the public.

60 Question: What is the difference between a head custodian and a Director of Building
61 and Grounds?

1 Answer: Mr. Coon explained that the new job description allowed for more maintenance
2 work on site, which could result in savings. The present Director of Building and Grounds was
3 a certified electrician, and had saved significant money by repairing, rather than replacing,
4 certain pumps. The school hoped that, with the director's broader skill set, the school would
5 see savings.

7 4. Powerpoint Presentation & Discussion of Town of Swanton's 2013 8 Budget

9 Mr. Lavoie presented the Town of Swanton's 2013 presentation as follows:

10 A. 2012 Highlights

- 11 • Voters approved adding 2 additional seats on the Selectboard for 1-year terms apiece.
- 12 • 7 candidates ran for the 2 new positions.
- 13 • Dick Thompson & Joel Clark elected to fill the new Selectboard seats @ a special
14 election.
- 15 • After Dick Thompson retired from his 16-year term as Town Administrator, the
16 Selectboard hired David Jescavage as his replacement.

17 18 B. 2012 Accomplishments (Slide 1)

- 19 • Level Funded \$ Wherever Possible & Practical
- 20 • Retired Balance of Old Debt
- 21 • Changed Police Contract From 1-year to 3-year
- 22 • Converted Town Office Building To Natural Gas
- 23 • Awarded Municipal Planning Grant For Bylaws
- 24 • Under Budget in 2012 by:
 - 25 ➤ \$32,559.50 General
 - 26 ➤ \$5,120.29 Highway

27 28 C. 2012 Accomplishments (Slide 2)

- 29 • Highway Department Road Resurfacing:
30 Roads Paved:
 - 31 -Remainder of County Road
 - 32 -Mountain View Drive
 - 33 -Bachand Road
 - 34 -Lord Road
- 35 • Recreation Trail Well Maintained & Used

36 D. 2012 Accomplishments (Slide 3)

- 37 • Design Work Proceeded on new Highway Garage to be Built on VT Route 78
- 38 • Large Culvert Replaced on Sweet Hollow Road & 4 Small Culverts Replaced on Other
39 Roads
- 40 • Continued Emphasis on Safety & Inspections
- 41 • 7425 Days Without Lost Time Accident

42 43 E. Future Projects in 2013

- 44 • Purchase New Highway Dept. Mowing Tractor
- 45 • Purchase New Highway Dept. 1-Ton Truck
- 46 • Construct New Highway Dept. Garage
- 47 • Construct New Library Front Steps
- 48 • Implement Sidewalk Feasibility Grant Project
- 49 • Start Municipal Planning Grant Bylaw Project
- 50 • Vtrans To Redo County/Beebe/South River Jct.
- 51 • Federal Railway Assoc. RR Crossing Project @ Lakewood Drive in West Swanton

52 53 F. 2013 General Budget

- 54 • If All Articles Approved\$1,060,013.89
- 55 • To Be Raised By Taxes\$ 337,001.61
- 56 • 2012 Tax Rate\$0.1406
- 57 • 2013 Projected Tax Rate\$0.1288
- 58 TOWN GENERAL TAX RATE DECREASES
- 59 • 2013 Tax Rate Decreases By..\$0.0118

1 G. 2013 Highway Budget

- 2 • If All Articles Approved.....\$1,210,727.18
- 3 • To Be Raised By Taxes\$ 822,720.35
- 4 • 2012 Tax Rate\$0.3890
- 5 • 2013 Projected Tax Rate ..\$0.346
- 6 TOWN HIGHWAY TAX RATE DECREASES
- 7 • 2013 Tax Rate Decreases By...\$0.0422

9 H. Budget Requests Summary (if all voted articles are approved)

- 10 • Town Residents' Budget\$2,269,741.07
- 11 • Village Residents' Budget ...\$1,084,079.00
- 12 • Swanton School Budget\$8,236,464.00
- 13 • MVU High School Budget ..\$15,117,492.00

15 I. Projected 2013 Taxes (Town Residents)

	CLA: 103.00%	CLA: 109.56%
	2012 ACTUAL	2013 PROJECTED
Town General Tax Rate:	\$0.3890	\$0.3468
Total Education Tax Rate:	\$0.9987	\$1.1490

22 Property Taxes on \$200,000 PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

Your 2012 Tax Bill:	\$3,056.60
Your 2013 Tax Bill:	\$3,249.20
Increase:	\$192.60*

27 *Increase due to school tax. Town taxes decreased.

29 J. Projected 2013 Taxes (Village Residents)

	CLA: 103.00%	CLA:109.56%
	2012 ACTUAL	2013 PROJECTED
Town General Tax Rate:	\$0.1406	\$0.1288
Village Tax Rate:	\$0.6524	\$0.6872
Total Education Tax Rate:	\$0.9987	\$1.1490

36 Property Taxes on \$200,000 PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

Your 2012 tax bill:	\$3,583.40
Your 2013 tax bill:	\$3,930.00
Increase:	\$346.60*

41 *Increase due to school tax and village tax. Town tax decreased.

43 K. New Highway Garage

- 44 • Cost Estimate: Approximately \$800,000
- 45 • Funding Sources: Town has appropriated \$40,000 yearly for 15 years = \$600,000 &
- 46 \$300,000 from Sale of Town Properties – Robin Hood Site & Former HD Garage Site
- 47 • Construction Period: April to August 2013
- 48 • Size: (60' x 142') - 6 Bays Including Truck Wash Bay + Rest rooms + Office Space +
- 49 New Well + Septic System
- 50 • Location: 221 First Street (VT Rt. 78)

52 Mr. Lavoie explained that the new garage would be paid for by the \$600,000 already approved
53 by voters (\$40,000 yearly for 15 years), as well as by the sale of the Robin Hood site and
54 hopefully the sale of the Fourth Street former garage site. He stressed that this would result in
55 **no new taxes** for the taxpayers.

57 L. Library Steps Repair Project

- 58 • Swanton Library Opened In 1915
- 59 • Architect's Assessment & Report Completed
- 60 • Front Steps Cracked, Unlevel, & Deteriorated
- 61 • Large Marble Landing Pitched Toward Door

- 1 • Wood Rotting @ Bottom Of Front Door
- 2 • Water Infiltration Occurring In Front Basement
- 3 • Concrete Wall Around Landing Crumbling

4
5 **M. Library Steps Repair Project (continued)**

- 6 • Front Sidewalk & Lawn Are Pitched Toward Front Of Library
- 7 • Roof Runoff Falls To Front Of Building
- 8 • Many Expensive Repairs, Replacements, & Readjustments Needed
- 9 • Project Requires Contractors With Preservation Skills
- 10 • Because Of Multiple Issues, All Work Needs To Be Done As Comprehensive Single
- 11 Project

12 To View Architect's Detailed Assessment Report

13 Visit: www.townofswantonvermont.weebly.com

14 Click On "SWANTON PUBLIC LIBRARY" In Left Column

15
16 **N. Arena Renovation Project**

17 Renovations include:

- 18 • ice enlargement to regulation size 200' x 85'
- 19 • code compliance
- 20 • space enlargement
- 21 • energy efficiency improvements
- 22 • new locker rooms
- 23 • additions for community room, & weight room
- 24 • indoor walking area

25
26 **O. Arena Renovation Project (continued)**

27 Sports activities include:

- 28 • ice hockey & broomball
- 29 • stick & puck
- 30 • public skating & skating lessons
- 31 • indoor turf for soccer, field hockey, baseball, softball
- 32 • summer camps.

33 For Construction Drawings & Info Visit:

34 www.tri.clients.wiemannlamphere.com

35
36 **P. Arena Renovation Project (continued)**

- 37 • Highgate Sports Arena needs extensive renovations totaling \$4,305,000
- 38 -Swanton share = 55% or \$2,367,200
- 39 -Franklin share = 13% or \$559,650
- 40 -Highgate share = 32% or \$1,377,600
- 41 • 20-year loan yearly tax impact on a \$200,000 property is an additional \$59.
- 42 • An interlocal contract to own, operate & maintain facility on leased land by the 3 towns.
- 43 • Goal: affordable, multi-age, multi-sports arena.

44
45 **Q. Candidates for Office**

- 46 • Auditor (3 years)
- 47 -John E. Hubbard
- 48 • Auditor (1 year unexpired)
- 49 -Amy Foster Giroux
- 50 -Donald G. Poirier
- 51 • Cemetery Commissioner (5 years)
- 52 -Charles E. Prouty
- 53 • Collector of Delinquent Taxes (1 year)
- 54 -Betty L. Cheney
- 55 • Library Trustee (2 years unexpired)
- 56 -Faith Dubois
- 57 • Library Trustee (3 years)
- 58 -Paul Foisy
- 59 • Lister (1 year)
- 60 -Amy Foster Giroux
- 61 • Lister (3 years)

- 1 -James Pratt
- 2 • Moderator (1 year)(town & town school district)
- 3 -Brian K. Savage
- 4 • School Director (2 years)
- 5 -Mary Wood
- 6 • School Director (3 years)
- 7 -Tobias “Toby” Maguire
- 8 • Selectman (3 years)
- 9 - Joel Clark
- 10 • Selectman (1 year)(2 positions open)
- 11 -James Guilmette
- 12 -Kathy L. L. Lavoie
- 13 -Richard J. “Dick” Thompson
- 14 • Town Agent (1 year)
- 15 -Gerald Barney
- 16 • Town Grand Juror (1 year)
- 17 -Gerald Barney
- 18 • Trustee of Public Money (3 years)
- 19 -Brian K. Savage
- 20
- 21 R. Visit the new Town website
- 22 • <http://www.townofswantonvermont.weebly.com>
- 23
- 24

25 2. Public Comments

26 Mr. Lavoie took questions from the public.

27

28 Question: Why do we need to vote on the garage when the money is already allocated?

29

30 Answer: Mr. Lavoie replied that the Selectboard needed voter approval to spend the allocated

31 money. Mr. Garrett explained that if money is borrowed for more than 5 years, voter approval

32 is required. Mr. Billado added that Town Clerk Cathy Fournier was looking into whether to

33 borrow from the bond bank or the bank to begin construction, to be paid back by the revenue

34 from the sale of properties. At the moment, the bank seemed like a better option because the

35 Town could pay back the loan early without penalties.

36

37 Question: What happens if Franklin, Highgate, or Swanton does not vote in favor of the arena

38 project?

39

40 Answer: Mr. Lavoie explained that the percentages would have to be adjusted for the

41 remaining two towns. Mr. Billado pointed out that the two could choose to continue with the

42 project even in the absence of the third town.

43

44 Paulette Tatro from Highgate, also Vice Chair of the Tri-Town Recreation Committee, said that

45 she had worked for 3 years on the project, which she hoped would result in an improved facility

46 for all ages. She passed out an informational hand-out. She explained that the facility had been

47 built in the 1970s and that Highgate had been unable to keep up with the necessary repairs.

48 The proposed project would address code issues and safety, and make the facility more user-

49 friendly by adding new spaces. These spaces would include a community room to host

50 gatherings, additional locker rooms, an area for walkers (not an indoor track), and an enlarged

51 ice surface (200’ x 85’). The cost would be \$29.50 a year per \$100,000 assessed property value,

52 translating to \$59 a year for \$200,000 assessed property value. The bond from taxpayers to

53 renovate the building did not include operating funds. The goal was to be self-sustaining, with

54 a little excess for maintenance. The project was stated as being \$4.3 million, but it was in fact

55 \$4.5 million, with the extra \$200,000 coming from a grant received by Highgate and also by

56 approximately \$88,000 in donations given to Highgate. This money could be used to help

57 offset operating costs until the business became self-sustaining. Construction would begin in

58 approximately March 2014, and continue from the spring through the fall, hopefully to be

59 completed by the time the ice would need to go back in. Ms. Tatro hoped that the community

60 would support the rink as an investment in the community, since new people to the area would

61 look at what the location would have to offer.

1
2 Question: What would be the projected income?
3

4 Answer: Ms. Tatro replied that the income was projected to cover the overhead costs of
5 staffing, operation costs, with approximately \$20,000 in excess per year.
6

7 Question: In the past, how had the arena done financially?
8

9 Answer: Ms. Tatro explained that, prior to MAHA running the rink on volunteer time, the rink
10 had operated at a loss, which taxpayers absorbed. The new project would include new staff,
11 with a strong marketing director to help implement new programs.
12

13 Jack McCarthy added that he had formerly served on the TTRC and had toured ice rinks
14 around New England. The key factor of a successful rink was a manager who would use the
15 facility at its maximum capacity, with multi-age activities for the community, so that every
16 hour was in use by some group or activity. A good recreational resource resulted in a stronger
17 community, and he felt that the cost of renovating the building would cost less and do more
18 good than the cost of paying for a person in prison.
19

20 Alan Laroche said that he felt it was the wrong time to do this kind of renovation, considering
21 the state of the economy, and the increase in property tax, fuel tax, and gas prices. He did not
22 approve of the project.
23

24 Ms. Tatro said that she respected Mr. Laroche's opinion, but felt that attempting to renovate
25 the arena in the future would only result in higher costs than if the project was completed now.
26

27 **MISSISQUOI VALLEY RESCUE**

28 David St. Pierre stated that the rents had increased and that there were higher expenses from
29 outside sources. Missisquoi Valley Rescue had asked for an increase in the budget, but had not
30 given raises to any of its staff.
31

32 **SWANTON VILLAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

33 Chief "Joey" Stell thanked the people of Swanton for supporting the Swanton Village Police
34 Department bid. The department had been able to lower the price of the contract because of
35 decreases in the purchase price of supplies. The department was open to feedback. Chief Stell
36 also informed the public of the third annual Citizens Police Academy, which was set to begin on
37 Thursday, February 28th, 2013. The enrollment was open, and the academy would be held at
38 the Complex and run for several weeks on Thursday nights.
39

40 **SWANTON VILLAGE FIRE DEPARTMENT**

41 Chief Ricky King thanked the people of Swanton for their support. He said that the new truck
42 would arrive in April, and welcomed the public to stop by and see it.
43

44 **QUESTIONS**

45 Question: Could you explain the Lakewood railroad crossing more fully?
46

47 Answer: Mr. Jescavage explained that the Federal Railway Association had determined that the
48 Lakewood Drive railroad crossing was the only crossing in the United States that qualified for a
49 feasibility study in which the old railroad X signs would be replaced by a solar-powered board
50 with circular lights around the perimeter. The project would study whether or not the new
51 system would make drivers more aware of the railroad crossing, and would include a camera to
52 record driver responses. An editorial in a local paper had misled people; the crossing would not
53 be gated but would only include the solar-powered cross-bucks. The Town of Swanton
54 encouraged the Federal Railway Association representatives to leave the cross-bucks at the site
55 after the completion of the study.
56

57 Question: Would the cross-bucks be lit all the time?
58

59 Answer: Mr. Jescavage said that the lights would be lit continuously. They were solar-powered
60 and would not be blinking lights. The Town had encouraged the Federal Railway Association to
61 continue the study for a year to see how the solar power was influenced by the lower light of the

1 winter months. Mr. Billado added that the study would be at no cost to the taxpayers.

2
3 Question: Would the new system be used on Tabor Road too?

4
5 Answer: Mr. Jescavage replied that because the approach to the railroad crossing was at 40
6 mph, the crossing did not qualify for the study, which required a 30 mph approach.

7
8 **3. Any Other Necessary Business – No other necessary business.**

9
10 **D. Executive Session – No executive session needed.**

11
12 **E. Adjournment**

13 Mr. Lavoie thanked the public for coming and encouraged them to vote on March 5th, 2013.
14 The meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

15
16
17 Typed on February 26, 2013
18 Minutes by Yaasha Wheeler
19 Received and filed by:

20
21
22
23
24 _____
Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk

_____ Date