

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF SWANTON  
SELECTBOARD MEETING  
In-Person & By Zoom  
Town Office Building  
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488  
Tuesday, August 23, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.**

Present: James Guilmette, Chair; Mark Rocheleau, Vice Chair; Earl Fournier, Nicole Draper, Ed White, Members; Brian Savage, Town Administrator; Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk; Joseph Cava, Administrative Assistant; Joel Clark; Michael Markus; John Lavoie; Bob Richard; Patrick Parah; Josh Ellerbroch; Brian Barrett; Elizabeth Nance, FCIDC; Liz Curry; Michelle Nordberg; Jeff King

\*All motions carried unanimously unless specified otherwise.

- A. Call to Order – Mr. Guilmette called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Guilmette led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- C. Agenda Review
- D. Meeting Topics:

- 1. Minutes

- a) August 2, 2022, Regular and Zoom Selectboard Meeting

- Mr. White made a motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the 8/2/22 Selectboard meeting, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

- 2. Public Comments – None

- 3. Law Enforcement

- a) Swanton Animal Control Officer Monthly Report

- Members of the Selectboard briefly reviewed the Swanton Animal Control Officer monthly report. Mr. Guilmette asked Mr. Savage if there was any paperwork reported on the dog bite within the Animal Control Officer's report? Mr. Savage deferred to Ms. Fournier. Mr. Fournier asked for clarification on the number of occurrences for dog bites in the community.

- 4. Public Hearing – Possible Grant Application to the VCDP for the architectural, engineering, etc. cost for the renovation of the Abenaki Nation of Missisquoi headquarters at 100 Grand Ave.

Ms. Curry opened by discussing the redevelopment of the abandoned shed behind the Abenaki headquarters and the cultural impacts it will have upon the greater community. Ms. Curry continued saying that the VCDP grant would be used for reimbursement purposes for the architectural contract. In addition, a sub-grant agreement would need to be drafted by the Town's attorney. The grant totals around \$53,000.00 and there would be other potential funding avenues through the Vermont Division for Historical Preservation and the Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation (FCIDC).

In addition to the impacts to the Abenaki nation, the food shelf supported by this organization has contributed to over 4,000 individuals last year and has already hit 2,800 this year. To continue the support of this mission, the building needs sustainable measures undertaken in order to expand and continue. Mr. Lavoie expressed the importance of what this building does for the community in

addition to the Abenaki nation. Mr. Fournier asked about grant funds, and whether some of it would be used for improvements to the main building as well? Ms. Curry responded yes.

Mr. Fournier made a motion for the Selectboard to draft a letter of support for Brian to sign in addition to the grant paperwork, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

## 5. Old Town Business

### a) Update on LVRT Trail Head – Joel Clark

Mr. Clark presented a drawing of the western terminus for the redevelopment of the LVRT. The grant applications are still pending, but Mr. Clark expects up to \$30,000.00 in grant funding to assist with the gravel parking lot, grading, and permitting. The site visit for this plan will be in October with final grant submission in November. Mr. Clark is just waiting on the estimate from Cross Consulting Engineers before submitting the final grant applications, but expects the costs to exceed \$450,000.00 for parking, lighting, and bathrooms. A determination has been completed by the State to identify wetlands in the project area.

Mr. Clark recommended having Cross Consulting Engineers mark trees within the wetland area. Part of this plan also reduced the parking area due to the wetland buffer needed, but this brings the parking lot within coverage. Continuing, Mr. Clark recommended walking to the property with the Highway Department to determine long term care and clearing of the site. Mr. Clark also recommended notifying the abutting landowners before any cutting or development begins. Mr. Fournier recommended involving other community groups like the Missisquoi Valley Wildlife Refuge and the Abenaki nation.

### b) Update on Survey of Land acquired in Tax Sale

Mr. Savage gave the Selectboard an update of the field work that will begin this week for a draft survey to be submitted to the Selectboard.

### c) Update on Pedestrian Bridge Deck Issue

Mr. Savage gave an update on the complexity of this project and the importance of getting it done before the project costs become too overwhelming to resolve. The contractor reviewing the bridge decking will also review the roof issues with the Swanton Public Library to determine the best possible solution.

### d) Update on Fourth Street Property

Mr. Savage is waiting on a review of the engineering report from the Vermont DEC.

## 6. New Town Business

### a) Computer Equipment Issues

Ms. Fournier said the tower for the computer servers needs to be replaced which comes to around \$5,900.00. In addition, the Assistant Town Clerk's computer needs to be replaced which will cost around \$1,293.00

Mr. White made a motion to buy a new tower and computer not to exceed \$7,193.00, seconded by Mr. Rocheleau. Motion carried.

### b) Set 2022 Tax Rate

Ms. Fournier led members of the Selectboard through a breakdown of the residential and non-residential tax rates and the net changes between the general fund, highway fund, education rates, and municipal tax rates.

Municipal Rate: 1.84% Increase  
 Residential Education: 4.9% Decrease  
 Non-Residential Education: 5.4% Decrease

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion to approve and adopt the 2022 tax rate, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

<i>2021 Tax Rate</i>				<i>2022 Tax Rate</i>			
	<b>Residential</b>	<b>Non-Residential</b>			<b>Residential</b>	<b>Non-Residential</b>	<b>Net Change</b>
General	0.1077	0.01077		General	0.1268	0.1268	<b>0.1160</b>
Highway	0.2362	0.2362		Highway	0.2707	0.2707	<b>0.0345</b>
Subtotal before Ed Rate	0.3439	0.3439		Subtotal before Ed Rate	0.3975	0.3975	<b>0.0535</b>
Education	1.371			Education	1.3036		<b>-0.0674</b>
		1.6384				1.5489	<b>-0.0895</b>
<b>2021 Tax Rate</b>	<b>1.7149</b>	<b>1.9823</b>		<b>2022 Tax Rate</b>	<b>1.7010</b>	<b>1.9463</b>	

7. Community & Economic Development

a) Update on Retail Spaces on Merchants Row

Mr. Savage announced the grand opening of Vision Nutrition in the previous Rexall Drugs, and there is a pending lease for a retail establishment where New Beginnings Fitness used to be.

8. Highway Department

a) Paving Update

Mr. Guilmette said that Pike will be unable to finish the paving until September while they work on other projects. Paving must be completed on Wheeler Round before winter as the risers on the sewer manholes are in place and left as they are would interfere with snowplowing.

b) Maquam Shore Road Culvert

Mr. Guilmette said that the new culvert has been ordered, and they are hashing out the remaining details. Ms. Nordberg asked about the proposed culvert, cost installation, and scheduling? Mr. Guilmette answered saying that the proposed culvert will be narrow compared to the previously proposed box culvert, with a cost amounting to \$175,000.00 with installation occurring this fall.

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion for Mr. Savage to sign the agreement with the Army Corp. of Engineers amended with any additional permitting required, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

c) Acceptance of FY2023 VTrans Grants in Aid Program

Mr. Savage spoke about the uses of this program and its applicability to emergency situations like the replacement culvert on Campbell Bay Rd.

Mr. White made a motion to authorize Mr. Savage to apply for the program, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

d) Tenco

Mr. Guilmette spoke with the representative for the truck body and said there would be a letter in writing for a refund of \$10,000.00 for the delayed delivery and unforeseen circumstances.

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion for approval to acknowledge the letter from Tenco and to authorize Mr. Guilmette to sign on behalf of the Town or Mr. Savage after consulting and approval from Mr. Guilmette, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

9. Expenditures

a) General Orders (7/20/2022 through 8/23/2022)

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the General Orders of 7/20/2022 through 8/23/2022, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

b) Highway Orders (7/20/2022 through 8/23/2022)

Mr. White made a motion to approve the Highway Orders of 7/20/2022 through 8/23/2022, seconded by Mr. Rocheleau. Motion carried.

c) Economic Development Orders (7/20/2022 through 8/23/2022)

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the Economic Development Orders of 7/20/2022 through 8/23/2022, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

d) ARPA Orders (7/20/22 through 8/23/2022)

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion to approve the ARPA Orders of 7/20/2022 through 8/23/2022, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

e) Library Orders (7/20/2022 through 8/23/2022)

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion to approve the Library Orders of 7/20/2022 through 8/23/2022, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

f) Payroll Orders (7/20/2022 through 8/23/2022)

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the Payroll Orders of 7/20/2022 through 8/23/2022, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

10. Any Other Necessary Business

a) UVM Intern

Mr. Savage received an email from Corey Parent, who is consulting with the Planning Commission to audit the Municipal Plan and recommended a UVM intern to assist with the delegation of ARPA funds. Mr. Fournier asked about utilizing an intern to resolve issues with the E911 addressing system? Mr. Savage responded that it would take more than six hours per week than the intern could provide.

11. Correspondence

Relative to the speeding the Selectboard mentioned that a speed study has been conducted on Maquam Shore Road earlier this summer and have had discussion with the Chief of Police concerning this matter. The second item in the email deals with vulgar language on flags being flown on private property. The Selectboard has had this discussion in the past, as they are on private property the occupants of the property are exercising their freedom of speech and nothing can be done about them.

#### 12. Public Comments (Reprise)

Ms. Nordberg asked about the squish culvert vs. the box culvert, and how the Selectboard reached their decision? Mr. Guilmette said that there were several factors including cost and timeliness to complete the project. Ms. Nordberg followed up by asking about tree removal in preparation for the culvert replacement and how long the process would take? Mr. Savage responded that in the past this has been a site visit with the engineers marking the trees with neighbors in attendance. Mr. Guilmette also followed up saying that the construction should only take up to a week.

#### 13. Upcoming Events

- a) DRB Meeting – Thursday, August 25, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. – Town Office Building, 1 Academy Street
- b) LABOR DAY – Town Offices & Operations Closed – Monday, September 5, 2022
- c) Regular and Zoom Selectboard Meeting – Tuesday, September 6, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. – Town Office Building, 1 Academy Street

#### 14. Executive Session (Personnel & Real Estate)

Ms. Draper made a motion to enter executive session at 8:20 p.m., seconded by Mr. Rocheleau. Motion carried.

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion to exit executive session at 9:58 p.m., seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion to offer the highway position to Jeff King, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

Mr. Rocheleau made motion to increase Patrick Lawyers pay to an amount to be determined, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

- E. Adjournment – Mr. Fournier made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 p.m., seconded by Mr. Rocheleau. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph Cava  
Administrative Assistant

Received and filed by:

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Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk

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Date