

**MINUTES
TOWN OF SWANTON
SPECIAL SELECTBOARD MEETING
In-Person & By Zoom
Town Office Building
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488
Tuesday, January 11, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.**

Present: James Guilmette, Chairman; Earl Fournier, Nicole Draper, Mark Rocheleau, Ed White, Members; Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk; Brian Savage, Town Administrator; Joseph Cava, Administrative Assistant; Patrick Parah; Kate

- A. Call to Order - Mr. Rocheleau called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Rocheleau led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- C. Agenda Review
- D. Meeting Topics
 - 1. Minutes
 - a) January 4, 2022 SLB Regular/Zoom Meeting – Mr. White made a motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the January 4, 2022 Selectboard meeting, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.
 - 2. Public Comments

Mr. White announced that he would be running for a consecutive three-year term seat on the Selectboard.

Mr. Parah will be enforcing an eviction in another town.
 - 3. Law Enforcement
 - a) SW Animal Control Officer Monthly Report – The Selectboard briefly reviewed the report and moved along with business.
 - 4. Old Town Business
 - a) ARPA Update

Mr. Savage gave an overview of the rules of ARPA. The Vermont League of Cities and Town will be forwarding opinions on these rules soon.
 - b) Beebe Road Culvert Contract Document

Goodhue Excavation has sent a contract for the culvert bid totaling \$219,875.00.

Mr. Guilmette entertained a motion for Mr. Savage to sign the contract for Mr. Guilmette in his absence. Mr. Fournier made a motion for Mr. Savage to sign the contract and approve Goodhue Excavations bid totaling \$219,875.00, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.
 - c) Discuss MVR’s 2022 Request

Mr. White made a motion to approve MVR’s 2022 budget request totaling \$196,628.00, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.
 - d) Discuss Swanton Fire Department 2022 Budget

Mr. Guilmette made a motion to approve the SW Fire Department's 2022 budget totaling \$263,875.00, seconded by Mr. Rocheleau. Motion carried.

e) Discuss Swanton Police Department 2022 Coverage

Mr. Guilmette expressed concerns about increased budget expenditures for equipment. Mr. Rocheleau agreed, adding that a higher police presence should be implemented in the community without placing an unnecessary burden on the taxpayers. Mr. White asked about monitoring to ensure that funds are being properly used. Mr. Fournier shared this concern of the burden on taxpayers and whether they would approve the new contracts. Mr. Parah interjected expressing a need for speed control in the village. Ms. Fournier reminded the Selectboard that this would be a topic of discussion for the Village Police.

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion to approve the 8-hour contract for SW Police Department's 2022 budget totaling \$157,239.94, seconded by Mr. Guilmette. Motion carried.

f) Discuss Swanton Public Library 2022 Budget

Ms. Fournier has not yet received the final figures from the SW Public Library on their portion of the budget. The numbers are available for the Town's contribution, but the budget cannot be finalized without the Public Library's contribution.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to accept the Town's contribution of \$194,097.00, pending the Public Library's contribution, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

g) Discuss Town Highway and General 2022 Budget

Mr. Fournier asked why retirement went up on their budget, to which Ms. Fournier responded that salaries went up. Mr. Rocheleau expressed a concern of only using the new truck as a standby option. Ms. Fournier added that if one of the older trucks is taken off the road for maintenance, it would be smarter to have a reliable backup.

Mr. Fournier asked about what the MVU carryover line item meant? Ms. Fournier explained that this \$40,000.00 is set aside each year for the MVU Sidewalk project.

The Beebe Road culvert project was not included in the road improvement line item of the budget. The Highway Department however has rollover funds from last year to contribute towards the budget. This option would deflect from the potential burden being placed upon the taxpayers. The initial amount of \$30,000.00 was raised to \$130,000.00 to accommodate the Beebe Road Culvert project.

Mr. Guilmette made a motion to appropriate the \$18,442.69 in rollover funds from the previous Highway budget, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

Age Well requested a budget increase of \$600.00. This organization sponsors programs like Meals on Wheels and other services of public good.

Mr. Guilmette made a motion to approve increasing Age Well's budget by \$600.00, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

Watershed Mentoring is requesting an annual gift of \$1,000.00 to contribute to their mission of supporting troubled youth in Franklin County. Mr. Guilmette asked if this would need to be placed on the ballot

as an article? Ms. Fournier responded that it could be appropriated by the Selectboard.

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion to add \$1,000.00 to the budget for Watershed Mentoring, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

Mr. Guilmette made a motion to approve the Highway budget pending the \$100,000.00 addition to road improvement line item for the Beebe Road culvert project, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the General Budget with the above revisions for the Town Office Complex, Age Well, and Watershed Mentoring, seconded by Mr. Guilmette. Motion carried.

1) Discussion of Proposed Capital and Reserve Funds

Mr. Guilmette recommended adding a building maintenance / repair fund line item to the General Budget that can flexibly be used for the assortment of town properties rather than narrowly focused on one specific project. Ms. Fournier recommended going the route of a capital reserve fund so the funds can be rolled over into the next fiscal year if not utilized. A capital reserve fund written as an article for the ongoing maintenance and repair of town properties while consecutively having a study completed to understand the needs of each individual property. The previous allotment of \$10,000.00 is being raised to \$20,000.00 to accommodate this change.

h) Discuss Swanton Recreation 2022 Budget

Mr. Guilmette made a motion to accept the 2022 SW Recreation Budget of \$123,247.24, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

5. New Town Business

a) 2021 Selectboard Draft Report for Town Report

Mr. Fournier wished to add Swanton's resilience in the wake of COVID-19 in the opening of the Draft for the Town Report. Also, an addition in the economic development section for extended work of Ms. Nance's involvement with FDICD and the extended opportunities this can create for developing the Southern Growth District.

Mr. Fournier also mentioned incorporating the new police contract and the goal of expanding police services. The Town taking on the Public Library would also be a good contribution to the Town Report with an emphasis on its location, its competitive employment, and its diverse offering on community services.

b) Discuss Swanton Cemetery Commission 2022 Budget

Mr. Rocheleau addressed Mr. Savage regarding the Cemetery fund and its increased expenses. The increases are based upon the increased costs of mowing the lawn and ongoing projects like the maintenance of the slate roof on the burial building at Riverside cemetery. A cemetery fund was discovered through the Trustees of Public Money amounting to about \$173,000.00. Mr. Guilmette recommended keeping the Cemetery budget as is, and reexploring these new funds in the spring to recalculate the figures for the 2023 budget.

c) Fourth Street Property Budget

Mr. Clark, who was not present at the meeting, forwarded a budget proposal for the Fourth Street property. This budget proposal included a Brownfield mitigation for a 35 ft. x 35 ft. section of land with elevated levels of iron in the soil. Mr. Fournier recommended doing smaller phased projects on the Fourth Street property with an emphasis on Brownfield Mitigation, then exploring recreational opportunities in the future. Mr. Guilmette recommended putting a line item in the General Budget of \$12,000.00 for Brownfield mitigation on Fourth Street property.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve \$12,000.00 on the General Budget for Brownfield mitigation, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

Ms. Draper made a motion to amend the previously approved General Budget to incorporate the above change, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

d) Liquor Control Board

Mother Hubbard's Bakery, Deli & Country Store has changed ownership and is transitioning into the sale of wine and beer under the name of Caitlin's Creations LLC.

Mr. Guilmette made a motion to approve Caitlin's Creations LLC to the liquor control board, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

6. Community & Economic Development

a) Updates (None)

7. Highway Department

a) Other Updates

Mr. Guilmette gave a summary that a part was found to repair the truck and the agent and boss will be visiting the garage to arrange terms for its delivery in the spring.

The stone repointing on the Town Hall will be starting in the first week of February and the gutter installation within the next several weeks.

8. Any Other Necessary Business

a) Joint Meeting with Village Trustees, Thursday, January 13, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m., Village Municipal Complex, 120 First Street, Swanton, VT

9. Public Comments (Reprise)

Mr. Parah volunteered to assist the Cemetery Commission to clean headstones in the Church Street cemetery and fixing the fence along the back side of the property.

10. Upcoming Events

- a) Joint Meeting with Village Trustees, Thursday, January 13, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m., Village Municipal Complex, 120 First Street, Swanton, VT
- b) Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday, Monday, January 17, 2022, Town Offices & Operations Closed
- c) Planning Commission Meeting, Wednesday, January 19, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m., Town Office Building, 1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT
- d) Selectboard Meeting, Tuesday, February 1, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.

11. Executive Session (Personnel & Real Estate)

Ms. Draper made a motion to enter Executive Session at 8:49 p.m., seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

Mr. White made a motion to exit Executive Session at 9:21 p.m., seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

- E. Adjournment – Mr. White made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:23 p.m., seconded by Mr. Fournier

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph Cava, Administrative Assistant

Received and filed by:

Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk

Date