

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

Tuesday, January 5, 2016 @ 7:00 p.m.

Present: Dan Billado, Selectboard Chair; Joel Clark, Selectboard Vice Chair; John Lavoie, James Guilmette, and William “Turk” Thompson, Selectmen; David Jescavage, Town Administrator; Yaasha Wheeler, Secretary; Eugene Rich, SVPD; Peter Cross, Cross Consulting Engineers; Chief Tim Girard, SVFD, and Adam Paxman; Heather Buczkowski, Ch. 16; Christine Lang.

A. Call to Order

Mr. Billado called the meeting to order.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

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

C. Agenda Review

Since the first posting of the agenda, Mr. Jescavage had moved up Law Enforcement to #3, the Fire Department Budget and the Review Estimate of CAI Technologies had been added, and he requested the board to discuss the annual report cover when discussing the annual report dedication.

D. Meeting Topics:

1. Minutes

a) December 15, 2015 SLB Regular Meeting

b) December 15, 2015 SLB Finance Meeting

Mr. Guilmette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to approve the minutes. Discussion: Mr. Clark noted that a \$1500 sum had been added back into the general budget for the Swanton Enhancement Project but had not been recorded in the minutes. Miss Wheeler would look into that and add it. Motion carried.

2. Public Comments

Christine Lang came forward to ask the board to appear in Montpelier on Wednesday, January 20, 2106, to listen in or possibly testify about the public service board process before the committee. The committee had talked with Irasburg, Grafton, and other towns that had gone through the Public Service Board process, and they were looking for selectboards to speak up.

3. Law Enforcement

a) Swanton Police Monthly Report

Officer Eugene Rich came forward and passed out copies of the report. The total incidents were 48, with total citations/traffic fines were 10 totalling fines of \$1699. The department was trying to document warnings given, which helps gain grants, and was using the digital signboards to heighten awareness. Mr. Billado said he had met with Chief Leonard Stell regarding the police contract/budget, and had had questions with the vehicle lease and dispatching. Chief Stell was looking to stretch out the cost of the vehicle over 5 years, so in

the future, the price should come down if the department proved that it could get 4-5 years out of every cruiser. The town pays 80% of the cruiser, and now the cruiser was being added to the village's fleet for a year or two. Mr. Thompson and Mr. Billado discussed the equipment that went along with a contract. It was noted that the police budget represents a 2.5% increase.

The Selectboard discussed the police contract, which Mr. Billado felt was a "little vague," and Mr. Lavoie suggested that they could discuss the current 2016 budget and hash out the 3-year contract. Mr. Clark said he wanted to get a contract in place that protected both parties, and it seemed that perhaps the Selectboard was not interested in bidding out the contract like last time, but locking into a new 3-year contract.

4. Old Business

a) Discuss 4th Street Property Listing with Mike Blouin

Mr. Blouin was not present, but Mr. Jescavage said he would summarize on Mr. Blouin's behalf. The real estate office that Mr. Blouin had been working with had been reorganized and the local office shut down. Mr. Blouin was moving to Paquette Realty and wanted to see if the Town was interested in re-listing it with Paquette's, or whether the Town should start over. The Selectboard was in favor of going with Paquette. Mr. Billado said he would like to see more aggressiveness from whoever was selling the property. Mr. Blouin said that the listing price was considered too high, and that might be a problem, but the Selectboard felt that the asking price was reasonable. Mr. Lavoie was in favor of getting an agreement with Paquette for 6 months. Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to enter an agreement with Paquette Realty, provided that the fee was no more than was previously paid to the other real estate agency.

b) Approve Cross Engineering Contract for Sidewalk Scoping Study

Mr. Cross came forward to answer any questions about the scoping study for the sidewalk for South River Street and for First Street going toward MVU. Mr. Cross explained that this project was VTrans funded and, if it continued to be VTrans funded, there would be a "fair amount of work" after the scoping was done. Mr. Jescavage said they had communicated with VTrans about the grant requirements.

Mr. Guilmette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to authorize Mr. Jescavage to sign the contract with Cross Consulting Engineers for the sidewalk scoping study.

c) Fire Department Budget Final Review

Chief Tim Girard of the Swanton Village Fire Department and Adam Paxman came forward. Mr. Paxman passed out copies of the budget. He noted a few outstanding bills (FICA, truck repair, etc.), so the Fire Department would probably have an \$11,700 net loss for the year. There would be about a 6% increase in total, but the share from Swanton would be a 12% increase. The airpaks would cost \$40,000 this year. Mr. Billado discussed the standards pertaining to airpaks, and said he had spoken to someone from the NFPA advisory and was told that the state fire marshal's office enforced the standards. He had spoken to Bill Brown at the office, and was told that the state does not enforce the new standard. It is a considered a "recommended best policy standard only." Both NFPA and the fire marshal's office was saying that there was no deadline on that standard. He wished that the airpaks did not have to be so aggressively replaced, since 28 would be replaced over several years. Mr. Girard said that the complete assembly would cost \$80,000 and Mr. Paxman added that they were trying to work with the vendor to get 6 for the price of 5.

Mr. Billado felt that \$5000 for tool expense was too much, so he felt there was a lot of redundancy built into the budget. Mr. Girard explained the expenses that the fire department faced. The packs could not be upgraded because of the face masks and the high pressure regulators. Mr. Clark summarized that he would not expect to see more than a 1-2% increase next year, and Mr. Girard agreed. He would support the budget this year, but not if a 12% increase could be expected every year.

Mr. Lavoie felt that, if the town was paying 75% of the budget, then the Selectboard should be part of developing the budget. Mr. Thompson said that this underlined the need for the Town and Village to merge, and added that he felt that Missquoi Valley Rescue should become part of the Fire Department. Mr. Paxman was a firm proponent of that vision to merge MVR and SVFD. The Selectboard suggested having a Joint Legislative Body meeting to look over the SVFD, instead of the Village and the Town looking at them separately. Mr. Billado emphasized that the Selectboard was only looking so closely at the budgets because of their representation of the taxpayers.

Mr. Lavoie asked what was done with old equipment/suits, and Chief Girard replied that a few old packs and suits were used for training. Sometimes, some equipment could be sold to Canada as well.

d) Review Estimate from CAI Technologies for Mapping Corrections

Mr. Jescavage stated that Cathy Fournier, Tanya Dufresne, Joel Clark, Amy Giroux, and himself had met with Franco Rossi recently, and Mr. Rossi had put together a proposal. There was no grant money available right now, but the estimate was \$6800 to use the current system to align the maps as much as possible. The maps from CAI Technologies were based on aerial photos. The reason that Swanton's current maps were off was because the Town inherited its information from IDX, which were not from aerial photos, which was why the lines don't match in Swanton's system.

The representative from VCGI (a state-run GIS system) stated that VTrans was trying to come up with a new system that would allow for the upgrading of all town maps in the state, but the first priority would be for towns with no mapping and then for towns (like Swanton) that needed improved maps. That program was still in the formation stages, after a year and a half of development. West Swanton seemed to have the most discrepancies in the property lines.

CAI Technologies proposed to do the work over the next year for \$6800. Both clerks and listers agreed that this would be a good thing for the Town to do. Mr. Lavoie suggested using money from the Economic Development fund. Mr. Billado was in favor of using the economic development money to improve the public library, the Town office building, and the mapping system. Mr. Jescavage would ask Town attorney Brian Monaghan if the funds could be used for those purposes.

Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to have CAI Technologies prepare a more specific proposal and contract for the estimated \$6800, with the intent to pay for this out of the economic development fund, and, if not, to pay out of the General Fund. Motion carried.

e) Discuss Black River Architect Fees

Mr. Clark pointed out the break-out of the Black River fees, and noted that the Town was not planning to move forward with re-doing the second story of the Town Office building. Should they move forward with using Black River for doing a few smaller repairs/improvements in the building? Mr. Thompson was in favor of having the building "professionally done" because of the building's historical value. Mr. Clark recommended collecting suggestions for building improvements and then discussing them at a future Selectboard meeting.

5. Economic Development

None.

6. Community Development

None.

7. Highway Department

a) Street Updates

None.

b) Leaking Waterline on Covey Drive Update

Mr. Clark said he had spoken with Mr. Garrett about the water leak on Covey Drive, and Mr. Garrett said that the leak had been fixed. The repair had involved open-cutting the road.

c) Other Updates

Mr. Clark had responded to a complaint about plowing, and felt that the road crew was doing a “decent job.”

8. Correspondence

Mr. Jescavage read the following letter from the Irasburg Selectboard, dated December 15, 2015:

We wish to thank you for your support of our opposition to the industrial wind project slated for our Town. We also appreciate your willingness to join forces in having the Vermont legislature adopt enabling legislation that would grant municipalities the option to regulate “green energy” within their borders. We are very grateful for your letter and support of our efforts.

Mr. Beliveau had informed Mr. Jescavage of a celebration and meeting of the Swanton committees on February 18, 2016.

CVOEO (Franklin/Grand Isle Community Action) was requesting \$1000 to support the food shelf. This was accompanied by signatures of Swanton residents who supported this appropriation. The food shelf had served on 700 occasions, with 231 households, with 642 household members. Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to add the requested appropriation on the ballot as a separate line item (Article 13).

On Wednesday, January 13, 2016, the Franklin County budget would be discussed at the courthouse in St. Albans. Act 46 would be discussed at the Swanton Central School cafeteria. The Vermont Veteran’s Home requested the Town to put a link to their site on the Town’s website (which was already there).

9. Any Other Necessary Business

a) Discuss Annual Report Dedication/Photo

The Selectboard agreed to dedicate the report to the Swanton Enhancement Project and to include a memorial to Ron Case, who was on the Planning Commission at the time of his passing, after discussion with Colette Case. Mr. Jescavage suggested having a collage from the Swanton Enhancement Project and committees for the cover photo. The Selectboard agreed.

b) Review Warrant

The Selectboard discussed the items that should be on the ballot. Mr. Jescavage would plug in the numbers for the ballot based on the budgets. Mr. Jescavage would asked Mr. Monaghan if the economic development money could be used to fund the library improvements and mapping improvements.

10. Public Comments – None.

11. Upcoming Events

- a) Tuesday, January 12, 2016 @ 6:30 p.m. Planning Commission/Town Offices**
- b) Monday, January 18, 2016 MLK Holiday. Town Offices Closed.**
- c) Tuesday, January 19, 2016 Next SLB Meeting @ 7 p.m. Town Offices.**

d) Thursday, January 28, 2016 DRB Meeting @ 7 p.m. Town Offices

12. Executive Session

Mr. Billado made a motion, seconded by Mr. Thompson, to enter executive session at 8:29 p.m. to discuss personnel matters which could not be discussed in public without putting the person and the Town at a disadvantage. Motion carried.

Mr. Thompson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Clark, to exit executive session at 8:53 p.m. Motion carried. Action taken: Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to approve a \$1.00 per hour wage increase in addition to the 2% across the board increase, for a total hourly rate of \$15.60 per hour, for Amy Giroux on the recommendation of Jim Pratt. Motion carried.

E. Adjournment

Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Guilmette, to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 p.m. Motion carried.

Received and filed by:

Cathy Fournier, Swanton Town Clerk

Date