

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

Tuesday, November 1, 2016 @ 7:00 p.m.

Present: Joel Clark, Selectboard Chair; John Lavoie, Selectboard Vice Chair; Dan Billado, James Guilmette, and Jeff Raleigh, Selectmen; Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk; Yaasha Wheeler, Secretary; David Jescavage, Town Administrator; Rebecca Rupp and Michelle Beaulieu, Swanton Public Library; Jerry Vaisey, Ch. 16; Andre & Linda Gagne.

A. Call to Order

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

B. Pledge of Allegiance

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

C. Agenda Review

A discussion on holiday hams had been added under Any Other Necessary Business. Under Old Business, Mr. Clark added "Sign Discussion" and "Swanton Wind." He and Mr. Billado also added executive session for personnel and contracts, since both parties would be put at a disadvantage if this was discussed publicly. Chief Stell was unable to be present, so the Law Enforcement was shelved in favor of a budget update and orders from Mrs. Fournier.

D. Meeting Topics

1. Minutes

a) October 18, 2016 SLB Special/Regular Meeting

Mr. Guilmette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Raleigh, to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried.

2. Public Comments

None.

3. Budget Updates (instead of Law Enforcement)

Mr. Billado made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to approve the Highway Orders (October 20, 2016 to November 1, 2016) as printed. Discussion: An oil pan had been bought for one of the trucks and the paving was almost done. Mr. Billado remarked that owning their own excavator and loader was an economical investment. Discussion concluded. Motion carried.

Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Guilmette, to approve the General Orders (October 20, 2016 to November 1, 2016) as printed. Mr. Billado made an amendment, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to amend the orders to move the loader payment (mistakenly placed in the General Orders) to the Highway Orders. Motion carried.

4. Old Business

a) Request from Northwest Riders Snowmobile Club to Use Town Right-of-Way

Mr. Billado made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to approve and sign the request of Northwest Riders Snowmobile Club to use the town right-of-way. Discussion: Mr. ? informed the board of where the trail would be located this year. Mr. Billado said this was a good group of people and highly supported their request. Discussion concluded. Motion carried.

b) Sign Adopted Revised Personnel Policy

Mr. Jescavage presented the approved personnel policy, which the Selectmen signed.

c) Part-time Economic Development Coordinator Position Update

Mr. Jescavage said he had received one application, but had received no other inquiries or applications. The position was being advertised statewide in the VLCT magazine, and had also been advertised on the town website and in local papers. The ads had been running over two weeks. The Selectboard agreed to run the advertisements for another few weeks.

d) Electronic Sign Discussion

Mr. Clark said that the Selectboard had gotten verbal approval from the state to get it, with the condition that the message could only change every 15 minutes, though Mr. Clark noted that other signs in neighboring municipalities changed frequently. Mr. Clark added that the sign that the Selectboard had previously decided to get was no longer being made by Vermont Display. The quote for a comparable sign was about \$1900 more. The cabinet would be 2'7" high and you could get up to 24 characters per line, with 4 lines. The purchase would not include installation, but the Village was willing to help with the installation. The Selectmen agreed to spend the money for the sign; effort had already been put into the sign and costs would only go up.

Mr. Guilmete made a motion, seconded by Mr. Raleigh, to spend \$9635.70 to purchase the electronic sign for the Swanton Village Green. Discussion: Both the Village and the Town were paying for this sign, and \$2500 from the Swanton Enhancement Project was already allotted for its purchase.

e) Swanton Wind Application for Certificate of Public Good

Mr. Clark and Mr. Raleigh had attended the Swanton Wind public hearing before the Public Service Board. The schedule started the process in January 2017. There would be several rounds of "discovery" and the Town had to decide if they were going to hire some experts to challenge some of the input provided by Swanton Wind. The Town's lawyer would be talking with state agencies so that the Town did not unknowingly duplicate information already out there. Mr. Billado thanked Mr. Clark for attending, and noted that the Town had been committed up to \$10,000 in opposing Swanton Wind's project. That money would run out quickly, and, since donations to the Town were legally acceptable, the Town should seek help from other people interested in opposing the project.

5. Department Budgets

a) Discuss 2017 Library Budget

Mrs. Rupp came forward and offered copies of the newly-corrected Swanton Public Library budget. Mr. Clark thanked the library for all the activities going on there. Mrs. Beaulieu said that the new computers (six new ones for a total of eight) were helping to bring in more people, including adults who were doing resumes and online employment tests. Mrs. Rupp said that they had attempted to keep things flat for 2017, except for staff salaries: "For us to attract and hang on to good people, we really have to pay them a little more than we're paying them now."

They wished to give the children's librarian a full-time position, which was not included in the budget, because it might need to be a line item on the town ballot. The children's

librarian was currently working 25 hours a week, and they wished to increase her hours to 38 hours a week (the hours that the library was open). If she was full-time, the library could offer more after-school programs, hopefully to begin in 2017.

The budget included a calculated increase in hourly wage for the employees. They wished to go from \$11.46/hour to \$15/hour. The \$11.46/hour, when compared to statewide wages, was very low. The Selectboard calculated that that would be an increase of over 30 percent. The Selectboard and the library agreed that the 2016 renovations and repairs had been an excellent investment.

Due to the failures of some air conditioning units during the summer, Mrs. Beaulieu suggested that the five units should be replaced over the next several years. The elevator was also “aging rapidly.” The Selectboard discussed the possibility of having a capital reserve fund for long-term plans.

Mr. Clark recommended staggering the increase for the staff over several years, to make it more palatable to the voters. Any surplus was rolled into the contingency fund for over-expended items. Last year, the library had asked for just over \$138,000; this year, they were asking for \$155,000 (a 16% increase). Ms. Beaulieu and Mrs. Rupp discussed the repairs made to the library in 2016.

Mr. Clark suggested taking some money out of line items in which the library had underspent and begin a capital reserve fund. Mr. Billado suggested that a spending freeze could help for the end of the year and help cut the percentage increase down. Mr. Clark emphasized that, though the board was asking the library to trim the budget a little, “this is an investment in our community.” The Selectboard thanked the library for doing a great job.

6. Community & Economic Development

a) Update on Gateway Economic Development Project

Greta Brunswick had set the next Targeted Area Wide Planning Meeting for Thursday, November 3rd at 5:30 p.m. The consultant team would present the land use, environmental, and market analysis that had been conducted so far for the area as a whole and would begin discussion for selecting catalyst sites. Mr. Jescavage added that Peter Fairweather had been strongly recommended by other communities. The meeting was open to the public.

7. Highway Department

a) Updates

Mr. Guilmette asked if the crew would brush-hog; Mr. Clark said he believed that was going to be done soon.

8. Correspondence

Mr. Jescavage’s only correspondence should be read in executive session for contracts.

9. Any Other Necessary Business

a) Discuss Holiday Hams

Mr. Guilmette said that Rosie’s had offered hams for \$3.59 a pound and was local. The Town had usually ordered through McKenzie’s, which had more options. Mr. Jescavage suggested that individual employees should decide which one they wished to buy from. Mr. Lavoie said, “Until we try them, we won’t know if we like them as much as McKenzie’s.” He recommended going with Rosie’s.

10. Public Comments

None.

11. Upcoming Events

- a) Wednesday, November 2, 2016 Next PC Meeting @ 7 p.m. @ Village Office Complex, 120 First Street, Swanton, VT
- b) Thursday, November 3, 2016 @ 5:30 p.m. Next Gateway Committee Meeting @ Town Offices, 1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT
- c) Tuesday, November 8, 2016 Town Clerk's Office Closed for Election Day
- d) Friday, November 11, 2016 Veterans Day Holiday, Town Offices Closed
- e) Tuesday, November 15, 2016 @ 7 p.m. Next Selectboard Meeting @ Town Offices, 1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT

12. Executive Session

Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Guilmette, to go into executive session for personnel and contracts at 8:17 p.m. stating that the topics of discussion will put the Town and/or individuals at a substantial disadvantage if discussed in open meeting. Motion carried.

Mr. Guilmette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Billado, to exit executive session at 9:40 p.m. Action: The Town Administrator was directed to contact Town Attorney Brian Monaghan about a legal issue.

E. Adjournment

Mr. Billado made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to adjourn at 9:41 p.m. Motion carried.

Received and filed by:

Cathy Fournier, Swanton Town Clerk

Date