

**TOWN OF SWANTON
SELECTBOARD SPECIAL MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES**

**Swanton Town Office Building
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488
Tuesday, January 8, 2019 @ 7:00 p.m.**

Present: James Guilmette, Chair; Daniel Billado, Vice Chair; Joel Clark, Gary Centabar, Members; Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk; David Jescavage, Town Administrator; Elisabeth Nance, Administrative Assistant; Karen Drennen; Lt. David Kachajian, Swanton Police Department; Julie Regimbal, Superintendent, Franklin Northwest Supervisory Union; Rebecca Rupp, Swanton Public Library; Heather Buczkowski, Videographer

- A. Call to Order – Chair Guilmette called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance – Chair Guilmette led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Guilmette asked for a moment of silence for long-time DRB member Gabriel Liegey who recently passed away.
- C. Agenda Review
 - 1. Law Enforcement – Mr. Jescavage informed the board b) Discuss Bus Safety was added after publication of the original agenda
 - 2. Old Business – Mr. Jescavage noted he combined what were c) Review 2019 Fireworks Cost Update and f) Set Date for 2019 Fireworks/Arts Spectacular into one item as c)
 - 3. Correspondence – Mr. Jescavage noted a) Input Request for May Bikeathon on Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail was added after publication of the original agenda
 - 4. Any Other Necessary Business – Mr. Jescavage noted c) Choose Person(s) for Annual Report Dedication was added after publication of the original agenda
 - 5. Executive Session – Chair Guilmette noted the need for Executive Session to discuss legal and personnel issues.

D. Meeting Topics:

- 1. Minutes – December 18, 2018 Selectboard Regular Meeting

Mr. Centabar made a motion, seconded by Mr. Clark, to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2018 Selectboard meeting as corrected. Ms. Nance noted the correction is to the board member who seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

- 2. Public Comments

Ms. Regimbal came before the board to provide information on the merger, noting the organizational meeting scheduled for January 23, 2019 has been postponed until a date to be

determined in February. Ms. Regimbal clarified that at this time the merger is moving forward, it is only the organizational meeting that has been delayed. Ms. Regimbal noted that because of the merger, next year's budget will not be presented in February in advance of the March vote. Ms. Fournier noted, in response to a question from Mr. Clark, that the school district would pay for a separate budget vote.

In response to a question from Mr. Billado, Ms. Regimbal stated Swanton did not join the lawsuit opposing the merger but has voiced support for those districts that filed suit. Ms. Regimbal noted the suit is not being paid for by taxpayer funds.

The organizational meeting, when it is held, will be at MVU. Among the items on the agenda for that meeting will be electing a moderator, clerk, and treasurer, determining whether to use Australian ballot or town-meeting to vote on the district's budget and to elect district board members, and how to distribute the annual report and proposed budget.

Ms. Regimbal stated an amendment committee will be formed to determine amended articles in lieu of accepting those imposed by the state. The hope is to have one meeting to elect board members, approve a budget, and vote on the amended articles. She would like help on ways to disseminate information to residents. Mr. Clark offered the town's website and the electronic sign.

3. Law Enforcement – Swanton Police Chief Report

a) Swanton Police Chief Report

Lt. Kachajian came before the board and provided a written report for December 1-31, 2018. The report noted a total of 40 incidents, and 57 traffic warnings for 63 offenses. There were 3 traffic citations issued for \$660.00 in fines. Lt. Kachajian noted it was a "fairly routine" month with nothing out of the ordinary to report.

Lt. Kachajian asked Mr. Jescavage for an update on the missing directional sign at Missisquoi St. and Route 78. Mr. Jescavage stated he had contacted Jim Cota at VTrans who believed it is the municipality's responsibility but he was going to look into it. Chair Guilmette asked Mr. Jescavage to get a sign up to avoid accidents.

Mr. Jescavage asked Lt. Kachajian to brief the town on the safety study he is conducting. Lt. Kachajian said he is working with a part-time officer to identify areas of concern in the town.

Mr. Billado noted this month marks the 1-year anniversary of the animal cruelty case and asked for any updates, noting one person has gone to jail. Lt. Kachajian stated the other individual is still wanted. Mr. Billado will provide Lt. Kachajian the photographs he took of the scene for an upcoming court appearance.

b) Discuss Bus Safety

Chair Guilmette asked for an update on the officer riding the bus. Lt. Kachajian said, while the bus company was willing to allow an officer to be on the bus, the department got some pushback that he believes came from the school. Mr. Billado would like the

Selectboard to be notified when concerns are raised within the community about actions they have authorized.

The board was in favor of having police presence for a couple of hours in the morning on a couple days a week. Lt. Kachajian will follow up with Chief Stell.

Mr. Billado again asked for a monthly schedule of town coverage.

Mr. Centabar asked if the police department keeps track of warnings that are issued to look for repeat offenders. Lt. Kachajian replied that other than verbal warnings issued for things such as missing headlights, traffic warnings and citations are documented and available to officers.

4. Old Business

- a) Discuss 2019 Line Item for Trees – Mr. Jescavage noted this was held over from the last meeting. Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Billado, to increase the Swanton Enhancement Project line item from \$1,500 to \$3,000 with \$1,500 earmarked for tree planting and maintenance. Motion carried.
- b) Review 2019 Library Updates

Ms. Rupp came before the Selectboard on behalf of the Library Board of Trustees. On the advice of Mr. Jescavage they contacted Kinney Pike and now have worker's comp and liability insurance, which added approximately \$2,500 to the budget. Ms. Rupp stated the trustees have gotten two vastly different estimates to do an audit, so they will talk with each to see what they will need from the trustees. Mr. Billado suggested going with the lower bid, which is what the town does when the board opens bids for such things like paving.

Ms. Rupp had a question about town-owned buildings noting the library pays the town for insurance on the building and on the building's contents out of money received from the town. She wondered if it would be more efficient for the town to pay insurance on the building. Mr. Clark clarified that the town does not pay the liability insurance but does cover the building itself. The board chose to leave the process in place.

Ms. Rupp asked how other town organizations handle their finances. Mr. Centabar stated the Cemetery Commission handles its own finances. Mr. Clark noted the Recreation Commission handles its own finances. Ms. Rupp informed the board the library's treasurer position will be vacant by the end of January and she is worried about filling the position. Mr. Billado cautioned that the Selectboard, as much as it supports the library and appreciates the job being done, does not want to run the it. Ms. Rupp stated she just wanted to alleviate any concerns. Mr. Clark reaffirmed the town's support and stated he thought Mr. Jescavage and Ms. Fournier would be available to help with any specific operational questions.

Ms. Rupp noted the Library Board of Trustees meeting is tomorrow night. In response to

a question from Ms. Fournier, the library is having a financial discussion at that meeting to finalize the proposed budget.

Mr. Billado asked about the endowment. Ms. Rupp stated that money is being used to fund the financial advisor.

c) Review 2019 Fireworks Cost Update / Set Date for 2019 Fireworks/Arts Spectacular

Mr. Jescavage noted the cost of the fireworks would be \$4,000 and if the town prepaid by certain dates it would receive an additional percentage of fireworks. Mr. Jescavage also stated the Arts Spectacular is scheduled for September 7, 2019, which is a little later than last year. Mr. Clark would like more information from the vendor on what those additional fireworks would look like and would like the board to “get creative” on other dates. Chair Guilmette and Mr. Billado asked Mr. Jescavage to contact other vendors in the state.

d) Review 2019 Highway Department Budget – In response to a question from Mr. Clark, Ms. Fournier noted the only change in the budget from the previous discussion was the approved pay raise. The total budget increase would be 1.57%. Chair Guilmette noted the town’s portion of the police protection increased 5%.

Mr. Centabar asked whether the fire protection/truck figure would remain the same or increase every year. Mr. Clark stated the amount would remain the same. Mr. Billado voiced concerns with the village’s intention to continue to appropriate the \$50,000 for air packs beyond the voted upon five years and use that fund to purchase a new fire truck in 2026. The board will want to discuss the rollover of the packs with the village trustees when the time comes.

Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Centabar, to approve the Highway Department budget to go on the ballot. Motion carried.

Mr. Billado asked the verbiage on the fire prevention article continue to specify the amounts for fire protection and for the truck replacement fund separately. Mr. Clark voiced his opposition stating the town does not separate specific items in other department budgets. Mr. Billado made a motion, seconded by Mr. Centabar, to continue using the same wording for the fire protection and truck replacement article, which specifies the fire protection and truck replacement fund budget amounts. Motion carried.

e) Review 2019 General Budget – Ms. Fournier informed the board the overall budget increase is 4.2%, which includes \$4,000 for the fireworks. Ms. Fournier noted the postage figure will need to be corrected due to a typographical error on the budget presented.

Mr. Clark, having stated the Selectboard’s goal of making repairs to the depot, made a motion, seconded by Mr. Billado, to earmark \$8,000 for the depot’s roof. Motion carried.

Mr. Billado asked that, to make it easier for Ms. Fournier to finish her budget, the

Selectboard appropriate \$3,500 for the fireworks tonight while Mr. Jescavage gets the additional information requested.

Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Billado, to approve the budget with the correction to the postage line item, \$3,500 for fireworks, and an increase to \$3,000 to the Swanton Enhancement Project. Motion carried.

- f) FEMA Update – Mr. Jescavage informed the board the town still has not received payment for the October storm damage but FEMA is updating its policies, which includes 100% spent on administrative time spent on application versus 75%.
5. Community & Economic Development
- a) Economic Development Coordinator Update – Ms. Nance stated she has no significant updates with the two short weeks between Selectboard meetings.
 - b) Approve Town Administrator to Sign 2019 MPG Agreement – Mr. Jescavage reminded the board the town was awarded a Municipal Planning Grant to fund a master plan for Marble Mill Park. Because this is application submitted by the town Mr. Jescavage is seeking approval to sign the grant agreement. Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Billado, authorizing Mr. Jescavage to sign the grant agreement on behalf of the town. Motion carried.
6. Highway Department
- a) Road Sign Damage – Mr. Jescavage informed the board he has been contacted by two motorists stating their vehicles were damaged by a downed stop sign originally thought to be run over by a plow but that was in fact blown down by the wind; it was noted the pole itself is still standing. Mr. Clark suggested Mr. Jescavage write an affidavit for the record and document the site.
 - b) Updates (if needed)
Chair Guilmette asked who installed the “through traffic does not stop” signs at the Woods Hill and Route 207 intersection. It was determined VTrans must have installed the sign after a recent accident.
- Mr. Billado if a sign could be installed at the Robin Hood Dr. extension. Given Route 7 is a state highway this would need to be done by VTrans.
- Mr. Billado asked Mr. Jescavage for a security code to the town garage buildings. Chair Guilmette stated he would like them as well.
7. Correspondence
- a) Input Request for May Bikeathon on Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail – Mr. Jescavage stated he had received a courtesy email asking for input from Swanton on a bikeathon to be held in May. Mr. Billado and Chair Guilmette voiced their support for the bikeathon.
8. Any Other Necessary Business
- a) Accept Resignation of Planning Commission Member – Mr. Billado made a motion, seconded by Mr. Centabar, to accept Sara Luneau-Swan’s resignation effectively immediately. Chair Guilmette and Mr. Billado thanked her for her service on the board. Motion carried.
 - b) Discuss Holding Joint Selectboard/Board of Trustees Budget Info Meeting on Monday,

- February 25, 2019 @ 7:00 p.m. in Village Complex – Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Centabar, to hold a joint meeting with the Village Board of Trustees on Monday, February 25, 2019. Motion carried. Ms. Nance informed the board she is working with Dianne Day to do a potluck/chili cookoff prior to the meeting.
- c) Choose Person(s) for Annual Report Dedication – Mr. Billado made a motion, seconded by Mr. Clark, to dedicate the Annual Report to long-time DRB member, Gabriel Liegey.
9. Public Comments (Reprise) – Mr. Clark mentioned the ongoing fundraising effort for the community playground. The fund has raised \$180,000 out of its goal of \$200,000. Bricks are still available and can be viewed at the town offices and village complex.
10. Upcoming Events
- a) Wednesday, January 16, 2019 @7 p.m., Planning Commission meeting, Town Offices, 1 Academy St
 - b) Monday, January 21, 2019, Town Offices & Operations Closed for Martin Luther King Day (corrected)
 - c) Tuesday, January 22, 2019 @ 7 p.m., Next Selectboard Meeting, Town Offices, 1 Academy Street
 - d) CANCELLED – January 23, 2019 Franklin Northwest Unified Union School District Meeting
 - e) Thursday, January 24, 2019 @ 5 p.m., Department Annual Reports Due
 - f) Thursday, January 24, 2019 @ 7 p.m., DRB Meeting, Town Offices, 1 Academy Street
 - g) Monday, January 28, 2019 @ 8 a.m., Legislative Breakfast at Village Complex
11. Executive Session (personnel/legal)

Mr. Billado made a motion at 8:25 p.m., seconded by Mr. Centabar, to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel and legal issues that premature general public knowledge of would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage. Motion carried.

Mr. Billado made a motion at 8:46 p.m., seconded by Mr. Clark, to exit Executive Session. Motion carried. No action taken.

Mr. Clark asked for a moment of silence for Paul Foisy, former long-time Trustee of the Swanton Public Library who passed away unexpectedly.

- E. Adjournment – Mr. Centabar made a motion at 8:47 p.m., seconded by Mr. Centabar, to adjourn. Motion carried.