

TOWN OF SWANTON
MINUTES
SELECTBOARD MEETING
Swanton Town Office Building
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488
Tuesday, October 1, 2013 @ 7:00 p.m.

Present: John Lavoie, Selectboard Chair; Daniel Billado, Selectboard Vice Chair; Dick Thompson and Joel Clark, Selectmen; Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk; David Jescavage, Town Administrator; Yaasha Wheeler, Secretary; Shawn Dashno, Animal Control Officer; Peter Cross, Cross Consulting Engineers; Chief Leonard Stell, Swanton Village Police Department; H.D. Campbell.

A. Call to Order

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

B. Pledge of Allegiance

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

C. Meeting Topics

1. Minutes

a. 9/17/13 Selectboard Finance Meeting

b. 9/17/13 Regular Selectboard Meeting

Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Billado, to accept the meeting minutes as printed. Discussion: Mr. Garrett clarified that the broken piston was on Maurice Jetty's truck, with a final anticipated cost for replacement at \$1700 (not including installation). Discussion concluded. Motion carried.

2. Public Comment – None.

3. Old Business

a. Review New Garage Requisition with Peter Cross

Mr. Cross presented a requisition to reduce the retainage to 5 percent. Previously, the Selectboard had determined that the building was not substantially complete until the ventilation system was operational. Additionally, Mr. Cross had noticed that the make-up air dampers needed to be rewired, and he recommended that the requisition shall be approved only on the final inspection of the work. The work would be done Friday; otherwise, he was comfortable with the 5% retainage requisition. Mr. Thompson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Clark, for the approval of the requisition upon correction of the air dampers. Motion carried.

b. Review New Garage Drainage Proposal with Peter Cross

Mr. Cross mentioned that the drainage issue on the pavement had not yet been addressed. After considering many options, Mr. Cross felt that the best option was to install an infiltration catch basin with a ring of concrete and some stone, to let the water infiltrate the sandy soil beneath the pavement. The installation would be done so as to minimize undermining. Mr. Jescavage was concerned that the water would create its own piping and therefore undermine the pavement, but Mr. Cross felt that the area was flat enough that the water would simply infiltrate the soil, with his main concern being settling if the area was not backfilled and tamped properly. Mr. Billado expressed concern that heavy truck traffic would shift the basin over time and Mr. Cross explained that the alternative—cutting a swale in the pavement—would result in a ditch almost a foot deep on the northern end of the pavement. Mr. Billado felt that removal of the hump in the pavement would fix much of the puddling problem. Mr. Garrett's main concern was that the basin would settle and the crew would accidentally plow the top off of it. After discussion, the Selectboard was most comfortable with Mr. Clark's suggestion to have a catch basin with horizontal chambers (such as 6-inch perforated pipe) for drainage.

Mr. Cross explained that, of the three systems (gas sensors, humidistat, and timer), only the gas sensors had been installed at this time. Mr. Clark was in favor of testing the sensors.

Mr. Cross stated that the state certificate of occupancy had been granted, and the town's certificate was still being waited upon.

4. Law Enforcement – Swanton Village Police Chief Report

Chief Stell came forward to share his September report. In all, there had been 43 calls, with 4 traffic tickets issued for a total of \$786. The year's citations since January involved 97 incidents for a total of \$18,088.50. A man from Jones Court with a number of state charges had been identified; however, he was possibly back in the Massachusetts area, because he was no longer residing locally. The police department had been unable to catch the speeding vehicles on Bachand Road in action. Mr. Garrett informed the chief of complaints that he had received regarding excessive speed and motorcycles popping wheelies on Route 207. Chief Stell agreed to look into the matter, adding that the speeding on County Road had been addressed and improvements were being seen. One motorist had been clocked at 81 mph. Suspicious activity on the Rail Trail near the Swanton recreation fields had involved misbehaving juveniles, but no vandalism. He was still working on the road weights for Mr. Garrett.

3. Old Business

d. Executive Session for Real Estate and Personnel

Mr. Billado made a motion, seconded by Mr. Clark, to enter executive session at 7:43 p.m for real estate and personnel. Motion carried.

Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Billado, to exit executive session at 8:27 p.m. Action taken: none.

e. address 2 continuing dog complaints

Mr. Dashno came forward. He asked for direction on the continuing case regarding the Zorn German Shepherds. The Selectboard instructed Mr. Jescavage to send a letter to Brian Monaghan, the town's attorney, with the pictures and written complaint from Mr. Raleigh, and to tell Mr. Monaghan to proceed with action against Mr. Zorn. Mr. Jescavage should also follow up with Mr. Raleigh about the steps being taken to correct the issue. Mr. Raleigh had alleged that Mr. Dashno had not responded to one of his calls; Mr. Dashno stated that he had, but had been unable to find the dog and did not speak directly with Mr. Raleigh while in the area. Mr. Lavoie recommended that Mr. Dashno meet with a concerned citizen whenever possible, to prove that the complaint was taken seriously. If Mr. Dashno were to find Mr. Zorn's dog on Mr. Raleigh's property, the dog should be impounded and not given back until the judge made a decision.

The second ongoing complaint regarded the dogs on Spring Street. He had not received any calls since the initial two, to which he had responded. Having advised Mr. Wiseman to gather a petition from any other concerned neighbors, Mr. Dashno presented the petition. Mr. Jescavage added that the landowner of the property with the dogs had visited his office and assured the board that he was taking the matter seriously. The dogs were prohibited, according to the lease, and the tenant had been told several times to get rid of them, which she had promised to do, but never done. Mr. Billado noted that some of the petition included mention of "health hazards," of which he had not been made aware, as well as public display of "drunken and stoned behavior." The Selectboard asked Mr. Dashno to follow up on the residents who had signed the petition.

Mr. Jescavage mentioned a complaint about loose chickens on Lime Kiln Road. The Selectboard noted that there was no chicken ordinance. Mr. Dashno said that he had spoken to the complainant and the chicken owner, although he realized he had no authority to taken any action. Mr. Billado advised that Mr. Dashno should continue to try to be the middle person, and to coax people to be good neighbors.

5. Highway Department

a) Hungerford Brook Bridge

Mr. Garrett suggested a response to the concerned citizens, explaining that the road was being refurbished and a guardrail would be installed by July 1, 2014, prior to the expiration of the grant. The pedestals had been broken off a long time ago and would be removed. Mr. Clark said he saw the guardrails as a safety issue, and asked Mr. Garrett to price the project and inform the concerned citizen that “as part of the Woods Hill Road project, the town’s intentions was to get the guardrails installed this calendar year, but at least by July 1, 2014.”

b) Review Highway Equipment List

This item was postponed to the next meeting.

c) Discuss Old 1-Ton Truck

This item was tabled until executive session.

d) Other Updates

Mr. Garrett stated that he had drawn 43 tandem loads of sand, each load being \$550 for 14 yards, at about \$75-\$77 per load. This meant that \$3311 out of the \$13,000 was spent. He had also sifted about 700 – 800 yards. He would need more than the 23 tons of salt in the salt shed; he was hoping for at least 90 more tons at the state’s new price of \$63.28. A total of 161 tons would be about \$10,200. He would still be underbudget, at about \$14,000 of the \$17,000 for the salt and sand line item. The Selectboard encouraged him to do as he wished. Joel Clark signed the bill from Cargill for the salt.

Mr. Garrett mentioned that the state was proposing to do away with sand, which was purported to be the biggest pollutant of Lake Champlain.

Mr. Garrett reported that he had striped 4.7 miles of road in West Swanton and 1.7 miles of Sweet Hollow Road.

Mr. Garrett said that he had spoken to Ron Kilburn, Zoning Administrator, about the driveway to the pond at the Church of Latter Day Saints on Bushey Road. The driveway did not have a culvert, had never involved a permit, and was impeding his drainage. Mr. Jescavage was asked to write a letter to the property owner regarding the matter.

Mr. Garrett requested to use some money from the blacktopping budget to buy 10 to 15 tons to fill in the ruts in Beebe Road. The Selectboard agreed. Blacktopping of Woods Hill was scheduled for October 11th or 12th.

Mr. Garrett recommended contacting state representatives and senators regarding some kind of return on tires. He had 400 to 500 tires to get rid of, for \$2 per car tire and \$3 per pickup tire. He added that the next year’s budget should include a line item for tire disposal. Mr. Clark suggested collecting tires on household hazardous waste day, for \$2 or \$3 per tire.

Mr. Garrett said that he had received a call from a man on Monument Road who complained that the town was not mowing enough. Mr. Clark said that he would evaluate the area.

Mr. Garrett stated that he was ditching Hog Island Road, with two 10-inch culvert (one old one in good shape, another he had bought for \$100). The sides of the road were all seeded and mulched.

Mr. Garrett informed the Selectboard had this computer was being fixed, so he could be reached best by cell phone.

Mr. Jescavage noted that the sidewalk issue on Bushey Street had been resolved, and he had received a sign structure contract from the state for the concrete culvert which would be installed next year on Maquam Shore Road.

6. Community Development

a) Discuss 2014 Health Insurance Plan

Mr. Jescavage explained that, at the Town Fair, he would have to give the Vermont Health Commission information about town employees, and about the town's decision of how much to contribute to each employee's insurance next year. There were 10 different insurance plans offered through Blue Cross Blue Shield, with the closest match to the town's current plan being the Platinum Plan, but which included no vision benefits. All towns had to register with the Vermont Health Connection in October, giving basic information on the town's contribution. In November, individual employees had to sign up on their own, with the help of state-trained navigators. The employees could choose any one of the health plans. Mr. Clark said that the contribution did not have to be a percentage. Mr. Thompson stated that the current percentage was 83.5% for the Town and 16.5% for the employee. Mrs. Fournier explained that, if every employee chose the platinum plan, the annual premium would still be \$54 less than they were paying currently. The Selectboard agreed to keep the same appropriation for the deductible. He added that the town had allocated \$6000 as a contribution toward deductibles, on a first come, first served basis. Given the high deductibles, Mr. Billado and Mr. Clark were in favor of capping the town's contribution from that fund at a certain amount per employee. The Selectboard agreed to stick with the current percentages (Town: 83.5%, employee: 16.5%), with continuing discussion on contributions toward deductibles.

b) Review HFI Grant Administration Contract for Roy's Mobile Home Park

Mr. Thompson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Billado, to authorize Mr. Jescavage to sign a contract authorizing HFI to do the administrative work for the grant. Motion carried.

c) Review Revised 5-Year Plan

Mr. Clark suggested reviewing the information and discussing it at the next meeting.

d) Review Village Dam Land Quit Claim Deed

Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Thompson, to authorize Mr. Jescavage to sign the deed. Motion carried.

7. Correspondence

Mr. Jescavage informed the board of the Northwest Access Television celebration at Twigg's in St. Albans on Monday, October 7th.

A new "Healthy People, Strong Communities" grant program was coming up, with a deadline set for December 3rd, and \$190,000 available. Mr. Thompson advised Mr. Jescavage to look into the grant to pave the rail trail.

Mr. Jescavage presented PR correspondence from Comcast.

Mr. Jescavage informed the board that the Agency of Transportation board had scheduled 6 public hearings across the state on various highway issues. The closest discussion would be on November 14th in the Green Mountain Room of the La Quinta Inn in St. Albans.

Mr. Jescavage presented the monthly summary of the amount of woodchips being stored in the woodchip plant (the summary being required as part of a condition on the plant's permit).

Mr. Jescavage informed the board that Elcom (computers and software) would have a booth at the Town Fair.

8. Any Other Necessary Business

a) Set Meeting Schedule for 2014 Budget Discussion

Mr. Jescavage was asked to begin inviting representatives from Swanton recreation, library, fire, and rescue to Selectboard meetings regarding the 2014 budget.

b) Set Date for Meeting with Fairfield Selectboard

The Selectboard agreed to meet in Fairfield with the Fairfield Selectboard on October 14th at 7:30 p.m. The meeting would be in regard to a pilot program involving a plowing arrangement. Mr. Garrett said that he found that, although the program demonstrated neighborliness between Swanton and Fairfield, it was not cost-effective for Swanton.

9. Public Comments (reprise) – None.

10. Upcoming Events

- a) October 3, 2013 VLCT Town Fair
- b) October 6, 2013 Hungry Heart Movie @ 7:00 p.m. at MVU
- c) October 9, 2013 PC meeting @ 7 p.m.
- d) October 16, 2013 Hungry Heart Community Forum @ 5:30 p.m. @ Swanton Village Complex
- e) October 15, 2013 next SLB meeting

Mr. Clark added that the next Development Review Board meeting was set for October 24th, and the Selectboard should develop a fencing plan for the new garage, to present to the board with a proposed completion date. Mr. Lavoie asked Mr. Jescavage to add “Fencing Discussion and Solution” on the next Selectboard agenda.

11. Executive Session

Mr. Thompson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Billado, to enter executive session for contracts at 9:50 p.m. Motion carried.

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

Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Thompson, to accept the offered trade-in price of \$15,000 from Handy’s for the Town’s old one-ton pickup. Motion carried.

Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Thompson, to adjourn the meeting at 10:11 p.m. Motion carried.

Typed on October 4, 2013
Minutes by Yaasha Wheeler
Received and filed by:

Cathy Fournier, Swanton Town Clerk

Date