

**TOWN OF SWANTON
SELECTBOARD
REGULAR MEETING
MINUTES**

**Swanton Town Office Building
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488**

Tuesday, May 19, 2015 @ 7 p.m.

Present: Daniel Billado, Selectboard Chair; John Lavoie, James Guilmette, and William "Turk" Thompson, Selectmen; Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk; David Jescavage, Town Administrator; Yaasha Wheeler, Secretary; Heather Buczkowski, Channel 16; Derick Billado, Animal Control Officer; Harold Garrett, Road Foreman; Brian Thompson, Highway Crew; Gary Taylor & Judy Dunn, St. Albans Police Department; Bob Lafont, Pike Industries; Tim Girard, Swanton Village Fire Department.

A. Call to Order

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

B. Pledge of Allegiance

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

C. Agenda Review

Mr. Jescavage noted that 3(a) Dispatch Discussion had been added under Old Business, and 7(b) Discuss Tree Cutting on Private Property was added under Highway Department. Mr. Lavoie added (c) Speed Limit under Any Other Necessary Business. Mr. Billado added (d) Other Business to both Highway Department and Any Other Necessary Business. Mr. Guilmette added (d) Memorial Signs on Woods Hill Road under Highway Department. Mrs. Fournier said that she had one road permit under Highway Department.

D. Meeting Topics:

1. Minutes

- a) May 5, 2015 SLB Site Visit**
- b) May 5, 2015 SLB Meeting**

Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Guilmette, made a motion to approve the minutes of both the site visit and the regular Selectboard meeting. Motion carried.

2. Public Comments – None.

3. Old Business

a) Dispatch Discussion with Chief Taylor & Lt. Dunn

Mr. Billado introduced the Selectboard, Town Administrator, Town Clerk, Road Foreman, and Secretary to Chief Taylor and Lt. Dunn. It was noted that this was the first time they had been requested to the Selectboard meeting. Mr. Billado explained that the current price of \$57,000 (which included all Village and Town emergency services) seemed very high. Originally, he had been told that the cost was based on per capita, but it seemed too high for that.

Chief Taylor said that when he was hired in 2005, dispatching was so expensive to run that there was discussion of not continuing to dispatch. However, he traveled New England to

see how other municipalities did dispatching. The city used about 60% of dispatching services, and the stakeholders use about 40%. St. Albans divided the budget by 60/40, and the way that stakeholders' fees were determined is based on population. Almost everyone's dispatch fees went down slightly, based on the numbers from the last census. The total expenditure for central dispatch resulted in a per capita rate of \$8.78 per person. Each community was billed by population, and because Swanton wanted both Village and Town billed together, it was done that way. Swanton had put through 891 calls. Missisquoi Valley Rescue was the greater user (more than the Fire Department).

Chief Taylor passed out information about the rates of other local municipalities. He explained that the fees were fairly stable now, an improvement from 2008. Over 4 years, the 60/40 ratio was implemented across the board. He stated, "There is not anyone who can dispatch for you for less, unless you are going to dispatch yourself." He added the average dispatcher with benefits cost between \$68,000 and \$72,000—which did not count other costs. He explained that St. Albans was not trying to bilk anyone; however, he was looking to flatten the cost for his employee, St. Albans city. All radio calls and telephones calls were recorded (with the exception of the lawyers' phone). The more communities that contributed to the dispatching, the less the cost was overall for everyone.

Mr. Billado asked to know how many dispatchers in the facility were state dispatchers being paid by the state. Chief Taylor said that there were no dispatchers being paid by the state. However, 911 was a different story; St. Albans received a reimbursement from the state of \$45,000 per seat annually for handling the 911 calls. State police have 18 seats, but St. Albans and other communities had 2 seats. He felt that the communities would be better served by allocating the money from the seats and divided it by the number of calls to determine the amount of money paid per call, that would be easier to people to understand. He felt that the dispatching board was very fair, and noted that money from the state was not applied toward the 60/40 split, because St. Albans assumed the cost of the service. If the dispatcher stopped being a 911 center tomorrow, the dispatching fees would not change. The \$90,000 from the state goes toward the St. Albans city's expenses.

Chief Taylor explained all the responsibilities and equipment involved. Mr. Billado mentioned the rumors that two dispatching facilities were being closed in the future; how would that influence the costs? Chief Taylor said that St. Albans had the busiest PCAP (?), and said that they handled about 3000 overflow calls. He explained current policies that influenced costs, and how taxes were put toward costs as well. Mr. Thompson apologized to the presenters for being critical; he had misunderstood that they had been given notice and not appeared at any of the meetings to which they had been invited. He also thanked them for the information; the board would have to discuss the information. Chief Taylor said that no one would begrudge Swanton any cost-cutting measures. Mr. Lavoie thanked Lt. Dunn for his clarity and fairness. Mr. Billado thanked Chief Taylor and Lt. Dunn for coming.

4. Community and Economic Development

a) Architectural RFP Discussion

Mr. Billado stated that Joel Clark planned to speak with the DRB about the fencing issue. He added that he and Mr. Clark had talked together about the RFPs, and Mr. Jescavage had done research for Mr. Clark. The three bids were as follows:

- Arnold & Scangas Architects: \$59,130
- Centerline Architects & Planners: \$77,800
- Black River Design, Architects: \$27,500

Mr. Thompson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to award Black River Design the contract for \$27,500 for architectural design on the Swanton Town Office Building.

b) Engineering RFP Discussion

The bids were as follows:

- Dubois & King, Inc: \$23,767

- Cross Consulting Engineers, PC: \$4932
- Lamoureux & Dickinson Consulting Engineers: \$10,703.96

Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Guilmette, to accept the bid from Cross Consulting for \$4932 for the Robin Hood Drive extension. Motion carried.

c) Garage Fence Bid Discuss

This item was tabled, until Mr. Clark could speak to the Development Review Board.

d) Paving Bid Discussion

Mr. Billado said that Mr. Clark and Mr. Garrett had done some homework. Mr. Garrett said that the bids needed to be evaluated in price per ton, versus the total estimates. The bids were as follows:

- Frank W. Whitcomb Construction Corp: \$509,096.28
- S. T. Paving, Inc: \$375,578
- Engineers Construction, Inc: \$496,604
- Pike Industries: \$429,994.43

Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Guilmette, to award the paving contract to Frank W. Whitcomb for \$64.68/ton a total of \$360,897.40. Discussion: Mr. Bob Lafont said that he was here to represent Pike Industries. He emphasized how badly they wanted to work with the Town of Swanton. He said he had spoken to Mr. Garrett about the things Pike Industries could do, "the extra stuff that public doesn't see." Mr. Billado said that the Road Commissioner and the Road Foreman looked at the bids, and recommended Whitcomb.

Mr. Lafont said that Pike was offering a shim overlay, which might be more than what the other bidders offered. Mr. Lavoie said that the total tonnage of Whitcomb was 1402 more tons than Pike Industries; why? When comparing "apples to apples," he determined that Whitcomb was the lower bid based on tonnage. Mr. Garrett added that there was 119 tons more from Whitcomb for about \$1900 less than Pike Industries.

Mr. Lafont reminded that Pike Industries had strong quality in Swanton. Mr. Lavoie said that some years ago, the Selectboard had not gone with the low bid because they preferred to stick with a company they already had a relationship with, and they took some heat for that. So the Selectboard did not want to make the same mistake. Mr. Billado felt that going with Whitcomb would sharpen the competition. Mr. Thompson said that the lowest bid was not always the best, but he was going with it because Mr. Clark was an expert and recommended that company.

Mr. Lafont recommended that the Town document the roads paved, and he would compare it with any of the roads he had done for Swanton in the last 10 years. Mr. Lavoie thanked Mr. Lafont for coming, because it shows that he cared. Mr. Lafont said that there was "something about Swanton" that made it desirable to work with. Discussion concluded.

Mr. Lavoie, Mr. Guilmette, and Mr. Thompson voted in favor of the motion; Mr. Billado voted no. Motion carried.

e) Public Hearing for Street Naming

The notice has been posted at the Town Office, Village Office, and Post Office.

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Swanton Selectboard will conduct a public hearing for the purpose of naming a new private road on Tuesday, May 19, 2015 at 7:15 p.m. in the Town of Office Meeting Room at 1 Academy Street in Swanton, Vermont. The Board will discuss and act on naming a new subdivision road that is located on the northerly side of the Woods Hill Road. The new subdivision road is proposed to be named Ironwood Lane.

The Selectboard will consider making Ironwood Lane its permanent, official name. The public hearing is being conducted pursuant to Sections II and IV of the Town of Swanton Ordinance Regarding Enhanced 911 Road Naming, Road Signs and Addressing. Members of the public and owners of property abutting the road are welcome to attend the public hearing and offer input. A map of the subdivision is available for viewing at the Swanton Planning & Zoning Office at 1 Academy Street in Swanton, VT.

Mr. Guilmette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Thompson, to approve the road being named Ironwood Lane. Motion carried.

5. Animal Control Officer
a) ACO Monthly Report

Mr. Derick Billado came forward to present his report. He stated that April 19 was a follow-up from last month's report, and the woman had registered all 6 of her dogs. On Mother's Day, he had responded to 3 bites, all resulting in hospital visits. Dr. Johnson from the State of Vermont and the State Health Department were involved; a dog had bitten a 2-year-old on the face, resulting in multiple stitches. The owner had stabbed the dog that night and buried it in the back yard. There were multiple levels to that issue, and some was still being resolved.

Mr. Derick Billado said that he had responded to a cat bite, and had to quarantine the cat. Mr. Thompson said that Swanton no longer dealt with a cat, but Mr. Dan Billado said that Swanton had to deal with cats in the case of a bite. Mr. Derick Billado said that the cat had bitten two kids.

Mr. Derick Billado reported that Carol Jewett had been bitten by her dog again just after recovering from the last bite. If it happened again, the Selectboard would have to get involved.

The Selectboard thanked Derick Billado for his work.

6. Expenditures
a) General Orders (April 22, 2015 – May 19, 2015)

Mr. Thompson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to approve the General Orders as printed. Motion carried.

b) Highway Orders (April 22, 2015 – May 19, 2015)

Mr. Thompson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Guilmette, to approve the Highway orders as printed. Motion carried.

c) Payroll (April 22, 2015 – May 19, 2015)

Mr. Thompson made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie, to approve the payroll as printed. Motion carried.

7. Highway Department
a) Better Back Roads Grants Update

Mr. Jescavage said that he and Mr. Garrett had worked with Bethany Remmers from NRPC to apply for two grants, one to do an inventory of all culverts and erosion hotspots, and the other would be to line a steep bank on Sweet Hollow Road. Ms. Remmers had submitted them to the state.

Mr. Garrett explained that the inventory grant was for \$4000 with a 20% match, which would be \$800, but the \$800 could be offset by Mr. Jescavage's time and Mr. Garrett's time. Mr. Clark gave him approval to go ahead, and Mr. Garrett would take the money out of his Miscellaneous Grant. Mr. Garrett said that the stone grant was for \$15,000 to fix a bank that kept caving in, and that had another 20% match, which again worked out to be no money

out of hand. Mr. Clark also approved seeking this grant. Mr. Jescavage noted that Mr. Garrett was currently using an \$18,000 grant on work being done on Bachand Road and Comstock Road. He explained the nature of the work, and the need for the stone to line the swale. The grant would pay for equipment, labor, and stone.

b) Tree Cutting on Private Property

Mr. Jescavage said that Mr. Garrett had requested him to write to the owner of 373 Maquam Shore Road, where there had been a fatality, and damaged trees needed to be cut down. Because it involved going onto private property, they needed Selectboard approval to ask the homeowner to take the tree out.

c) Discuss General Issues & Updates

Mr. Billado and Mr. Garrett discussed a tractor that needed to be repaired. Mr. Garrett stated that the problem was likely not a head gasket crack; currently, the highway crew had put an additive in the water, which would hopefully seal the problem. He said that repairing the issue himself would be very time-intensive. He suggested considering getting a new tractor after the end of the mowing season. Do you put the necessary \$6000 into it, or rent a tractor for the mowing season?

d) Signs for Woods Hill Road

Mr. Guilmette told Mr. Garrett that the signs originally faced in a different direction (perpendicular to the road). Mr. Garrett said that he wished to allow the family to remember the tragedy, but others in the area would rather not drive by, see them, and remember the tragedy. Mr. Guilmette was in favor of putting the signs back the way they were. Mr. Billado said his concern was that he took his eyes off the road to look at the signs, and Mr. Garrett noted that the signs were unique, so they attracted drivers' attention if they were more visible. Mr. Billado said he understood why some people would not want to be reminded of the deaths, but all other signs faced perpendicular to the road. Mr. Garrett added that the visibility of the signs contributed to their being stolen last time. The Selectboard were in favor of putting them back the way they were originally, so that drivers could see them both coming and going.

e) Road Permit

The Road Foreman and the Selectboard signed the road permit for Martha Shapiro, for 6 Kellogg Road.

f) Other Business

Mr. Brian Thompson proposed replacing the three posts on the Rail Trail with a gate for which he and Mr. Garrett had a key. That would save him travel time while mowing. The Selectboard agreed to let Mr. Garrett and Mr. Brian Thompson work out the issue together.

Mr. Lavoie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Guilmette, to pay for the body of the new truck, since it was all painted and repaired. Motion carried.

Mr. Garrett noted that three roads had been broken up by farming equipment. He would fix them once the farming season was over. Mr. Lavoie suggested converting the roads back to stone.

8. Correspondence

Mr. Jescavage presented a letter concerning grants for the Bike and Pedestrian Program, with a deadline for applicant at 1 p.m. on July 17th. He was talk with Mr. Garrett about where in Town such an upgrade would be needed.

Rusty Posner of the Franklin County Humane Society had sent the year's contract.

9. Any Other Necessary Business

a) Sign Letter of Agreement with NEMRC for Microsolve CAMA

Mr. Billado signed the agreement with NEMRC for \$238.81.

b) Other Business

Mr. Billado said that he had spoken with Mr. Clark about issues with several different roads in the town, for which more police coverage was needed.

Mr. Lavoie said that on the past Sunday, Dr. Yates had asked about the chances of lowering the speed for Maquam Shore Road from 40 mph to 30 mph. Mr. Lavoie had responded that a traffic study would need to be done to determine the common speed. He noted that there were many walkers on the road now, and he had seen a patrol there. He agreed that a traffic study would be a good idea, and would give the Selectboard more information. He was aware that the speed was a problem. Mr. Billado said that the fatality on the road involved an intoxicated driver, not just speed alone, and he said he had no problem asking for a traffic study, although he expected that the average speed would be much higher than 30 mph. The Selectboard agreed that Mr. Garrett should request such a study.

Mr. Garrett requested removing the signs and barricades on Robin Hood Drive in the Town right-of-way, and to replace them with "Road Closed" signs. Mr. Billado suggested that he speak with Mr. Clark. Mr. Guilmette asked if that would make the road more accessible, and Mr. Garrett said it would. Mr. Guilmette said he was not crazy about that. Mr. Lavoie said that if the road were "opened," would they have to install a stop sign on Bushey Road? The Selectboard agreed that Mr. Garrett and Mr. Clark should consider the matter together.

10. Public Comments (Reprise) – None.

11. Upcoming Events

- a) Monday, May 25, 2015 Memorial Day – Town Office Closed**
- b) Tuesday, May 26, 2015 Planning Commission @ 7 p.m.**
- c) Tuesday, June 2, 2015 Next Selectboard Meeting @ 7 p.m.**
- d) Saturday, June 27, 2015 Hazardous Waste Collection Day @ Swanton Town Highway Garage at 221 First Street from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

Mrs. Buczkowski noted that the Farmers Market started on Saturday, and would be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Saturday through October.

E. Executive Session – None.

F. Adjournment

Mr. Guilmette made a motion, seconded by Mr. Lavoie to adjourn at 8:30 p.m. Motion carried.

Received and filed by:

Cathy Fournier, Swanton Town Clerk

Date