

**TOWN OF SWANTON**  
**MINUTES**  
**REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING**  
**Swanton Town Office Building**  
**1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488**

*Tuesday, December 15, 2015 @ 7:00 p.m.*

*Present: Dan Billado, Selectboard Chair; Joel Clark, Selectboard Vice Chair; John Lavoie and James Guilmette, Selectmen; David Jescavage, Town Administrator; Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk; Yaasha Wheeler, Secretary; Harold Garrett, Road Foreman; Kevin Meilleur & Elizabeth Harlow, Kinney Pike; Sarah Swan-Luneau; Chief Tim Girard and Asst. Chief Jason Cross, SVFD; Adam Paxman; Derick Billado, Animal Control Officer.*

**A. Call to Order**

Mr. Billado called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

**B. Pledge of Allegiance**

Mr. Billado led those present in the pledge of allegiance.

**C. Agenda Review**

Mr. Clark added Item E under Old Business (Discuss Letter from Swanton Enhancement Project) and Item F (Vandalism). Mrs. Fournier added Other Business (b) Renewing Line of Credit. Mr. Jescavage added 6(b) Community Development.

**D. Meeting Topics:**

**1. Minutes**

**a) December 1, 2015 SLB Regular Meeting**

Mr. Guilmette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to approve the minutes as they had been corrected. Motion carried.

**2. Public Comments – No public comment.**

**3. Animal Control**

**a) SW Animal Control Officer Report**

Mr. Derick Billado stated that all the incidents in November involved the same dog. The dog was not supposed to be released to the owner, but the Humane Society had released the dog back to the owner in error, so the dog had been impounded a third time and would not be released until the owners showed proof of the dog's registration. He had told the owners that they needed to invest in a fence or they would be fined.

Mr. Derick Billado noted that the dog cage needed to be repaired.

**4. Old Business**

**a) Kinney Pike Annual Review of Insurance Coverage**

Kevin Meilleur and Elizabeth Harlow came forward. Mr. Meilleur presented the premium comparison, with an increase of 7%, for a total renewal of \$40,970. The commercial package had increased, involving property, business income, inland marine, and crime. There was an automatic increase of 3% in the limits on the buildings, and an increase in flood coverage due to the redrawing of the floodmaps following tropical storm Irene some

years ago. Ms. Elizabeth said that flood coverage was optional, but flood coverage had increased across the boards. The Selectboard asked her to look into how the premium would be affected if flood coverage were removed, since few of the buildings were in the floodplain.

Mr. Meilleur noted the following breakdown:

<u>Coverage</u>	<u>Expiring Premium</u>	<u>Renewal Premium</u>
Commercial Package	\$12,003	\$13,804
Property	included	included
Business Income	included	included
Inland Marine	included	included
Crime	included	included
General Liability	\$4,408	\$4,506
Business Auto	\$8,098	\$7,671
Employment Practices Liability	\$500	\$500
Public Officials Liability	\$708	\$730
Workers Compensation	\$10,460	\$11,645
Excess Liability (Umbrella)	\$1,228	\$1,261
Public Officials Bond	\$853	\$853
Totals	\$38,258	\$40,970

Mr. Jescavage noted that the MUMC/Library parking lot would be added, and he would get the information to the insurance agency.

The Selectboard reviewed the statement/schedule of values. Mr. Clark discussed the value of the items in the garage (there were not many items of value in there except for the equipment, which was already covered under the vehicle insurance). It was noted that salt was considered business personal property. The Selectboard considered ways to drop the cost for the new garage and for the recreation building, and asked Mr. Jescavage to check up on the values for the caboose, the historical society, and the teen center.

Mr. Meilleur walked the Selectboard through the various proposals. The board agreed to look into what the Town might own as far as fine arts; if none, then the Town would save by not putting them on the policy. Mr. Garrett noted that the backhoe should be taken off the equipment schedule and Maurice Jettie no longer worked for the Town. Mr. Billado wanted to look at the savings available if the comp deductible was reduced.

Mr. Meilleur noted that the Town did not currently have Data Breach Coverage. The Selectboard recalled having discussed this a year ago and determining that this coverage was not needed, so they decided to continue without that coverage.

Mr. Clark summed up the items that Mr. Jescavage and Kinney Pike was asked to look into. The Selectboard thanked the Kinney Pike representatives.

### **b) Discuss Franklin County Animal Rescue 2016 Contract**

The Selectboard reviewed the proposed contract. It was noted that the Town currently allocated \$1340, plus \$500 for the contract. The FCAR requested an allocated of \$1474. The Selectboard noted that cats were not something that the Town dealt with, and that all strays in the Town's name should be brought to the FCAR by the Animal Control Officer only. Mr. Derick Billado said that FCAR will not take any animals with a documented bite.

The Selectboard felt that this required more discussion, and they preferred to speak face-to-face with Rusty Posner. Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Guilmette, to postpone this item until FCAR representatives could be available at a Selectboard meeting. Mr. Clark suggested that Mr. Derick Billado and Mr. James Guilmette negotiate with Rusty Posner prior to the meeting.

### **c) Discuss Assistant Town Clerk Suggestion to Increase Dog License Fee**

Assistant Town Clerk Tanya Dufrense requested increasing the dog license fee, because the state had increased its fees several years ago, and Swanton had not increased its own fees. Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Clark, to raise licensed by \$2 starting April 1, 2016. Motion carried.

**d) Discuss Town of Highgate Recreation Request for Appropriation**

Heidi Britch-Valenta, Highgate Town Administrator, had requested \$15,000 for the Highgate Arena. Mr. Billado stated that the Selectboard had decided not to respond, and felt that Swanton already supported the arena through taxes, and other individuals and organizations supported the arena as well. He felt it was important not to continually revisit an issue that the voters and taxpayers had already voted down some years ago about Swanton's support of the arena.

**e) Discuss Letter from Swanton Enhancement Project**

Mr. Clark said that he is listed as the president of the Swanton Enhancement Project. As the bylaws were completed and elections were held, he would not hold that office. SEP sent a letter to the Selectboard requesting hiring a part- or full-time economic and community development coordinator. Personally, Mr. Clark would like to use money from the economic development fund (perhaps up to \$30,000) for a part-time position, and try the position for a year. Mr. Lavoie agreed that Swanton had money available, and would like to put it to good use, so he felt the Selectboard should "think about it seriously." Mr. Billado agreed with Mr. Clark that something should be done this year ("The momentum is there now and we don't want to lose it") and was in favor of using \$20,000 and taking "baby-steps." If \$20,000 was not enough, there was money available in the economic development fund for a greater investment, if the return showed promise.

Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Guilmette, to approve an economic development coordinator position. Motion carried.

**f) Vandalism**

Mr. Clark noted that three vehicles in the Rocky Ridge area had had their tires slashed. Although it was not known why they were targeted, they were the only ones with "No Wind Turbine" signs on their lawns. He wanted to make the public aware of it.

**5. Economic Development – None.**

**6. Community Development**

**a) Review Draft of Proposed MUMC Parking Lot Agreement**

Mr. Paxman stated that the trustee meeting had been held last night, and the trustees had authorized the Village Manager to sign the lease contract (for the things applicable to the Village) if the Selectboard approved the lease.

Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Guilmette, to approve the lease contract and to authorize Mr. Jescavage to sign on behalf of the Selectboard. Discussion: It was noted that the lease was legally approvable. Motion carried.

Mr. Garrett could put up the entrance and exit signs up.

**b) Appoint Planning Commission Member**

Mr. Jescavage stated that Ms. Luneau had been interviewed by the Planning Commission at their last meeting. They recommended that the Selectboard appoint her to fill the Planning Commission vacancy. Mrs. Luneau said that she was born and raised in the Town of Swanton, and had been involved in some town planning meetings in the past. The Selectboard thanked Ms. Luneau for stepping up to serve the town on a board.

Mr. Guilmette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to appoint Ms. Luneau to the Planning Commission. Motion carried.

## **7. Discuss Fire Department Budget**

Chief Tim Girard and Adam Paxman came forward. Chief Girard directed the Selectboard's attention to the total number of calls to which the fire department had responded.

Total calls in the Village	63
Total calls in the Town	152
Mutual Aid	21
Total as of 12/14/15	236

The Selectboard, Town Clerk, and fire representatives discussed the budget. The Fire Department anticipated going overbudget. Fire Salaries would go overbudget.

Chief Girard noted that, although the number of the calls had decreased from last year, the duration of the calls had increased, for structure fires and mutual aids. There were a lot of major calls in the first half of the year that "chewed up" the salary budget and a few other items. Chief Girard explained for Mr. Lavoie that not all responders went straight to a call, and the men on stand-by were paid for their time, in case back-to-back calls occurred. Mr. Jason Cross noted that the \$36,000 used was used to buy the extrication tools.

Mr. Jason Cross said that the air-packs would not be compliant with the new NFPA standard, and they could not be retro-fitted or repaired. The air-packs had to be replaced. Chief Girard added that the price of gear had gone up dramatically, and four sets of gear had to be replaced in the last year. Mr. Paxman added that \$14,300 was collected in HAZMAT calls. Chief Girard explained that a thermal imaging camera had been damaged and replaced for \$9000 out of the equipment expense.

Mr. Paxman summarized that they did not expect to see an increase in the overall. It was noted that the overall cost was based on a percentage of the Grand List. There were still two more payments for the fire truck (paid off in 2017). The Selectboard summed up that the Fire Department was asking for a \$32,658 increase over last year, for a total of \$209,643 from the Town.

The Selectboard agreed to discuss the Fire Department budget in the first January Selectboard meeting (January 5, 2016), in order to work with "real numbers." Mr. Clark summed up that the two main increases were in salary and in incorporating an expense that, in 2015, was presented as a separate line item. The fire department representatives and the Selectboard discussed the upcoming expenses and how to best approach those.

## **8. Expenditures**

### **a) General Orders (November 18, 2015 - December 15, 2015)**

Mrs. Fournier explained how overpayments worked. Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Guilmette, to approve the General Orders. Discussion: Mrs. Fournier explained the digitized fees item for Mr. Clark. Discussion concluded. Motion carried.

### **b) Highway Orders (November 18, 2015 - December 15, 2015)**

Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to approve the highway orders. Motion carried.

### **c) Payroll (November 18, 2015 - December 15, 2015)**

Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Clark, to accept payroll as written. Motion carried.

## **9. Highway Department**

### **a) Street Updates**

None.

### **b) Other Updates**

Mr. Clark stated that the issue at 101 Bachand Road had been resolved. Over time, the field had filled in and flooded the basement, because there was a lot of groundwater in the area. The Town had received permission to go on the property to address the water issues.

Mr. Clark would talk with a homeowner along Lakewood Drive about a culvert issue.

Mr. Garrett noted that the culverts along the extension of Lakewood Drive were coming out of the road. The landowner was giving the Town permission to dig a ditch to the lake to lower the culvert.

There had been numerous complaints about mud in the road. He had received calls from the state police regarding several roads that had mud on the road due to agricultural work. A car had gone off of Giroux Road because of the mud in the road. The Selectboard agreed that the mud was a hazard.

Mr. Garrett said that the truck body had been put on the truck this week, and that the brush had been cut along a few roads. He noted that there had been several dangerous dead trees in the town road right-of-way, but the landowner did not want the trees cut until he (the landowner) could use funds from a particular government program to cut down the tree himself. The Selectboard advised Mr. Garrett to look into the tree policy to take down the dangerous trees.

Mr. Jescavage had communicated with Mr. Cross about the lean-to. The state was concerned about the bow in the wall of the lean-to, but the Town had been monitoring the lean-to and did not see the bow as a hazard. Mr. Billado said he wished to set up the lean-to, since money had been allocated for that purpose. Mr. Clark said that the pillars would be set in the spring. Mr. Jescavage stated that Mr. Cross's engineer had reported both walls of the lean-to as bowed. He recommended either replacing the walls, or putting buttresses on the walls, which would interfere with the use of the lean-to. Mr. Clark suggested that the buttresses could be lined up with the columns to minimize interference.

## **10. Correspondence**

No correspondence.

## **11. Any Other Necessary Business**

### **a) Review of Highway Maintenance Operator Applicants (Executive Session)**

Mr. Clark noted that the Selectboard had agreed on a Highway Budget that did not include a highway maintenance operator. The applicants should be informed that the Town was not hiring at the moment, but their applications would be kept on file for a year.

### **b) Line of Credit**

Mr. Billado signed the agreement for the line of credit.

## **12. Public Comments (Reprise) – None.**

## **13. Upcoming Events**

- a) Thursday, December 17, 2015, DRB @ 7 p.m. @ Town Offices**
- b) Thursday/Friday, December 24-25, 2015 Christmas Holiday, Town Offices Closed**
- c) Thursday, December 31, 2015 New Year's Eve and Friday, January 1, 2016, New Year's Holiday, Town Offices Closed**

**d) Tuesday, January 5, 2016 Next SLB Regular Meeting @ 7 p.m. @ Town Offices**

**14. Executive Session**

Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Clark, to enter executive session at 9:50 p.m. Motion carried.

Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Clark, to exit executive session at 10:50 p.m. Motion carried.

Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Guilmette, to approve a pay increase for the town employees by 2% across the board. Motion carried.

**E. Adjournment**

Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Clark, to adjourn the meeting at 10:55 p.m. Motion carried.

Received and filed by:

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Cathy Fournier, Swanton Town Clerk

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Date