

Draft Minutes
TOWN OF SWANTON
SPECIAL SELECTBOARD MEETING
Town Office Building
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488
In-Person & By Zoom
Thursday, January 11, 2024 @ 6:00 p.m.

Present: Earl Fournier-Chair, Steve Bourgeois, Nicole Draper, Joel Clark, Cody Hemenway-Members, Brian Savage-Town Administrator, Cathy Fournier-Town Clerk, Christina Candels-Administrative Assistant, Betsy Fournier

A. Call to Order

Mr. Fournier called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Fournier led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Agenda Review

Ms. Cathy Fournier requested to table Swanton Public Library (Town Portion) until the next Selectboard meeting (1/16/24)

Mr. Clark would like to make sure the Fourth Street property is added to next regular meeting.

D. Meeting Topics

1) Public Comments

None

2) Old Town Business

None

3) New Town Business

a) Swanton Recreation Commission Budget (Tabled from 1/2/2024 meeting)

Ms. Betsy came before the board to discuss/present the proposed Recreation Budget for 2024.

The total Town appropriation for 2024 request is \$162,670.00. Added to the request \$5,000 for Capital Reserve. The Recreation Commission has a rollover of \$18,107.03. That leave a request of \$149,562.97 to be voted on by taxpayer on Town Meeting Day. This is a decrease from 2023 request. That request was \$152,932.00.

Notable increases to the budget are due to the Notch no longer offering their 4-hour program. The recreation commission is picking this program up due to the foreseen need. When the Notch ran this program, they paid for the staff. Ms. Betsy Fournier stated they are looking for grants to offset these foreseen costs.

Mr. Hemenway made a motion to approve the Swanton Rec Commission Budget request of \$149,562.97, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried. Ms. Draper obtained.

Mr. Fournier discussed the current RFP for a grant writer and where it is currently being advertised. Ms. Draper suggested sharing it with Vermont Recreation and Parks Association. Ms. Candels will share it with them to share.

b) Town General Fund Budget (Tabled from 1/2/24 meeting)

Ms. Cathy Fournier shared the current 2024 Proposed General Budget.

This was reviewed by the board and notable changes are to increase Brownfield - Fourth Street from \$12,000 to \$25,000.

Other notable increases are due to FICA/Medicare, Health Insurance, Election Expenses, Janitor Supplies, Brownfield-Fourth Street.

Mr. Bourgeois discussed the \$12,500 given to Franklin County Industrial Development. Mr. Bourgeois discussed having them come to meetings quarterly to discuss what Swanton is getting for support.

Mr. Clark made a motion to take this \$25,000 out of ARPA funds.

Mr. Clark would rather do that than ask the taxpayers for more money. Mr. Fournier asked Ms. Cathy Fournier what the carryover from 2023 budget is? Mr. Fournier thinks there may be a significant carryover to lower the request to be raised by taxes. Mr. Bourgeois also suggested leaving \$12,000 in the budget and taking the rest from ARPA. After discussing this Mr. Clark agreed to wait and see what the roll over is.

Mr. Clark rescinded his motion until they know the rollover from 2023.

Ms. Cathy Fournier will adjust the lines discussed and bring back to the board at the next Selectboard meeting to the board to discuss.

c) Swanton Public Library Budget (Town Portion)

Tabled until next Selectboard meeting 1/16/24.

d) Town Highway Department Budget (Tabled form 1/2/24 meeting)

Mr. Fournier discussed the 2024 Highway Proposed Budget drafted with Ms. Cathy Fournier & Mr. Kevin Lapan -Highway Foreman.

Ms. Cathy Fournier stated there will be roll over money left from the sidewalk.

With the current projected rollover and savings there should be enough to pay for

the ordered new truck. The money saved can go toward paving that the Town is getting behind on.

Notable increases are increase in health insurance, stones, chloride, road resurfacing, road improvement projects (this is to cover fixing Swanton Hill Road), police protection. The Town roadcrew can do a lot of the work to save costs.

The Town has been having to cut back on roads that need to be paved the last few years due to the cost but can't continue to get behind. Mr. Fournier stated that if they have enough rollover should the \$50,000 for truck be used to increase paving more.

Mr. Clark stated after the purchase of the ordered truck they will be in good shape for 3-4 years before they need a new truck? Yes.

The road crew takes very good care of the equipment to make it last.

Ms. Cathy Fournier stated there is currently \$104,000 in the capital reserve/equipment fund. With \$50,000 put in annually.

Mr. Savage also spoke about the need to create capital reserve accounts for each town owned building.

Mr. Clark discussed the \$325,000 in the budget to fix Swanton Hill Road if the budget goes up should this be removed and the town borrow this money over a couple years to save the taxpayers.

4) Any Other Necessary Business

Ms. Candels prepared a spreadsheet of 2023 budget, actual budget, variance & revenue. Mr. Fournier would like to know if the library has a carryover if they have one can it be used for some of there repairs. The board would like the library to review with Mr. Savage what they have left for funds at the end of 2023. Mr. Savage will update the board.

Mr. Fournier along with the board thanked Mr. Savage & Ms. Candels for the work they put into the Public Hearing.

Mr. Fournier discussed responding to the Village Trustees if the Selectboard supports full time police coverage.

Mr. Clark stated right now they need to focus on that they support 10 hour a day coverage for 2024, any further ahead than that they can discuss annually. This is an annual contract. Mr. Fournier stated this can also help Town residents understand that they have a voice and will be able to vote on this.

Mr. Clark will draft a letter for everyone to review.

5) Public Comment (Reprise)

None

6) Upcoming Events

- a) Monday January 15, 2024 Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday- Town Offices Closed

- b) Tuesday January 16, 2024 Regular Selectboard Meeting- 6 pm- Town Office
 - c) Wednesday January 24, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting-6:30 pm- Town Office
 - d) Thursday January 25, 2024 DRB Meeting-6 pm- Town Office
- 7) Executive Session (If needed)
Not Needed

E. Adjournment

**Mr. Hemenway made a motion to adjourn at 7:36 pm, seconded by Mr. Clark.
Motion carried.**

Respectfully Submitted by
Christina Candels-Administrative Assistant