

MINUTES
JOINT INFORMATIONAL MEETING
SWANTON BOARD OF VILLAGE TRUSTEES
SWANTON TOWN SLECTBOARD
Village Municipal Complex
120 First Street, Swanton, VT 05488
Monday, September 26, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.

Present: Reg Beliveau, Village Manager; Lynn Paradis, Assistant Village Manager; Dianne Day, Village Clerk; Neal Speer, Board of Village Trustees President; Adam Paxman, Eugene LaBombard, Christopher Leach, Village Trustee Members; James Guilmette, Chair; Mark Rocheleau, Vice Chair; Earl Fournier, Nicole Draper, Ed White, Members; Brian Savage, Town Administrator; Joseph Cava, Administrative Assistant; Sandy Kilburn; Hank Lambert; Molly Lambert; Betsy Fournier; Joel Clark; Darci Benoit (ZOOM User)

*All motions carried unanimously unless specified otherwise.

1. Call to Order

Mr. Leach called the Board of Village Trustees Joint Informational Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Guilmette consecutively called the Selectboard Joint Informational Meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence – Mr. Guilmette led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Agenda Review

Mr. Leach asked if there were any questions or revisions? Mr. Paxman said there was business to discuss during executive session.

4. Public Comments

Ms. Fournier thanked members of the joint boards for their input and support.

5. Approve and Accept Minutes from Monday, September 8, 2022 as Presented

Mr. Paxman made a motion to approve and accept the minutes from 9/8/22, seconded by Mr. LaBombard. Motion carried.

6. Approve and Accept Village Warrants through Thursday, September 22, 2022

Mr. LaBombard made a motion to approve and accept the Village Warrants through 9/22/22, seconded by Mr. Paxman. Motion carried.

7. Discuss Joint Issues and Projects with Town Selectboard

a) Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) Trailhead / Community Center / Fourth Street Property

Mr. Clark gave the joint boards an update on the southern LVRT trailhead. Right now the services of Cross Consulting Engineers are being contracted to put together a site plan for parking, picnic area, and included delineation of wetlands.

Mr. Leach asked about long term care and maintenance of the site? Mr. Clark explained that the State of Vermont has a management plan to assist with ongoing maintenance. Mr. Clark then proceeded to bring a map up to the members of the Board of Village Trustees to share the site plan that has already been presented to the Town Selectboard. Mr. Paxman asked about pushback from area residents on Leduc

Dr.? Mr. Clark explained that a letter was sent out to explain the project. Mr. Fournier asked for clarification on future lighting for the site? Mr. Clark explained that lighting was part of the long-term project goals.

Mr. Clark continued by exploring the opportunities of the Fourth Street site and its relationship to the recreational fields. As part of communications with the Selectboard, Mr. Clark explained that the lower pit of the recreational fields is a desirable location to build a community center. This portion of the recreational property is owned by the Village. Ms. Fournier added that recreational opportunities in Swanton are growing, and the site would allow a future community center to grow and expand.

The Selectboard approved funding at the last meeting from the ARPA funds to begin the design phase of the project. Mr. Clark stressed the importance of getting the design process to 80-90% completion should the remainder of funding needed to come from a bond vote. Mr. Leach responded that this type of venture is good for Swanton, but asked whether the Elementary School could also be used? Ms. Draper answered by saying that recreational opportunities already utilize the exterior recreation fields surrounding the school.

Mr. Paxman asked who Mr. Clark was referencing when he mentioned they? Mr. Clark explained that this is a Swanton project that has input from the joint board in addition to community citizens that take part in the public hearings. Mr. Clark added that the activity rooms within the community center could be rented out to offset the operational costs of the building. Mr. LaBombard asked about public utilities on the site? Mr. Beliveau mentioned that there is water and sewer wastewater capacity in addition to existing storm water drains on site.

Ms. Kilburn echoed support for this project by citing the year-round activities that enriches the community's youth. Mr. Leach asked about the plans for Marble Mill Park? Ms. Fournier said that there are grant opportunities available for this venture, but she hasn't been as heavily involved with this plan as she has been with the Fourth Street property. Mr. Paxman asked about the estimated price tag of the community center project? Mr. Clark responded that the current estimate is \$1.6 million.

Mr. Beliveau added that plans for Marble Mill Park are stalled because it is an active flood zone. Mr. Fournier stressed the importance of how these projects benefit Swanton as a whole and encouraged the support of the Board of Village Trustees. Mr. Speer asked about staffing for the proposed facility? Ms. Fournier mentioned the overwhelming amount of volunteer help through Swanton Rec. Ms. Draper added that the facility would also be staffed by paid Swanton Rec staff as well in addition to volunteers.

b) Downtown / Economic Development

Mr. Beliveau mentioned a scoping study being conducted by the Federal Energy Review Commission (FERC) to determine hydroelectric generation through Swanton Hydro. Mr. Beliveau stressed the importance of Village businesses being able to operate on 100% renewable energy. Mr. Fournier agreed with Mr. Beliveau adding to the importance of relicensing the existing hydro facility to keep energy rates in Swanton low.

Mr. White made a motion for Mr. Savage to draft a letter of support for members of the Selectboard to sign, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

c) New Swanton Website

Mr. Savage raised the importance of creating a new user-friendly website that the community can access. Conversations have been had with Mr. Beliveau in the Village to have a joint venture between the Town and Village for a conjoined website. Following this, Mr. Savage shared figures concerning the costs and ongoing

maintenance associated with a new website. The end goal would be to have a new website up and running by the end of 2023.

Mr. Fournier spoke about seeing other opportunities in the new website including marketing, community groups like the public library, and recreational opportunities and schedules. Ms. Kilburn stated how beneficial it is to see the joint boards working together for the advancement of Swanton.

d) Economic Development (Executive Session)

Mr. Paxman made a motion to enter executive session at 8:15 p.m., seconded by Mr. LaBombard. Motion carried.

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion to enter executive session at 8:15 p.m., seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

. Rocheleau made a motion to exit executive session and adjourn the Town Selectboard portion of this meeting at 8:49 p.m., seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

Mr. Paxman made a motion to exit executive session at 8:50 p.m. and re-enter Open Session, seconded by Mr. LaBombard. Motion carried.

No motions taken.

8. Any Other Necessary Business

Lynn Paradis, Assistant Village Manager; informed that Board that she has been working with Primmer & Piper on the new waterline that will cross the Missisquoi River. She said they have determined that there is enough time to warn a public hearing and go ahead and hold a Village bond vote on Tuesday, November 8, 2022, along with the General Election. She said this new waterline will cost approximately \$900,000 but the Village qualifies for a 50% disadvantage subsidy on that amount. This will amount to \$450,000 in loan forgiveness so she feels this is definitely the route to pursue to benefit the Village taxpayers.

Eugene LaBombard made the motion to authorize Dianne Day, Village Clerk, to sign the Resolution Certificate stating that it was determined that the public interest and necessity demand certain public water system improvements, namely to construct a second water line from the water plant crossing the Missisquoi River to the Village at an aggregate estimate cost of \$900,000. Adam Paxman seconded. Motion carried.

Chris Leach made the motion to approve and adopt the Warning and Ballot to be used on Tuesday, November 8, 2022 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Adam Paxman seconded. Motion carried.

Chris Leach made the motion to approve and adopt the Declaration of Official Intent of the Village of Swanton to reimburse certain expenditures from proceeds of indebtedness. Eugene LaBombard seconded. Motion carried.

Any Other Business: Adam Paxman stated he met with the local tree warden and they are going to work on planting four hardwood trees. He said they would work on an invoice to see what this is going to cost and also worked on future planting. He said there are about 11 more trees that need to come down.

9. Executive Session to Discuss Real Estate and Personnel

Adam Paxman made the motion to enter Executive Session to Discuss Real Estate and Personnel at 9:09 p.m. Eugene LaBombard seconded. Motion carried.

Eugene LaBombard made the motion to exit Executive Session at 9:46 p.m. Chris Leach seconded. Motion carried.

ACTION TAKEN: Adam Paxman made the motion to offer the Swanton Village Police Department Group D retirement benefits, effective July 1, 2023 and all employees Group C retirement benefits, effective July 1, 2023. He also made the motion to authorize Village President Neal Speer to sign the letter of intent. Eugene LaBombard seconded both motions. Further discussion took place stating any existing police will be administered an election by the VMERS office to remain in their present group of B or C or transfer to Group D effective July 1, 2023. Any newly hired Police after this approval date, will not be given this election and will automatically be enrolled in Group D effective July 1, 2023. The Trustees also elect to offer Group C to all non-Police employees, effective July 1, 2023. Any existing employees will be administered an election by the VMERS office to remain in their present group of B or transfer to Group C effective July 1, 2023. Any newly hired non-Police employees after this approval date, will not be given this election and will automatically be enrolled in Group C effective July 1, 2023. Motion carried.

10. Adjournment

Chris Leach made the motion to adjourn the regular Board of the Trustees meeting at 9:47 p.m., seconded by Eugene LaBombard. There being no further business at hand. Village adjourned the meeting at 9:47 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph Cava
Administrative Assistant

Dianne Day
Village Clerk

Received and filed by:

Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk

Date