

**TOWN & VILLAGE OF SWANTON**  
**MULTI-BOARD MEETING**  
**DRAFT MINUTES**  
**Selectboard/Village Trustees/Planning Commission/DRB**  
**Village Complex**  
**120 First Street, Swanton, VT 05488**  
***Wednesday, July 10, 2019 @ 7:00 p.m.***

Selectboard Present: Daniel Billado, Chair; Joel Clark, Karen Drennen, Mark Rocheleau, Members

Board of Trustees Present: Chris Leach, Adam Paxman, Eugene LaBombard, Trustees; Neal Speer, Village President

Planning Commission Present: Ed Daniel, Vice Chair; Heather Buczkowski, Andrew LaRocque, Ross Lavoie, Members

DRB Present: Reg Beliveau, Karen Drennen, Members

Also Present: Joey Stell, Chief, Swanton Police Department; Marianna Gamache; Brian Savage; Randy Brock; Corey Parent; Mark Thomas; Judy Paxman; Ron Kilburn; Sandy Skeels Kilburn; Molly Lambert; Hank Lambert; Glen Gurwit; Scott Rheume; Darci Benoit; Suzanne Washburn; Betsy Fournier; Deborah Winters; Piper Buczkowski; Nancy Fuller; Tom Benton, *St. Albans Messenger*

\* All motions carried unanimously unless otherwise noted.

A. Call to Order by Each Board Chair

For the Selectboard, Chair Billado called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.  
For the Board of Trustees, Mr. Speer called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.  
For the Planning Commission, Mr. Daniel called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

B. Pledge of Allegiance – Chair Billado led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Agenda Review

Mr. Jescavage noted g) Announce Chamber of Commerce 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Car Show on July 27<sup>th</sup> was added to New Business after publication of the original agenda.  
Ms. Nance added f) Municipal Planning Grant discussion to Community & Economic Development

D. Meeting Topics:

1. Minutes – November 16, 2017 Multi-Board Meeting

For the Board of Trustees, Mr. Paxman made a motion, seconded by Mr. LaBombard, to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried.

For the Selectboard, Mr. Clark made a motion, seconded by Mr. Rocheleau, to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried.

For the Planning Commission, Ms. Buczkowski made a motion, seconded by Mr. LaRocque, to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried.

Due to a lack of a quorum the DRB will approve the minutes at their next meeting.

2. Public Comments

Mr. Thomas came before the boards to discuss the no-trespass order on his land. Mr. Speer stated it was discussed at the Trustees meeting held prior to this meeting and Mr. Thomas will be informed of that discussion at a later time.

Chair Billado informed the audience of the procedure that would be followed in order to conduct an orderly meeting.

Mr. Thomas believes his family is being targeted by the town and will come to the next Selectboard meeting to address that board.

Mr. Lavoie stated that Sunday he used the boat launch at the Swanton Beach and there seems to be a parking problem that needs to be addressed.

3. Welcome Local State Legislators: Senator Randy Brock, Representatives Marianna Gamache & Brian Savage, and Senator Corey Parent of St. Albans

Chair Billado introduced the representatives. In response to a question from Ms. Drennen the representatives stated they were not aware of any legislation that would affect Swanton at this time.

Mr. Clark asked for any support they could provide for the West Swanton Route 78 paving project. Mr. Savage stated he is on the House Transportation Committee and noted the project has been delayed.

Ms. Winters asked if they had an update on the lake clean-up. Mr. Parent, who is on the Natural Resources committee, noted the legislature did pass a permanent clean water fund, which pushes responsibility to identify projects to the local level, likely regional planning commissions. Mr. Brock noted the funding solution was able to fully fund the project without raising revenues through an increase in taxes.

Mr. Paxman asked about the education tax. Mr. Parent noted local voters control the local school budget.

Chair Billado asked if Act 46 has resulted in any savings. Mr. Brock stated there has

been some cost savings, but it is too early to tell. Chair Billado asked where the savings are for the residents of Swanton, Highgate, and Franklin; Mr. Brock stated that Act 46 has not gone into effect yet for these communities so there has been no savings realized yet. There was discussion about the potential for cost savings.

Mr. Clark asked for more information on the Tax Structure Commission who is looking at the three major sources of tax revenue. Mr. Brock noted that taxing services is something that has been on the table. He also noted if you remove all the sales tax exemptions the overall sales tax could be lowered.

Mr. Beliveau wanted to thank the representatives for their support to pass two bills that benefit public power.

Ms. Washburn asked if the representatives had any economic development plans for Vermont. Mr. Brock stated the state's biggest problem is that there are not enough people to fill the positions that are currently available. He mentioned the program to encourage people to move to Vermont to work from home. This program saw an increase in revenue in its first year. He also talked about workforce development efforts, including access to a certificate of value. Mr. Brock also noted there is a lot of information on economic development issues on the Department of Labor and The Agency of Commerce and Community Development websites.

#### 4. New Business

##### a) Discuss Future of Combined Selectboard & Village Budget Info Meeting

Mr. Jescavage noted the effort in February seemed to be successful. Mr. LaBombard thought it was a good idea but would like to see some of the school information brought to that meeting. Chair Billado stated he thought the town was looking to go back to having the school board and the Selectboard meet together, and recommended Mr. Jescavage and Mr. Beliveau work with the school to coordinate the meeting in February.

Mr. Clark would like to see about including a 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Chili Cook-off as that seemed to be a good way to start the meeting. Mr. Leach encouraged any mechanism that would draw people to meetings.

##### b) Discuss Speeding Issues in Town & Village

Chair Billado stated the town is working on a specific speed issue in the town. He stated there is a lot of information that is needed to change a speed limit. He noted it is ongoing issue that the town and village is working on.

Mr. Paxman asked people to slow down and to refrain from text while driving. Chair Billado concurred, noting he sees quite a few people texting.

Mr. Lambert stated a change in speed limit is not the only way to slow traffic down, other options include on-road markings, speed bumps, and bump-outs.

Mr. Beliveau noted the additional flashing crosswalks and bike lanes on First St. as well as the bike lanes on Grand Ave. are all efforts to improve access and safety.

Ms. Benoit asked if there is a way to put more crosswalks on First St. Mr. Beliveau stated they can bring it up with the state again.

Mr. Jescavage pointed the boards to the *Setting Speed Limits Guide*. Mr. Jescavage informed the boards that he had driven out to the Spring St. area where the speed limit changes from 50 to 30 and stated there is only one speed limit sign going each way.

Ms. Washburn asked if there could be cameras to note license plates. Chief Stell stated the legislature has made it almost impossible because it would need a search warrant in order to act.

Mr. Daniel suggested making the fines high enough to deter speeding.

Mr. Lavoie noted the Swanton Police Department has done a good job addressing speeding issues on Route 7.

Ms. Fournier noted the Mark Fentin visit and that he will be putting together a list of ideas to improve safety; she will provide the town and village with that information.

Mr. LaRocque asked the village about the crosswalks at the First St./Grand Ave. intersection, which are in poor condition. Mr. Beliveau said this intersection is on the list to be addressed.

c) Town Road Paving Update

Mr. Leach asked about widening Maquam Shore Rd. Mr. Clark stated a grant has been applied for to pay for a scoping study to address safety and access. He also mentioned other places that people walk and bike that may benefit from a widening. Mr. Rocheleau suggested installing a trail from the railroad depot down to Maquam Shore.

d) Marble Mill Park Project Update

Ms. Fournier informed the boards the Marble Mill project had its first public forum and invited anyone interested to attend the next one, which is August 22. There will also be an ice cream social at Marble Mill on August 24, 2019.

Mr. Beliveau thanked Ms. Fournier and Ms. Winters for taking on this project.

Ms. Fournier noted the Fit & Healthy Path will be 10 years old this year and would like to celebrate that. She noted the governor's visit in August, which could be used as an opportunity for a celebration.

Mr. Kilburn encouraged people to get involved in the Marble Mill project. Chair Billado took this opportunity to note the railroad depot was dedicated to Ron Kilburn and was renamed the Ronald F. Kilburn Transportation Museum.

e) School Playground Update

Ms. Winters thanked the Selectboard and Village Trustees for their support and for the sitework assistance.

Ms. Winters informed the boards that installation has begun and is on schedule. A community dedication is planned to take place after the Arts Spectacular.

f) Discuss Vandalism in Town/Village

Chief Stell noted the summer months have seen an uptick in vandalism. The perpetrators of most of the vandalism have been identified and charged; he believes there are four outstanding incidents.

Ms. Benoit stated she reached out to the prosecutor to see if there was a way to channel the energies of the perpetrators into better use.

Chair Billado stated what happened on the rec path is disgraceful and needs to stop.

Mr. Jescavage noted there was a video of individuals attempting to vandalize the caboose and then tearing the signs across the streets down. He stated the video is on the historical society's page on the town's website in case anyone can recognize them.

Mr. Daniel suggested having them clean it up in front of the press.

Mr. Lavoie stated someone has been driving on the rec path from the housing complex on Blake Street.

Mr. LaRocque relayed a recent event on the bridge and asked whether the bridge should be fenced off underneath.

Ms. Paxman wondered if there were community events and a nightlife if the vandalism would stop. Chair Billado stated there are events but that there will always be acts of vandalism and the perpetrators need to be dealt with. Ms. Benoit stated Barre has group walks that could give people things to do and act as a deterrent.

Mr. Speer stated both boards are looking to brighten the downtown to make things more inviting for walkers and others. He noted that there are things being done but that it takes time. He invited the community to keep them moving forward.

g) Announce Chamber of Commerce 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Car Show

Mr. Rocheleau noted it is the 10<sup>th</sup> year for the car show, which brings a lot of out-of-towners into Swanton. This year the car show is a “silver wheels qualifier,” which means a better quality of cars with the best in show moving on to a car show in Boston. Only two shows in the state affiliated with Cruisin’ New England.

5. Community & Economic Development

a) Annual Report by Swanton Enhancement Project Committee

Mr. Lambert noted the SEP’s collaboration between other committees and the boards. He thanked the boards for their support. He noted economic development cannot occur without community development. Mr. Lambert noted the SEP focused this year on three prime areas: fostering better community engagement by hosting the chili cook-off and the community-wide yard sale; fostering youth engagement by sponsoring five people to go VCRD Leadership Conference last year; and, better communication, which is always a challenge.

Mr. Lambert also gave an update on the beautification committee; he also noted the Substance Abuse Task Force will again sponsor a free 2-week camp for kids, which will be expanded next year to 4 weeks.

Mr. Speer thanked Mr. Lambert and Ms. Lambert for their guidance.

Ms. Fournier noted Piper Buczkowski who sits on the Marble Mill Steering Committee is an example of young people getting involved.

Ms. Drennen asked audience members to get involved or to give suggestions for new activities.

Ms. Buczkowski noted there is a Swanton, Vermont Facebook page. She suggested putting board meetings online. She also suggested talking to our neighbors.

Mr. Parent noted he got involved through sports and that is often successful.

b) Updates on Historic Preservation Commission Ordinance & Commission

Ms. Nance noted most of the Historic Preservation Committee was actually in the room. Ms. Nance stated one of the reasons the commission was formed was to be able to apply for funds through the National Parks Service’s Certified Local Government program. The application to become a CLG is being worked on. In the meantime, the commission is finding its feet and determining its role in the community.

c) Sidewalk Grant Update

Ms. Nance noted the Lake St. / Maquam Shore Rd. and the downtown parking area scoping studies were submitted at the end of June as was the design and construction application for the MVU sidewalk. In response to a question from Mr. Daniel, Ms. Nance stated she and Mr. Clark had met with school officials who were willing to look into extending the sidewalk up the driveway to the school.

Ms. Nance stated there was some concerns that the town and village had applied for three grants from the same program but she had been assured that each application would be reviewed on its own merits, independently of the other applications.

Mr. Clark noted the decision has been made to go up First. St. with school officials in agreement. Mr. Clark noted the First St. property owners will be kept informed and involved as the process moves forward, should funding be approved.

d) Discuss Swanton Arts Spectacular & Fireworks for September 7<sup>th</sup>

Mr. Jescavage noted the fireworks will be launched after the Arts Spectacular from the boat launch across from Marble Mill.

Mr. Clark clarified that the tree planting and the fireworks are paid for by tax payers through the general fund.

Ms. Benoit stated the Arts Spectacular will run from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Ms. Benoit stated she has vendors and food trucks lined up, but they are looking for sponsorships and grants. In response to a question Ms. Benoit stated posters will be available soon.

Ms. Benoit noted Goose Point was recently full of trash. Mr. Beliveau stated this is the first he has heard of any issues but will have someone monitor the area.

Ms. Kilburn noted a recent article how fireworks can negatively impact veterans. Mr. Clark hopes to get enough word out to make people aware, so they can make plans.

e) Discuss Flags for Veterans Display on Veterans Day

Mr. Jescavage informed those present that the Selectboard approved duplicating the Memorial Day flag display that was done on the Village Green. The Veterans Day display will increase by 52 flags. This time the display will include photos on the cards that go on each flag pole. The deadline will likely be about 2 weeks prior to Veterans Day. Mr. Jescavage noted those who have already paid for a flag will not need to pay again and will have the opportunity to submit a photo to be included on the card.

Chair Billado asked for volunteers to assist with the installation and removal of the flags.

f) Municipal Planning Grant for a market analysis

Ms. Nance passed out the draft RFP stated that Swanton would benefit from a town-wide market analysis that included opportunities to recruit businesses to the area. Ms. Lambert described the need for a market analysis and how that can be used to attract businesses. She stated it is a very basic tool that also sets up what community development challenges are.

Mr. Clark wants to revisit the Fairweather report because he believes there is quite a bit of information in there. Ms. Lambert is concerned the Fairweather report is less detailed than businesses will be looking at.

Ms. Paxman asked if the Fairweather report is still available. Mr. Jescavage and Mr. Beliveau will work to get the report on both websites.

6. Any Other Necessary Business

a) Fountain Repair Update

Mr. Beliveau stated the fountain repairs were completed last year.

b) Proposed Zoning Bylaw Revisions Update

Mr. Daniel informed the boards that the Planning Commission will be asking for approval for changes to the bylaws.

Mr. Daniel noted that the commission is beginning to think about updating the Municipal Plan. He noted the commission is looking at “taking its show on the road” as a way to gather input.

c) Any Other Common Town/Village Issues

Mr. Paxman commended the police for closing down a suspected drug house in the village.

Mr. Daniel would the town and village to address the stop signs at Hannaford. Mr. Jescavage noted he has talked with the owners of the property who moved it once and then moved it back.

7. Public Comments (Reprise)

Ms. Lambert informed the boards of the Working Communities program via the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. While any community in Vermont can apply Swanton would have to coordinate with one of the 29 communities specifically identified. The program consists of both planning grants and implementation grants.

Ms. Washburn noted that as much as the town has worked to make Swanton more attractive there are properties in need of maintenance and wondered if there were any ordinances in place. It was noted that property owners are allowed two unregistered vehicles but there is no time limit on how long those vehicles can be on the property. There is currently no ordinance requiring maintenance of a property.

Mr. Leach asked why we could not make it possible for people to work where they live with regulations seeming to be limit growth. Ms. Washburn noted a lot of retired people are unable to stay in Vermont.

8. Upcoming Events

- a) Tuesday, July 16, 2019 @ 6 p.m., Selectboard Site Visits Starting @ Western End of Penell Road
- b) Tuesday, July 16, 2019 @ 7 p.m., Selectboard Meeting, Town Offices, 1 Academy Street
- c) Monday, July 22, 2019 @ 7 p.m., Village Trustees Meeting, Village Complex, 120 First Street
- d) Thursday, July 25, 2019 @ 7 p.m., DRB Meeting, Town Offices, 1 Academy Street
- e) Saturday, July 27, 2019 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Swanton Chamber of Commerce Annual Car Show on the Village Green

E. Adjournment by Each Board Chair

For the Selectboard, Mr. Clark made a motion at 9:29 p.m., seconded by Ms. Drennen, to adjourn. Motion carried.

For the Board of Trustees, Mr. Leach made a motion at 9:29 p.m., seconded by Mr. LaBombard, to adjourn. Motion carried.

For the Planning Commission, Mr. Lavoie made a motion at 9:29 p.m., seconded by Mr. LaRocque, to adjourn. Motion carried.