

**DRAFT MINUTES
TOWN OF SWANTON
REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING
Town Office Building
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488
In-Person & By Zoom
TUESDAY
March 18, 2025 – 6:00 pm**

Present: Joel Clark-Chair, Earl Fournier, Nicole Draper, Steve Bourgeois, Nicholas Brosseau-Members, Brian Savage-Town Administrator, Cathy Fournier-Town Clerk, Christina Candels-Assistant Town Administrator, Bob Nielson, Bridget Butler, Jared Lutz, Joshua Serpe, Christina Hubbard, Zander Yensan
Zoom: Tammy Getchell

A. Call to Order

Mr. Clark called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Clark led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Agenda Review

Mr. Clark said after speaking with a few Selectboard members they will postpone the Swanton Rec By-Law review until the next meeting 4/1/2025.

Mr. Savage requested to move Liquor Control up on the agenda with new applicants in attendance.

Mr. Savage would like to add under Old Town Business easement for the waterline under State Dr. previously known as Sholan Rd.

Mr. Brosseau asked if comments for the Recreation by-laws should still be sent to Christina? Mr. Clark suggested Mr. Brosseau wait until Monday and Swanton Rec will have an updated draft to review.

D. Meeting Topics

1. Minutes

a) Special Selectboard Organizational Meeting of March 5, 2025

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve the Special Selectboard Organizational Meeting minutes from March 5, 2025, as written, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

2. Public Comments

None

3. Law Enforcement.

a) Swanton Police Department

Sargent Gagne came before the board to share the February 2025 incident analysis.

In February 2025 Swanton Village Police responded to 48 incidents. The top ten incidents were as follows:

7-traffic stops, 7-community outreach, 5-crash, property damage, 6-motor vehicle complaints, 4-suspicious person/circumstance, 3-alarm, 3-threatening, 2-drivine-license suspended, 2-directed patrol & 1-citizen assist.

The 7 traffic stops resulted in 2-tickets & 8-warnings. In February there were 3 individuals arrested on 5 charges; 2-arrests were associated with traffic stops.

In February Swanton Village Police provided 12.25 hours of additional services.

Sargent Gagne agreed the numbers were down in February, but the weather is a factor in calls for service they will see an uptick with the weather changing.

Mr. Clark asked how staffing is? Sargent Gagne said they recently had one full-time officer step down from full-time to part-time. They are currently seeking to hire 2 full-time officers. They have recently hired a new part-time officer, who was certified in Massachusetts.

b) Swanton Animal Control

Mr. Savage shared the February 2025 report from Mr. Benson.

Mr. Fournier asked if the dog listed in the report that was brought to the shelter was if the shelter the Town has a contract with? No one claimed the animal did the Town pay for the 9 days? Mr. Savage said the Town paid for half and the animal is not in good health but is currently being fostered outside of the shelter.

c) Swanton Health Officer

Mr. Savage shared the February 2025 report from Ms. Kelleher. The incidents listed are one property. Ms. Draper said she drove past the property and did not see any garbage/issue today.

Mr. Bourgois asked if they have an enforcement officer? Mr. Clark said no.

4. Presentation by the Friends of Northern Lake Champlain – Swanton Beach Stormwater

Mr. Serpe and Ms. Butler came before the board to share their presentation for a project for water quality in the area of Lasnier Rd/Moreau Dr.

Ms. Butler shared the history of Friends of Northern Lake Champlain and their goals to keep phosphorus on the land and out of the lake, non-regulatory projects with farms/landowners and municipalities.

Mr. Fournier asked where they received funding? If the Town would be responsible if the funding does not come from the federal government? Ms. Butler shared how they receive funding, and the Town will have no responsibility.

Mr. Serpe shared this is a two-part project to treat stormwater at Swanton beach and Lasnier Rd/Moreau Dr. The beach project will be done with Swanton Village. The Lasnier Rd/Moreau Dr. will be done in the Town's Road right-of-way.

Mr. Fournier shared there has been concerns from landowners about water quality on Maquam Shore, but landowners may not know what they can do as their part.

Ms. Butler said they will have community events/social events to help them understand the project and what they can do. Property assessments at no charge.

Mr. Serpe said the reason they are here is to enter into an operation/maintenance plan for the project.

Mr. Fournier said when this project was brought before the Selectboard they were told there would be no maintenance required from the Town., have they done these types of projects before? Sand filters similar to this? Mr. Serpe could not speak on previous projects. Ms. Butler could not confirm, she would inquire and get back to them. Mr. Serpe and Ms. Butler thought the Town had more knowledge depth on this project than they do.

Ms. Butler said they now need take a step back and go back to design and review for so the Town and everyone involved can agree on the maintenance after the project is completed. At this time the Town has not been informed of or agreed to the maintenance of the project.

Mr. Serpe and Ms. Butler will gather more information and come back to the Selectboard, as well as bring designers to share the plans.

Mr. Clark shared there is already a water quality problem with Sucker Brook, which is a much bigger problem than the water quality problem in this project area.

Ms. Draper said this project was brought in before the Selectboard 2-7-2023, with no design plans or that the Town would need to enter into a maintenance agreement.

See attached PowerPoint for more information.

5. Liquor Control Recess Regular Selectboard Meeting and Convene Liquor Control Board

Ms. Draper made a motion to exit the regular Selectboard meeting at 6:53 pm and enter the Liquor Control Board meeting, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

- 1) Baderman Enterprises LLC-No Violations
Second Class Renewal, Tobacco Renewal & Tobacco Substitute Endorsement Renewal.
- 2) Caitlin's Creations LLC DBA Mother Hubbard Cupboard-No Violations
Second Class Renewal, Tobacco Renewal & Tobacco Substitute Endorsement Renewal.
- 3) Campbell's Bay Inc-No Violations
Second Class Renewal & Tobacco Renewal.
- 4) D G Retail LLC-No Violations
Second Class Renewal & Tobacco Renewal.
- 5) Gingras, Ezra-Hog Island Market-No Violations
Second Class Renewal & Tobacco Renewal.
- 6) Home Goods-New Application
Tobacco License.
- 7) Irons & Ale at the Club-No Violations
First Class Renewal, Third Class Renewal & Outside Consumption Renewal.

- 8) Hannaford Supermarket-No Violations
Second Class Renewal.
- 9) VFW-No Violations
First Class Renewal & Third-Class Renewal.
- 10) Wesco-Inc Champlain Farms-No Violations
Second Class Renewal, Tobacco Renewal & Tobacco Substitute Endorsement
Renewal.

Ms. Draper asked the new applicants from Home Goods to tell them about their business. Mr. Lutz said they will be a smoke & vape business. They will sell smoke accessories and tobacco vapes.

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve all applications listed, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to exit the Liquor Control Board meeting and enter the Regular Selectboard meeting at 6:59 pm, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

6. Expenditures

a) General Orders

Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the General Orders of 2/19/2025 to 3/18/2025 in the amount of \$113,955.42, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

Mr. Fournier asked if the payment to Missisquoi Rescue was two months? Yes.

b) Highway Orders

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve the Highway Orders of 2/19/2025 to 3/18/2025 in the amount of \$14,138.82, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

c) Special Orders

Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the Special Orders of 2/19/2025 to 3/18/2025 in the amount of \$877.50, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

d) Library Orders

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Library Orders of 2/19/2025 to 3/18/2025 in the amount of \$2,885.64, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

Ms. Draper asked if the payment for Menard Handyman service was a deposit because Abby at the library said the work has not been done? That was the invoice for the emergency ice/leak.

e) Highway/General Payroll Orders

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Highway/General Payroll Orders of 2/19/2025 to 3/18/2025 in the amount of \$41,585.93 (\$1,572.53 checks & \$40,013.40 ACH) seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

f) Library Payroll Orders

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the Library Payroll Orders of 2/19/2025 to 3/18/2025 in the amount of \$9,742.42, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

7. Highway Department

a) Monthly Report on Highway Department Matters

Mr. Clark shared the monthly highway report.

Mr. Clark said Mr. Lapan and himself have driven the Town roads to make a list of roads that need to be paved this year. They will draft bids for the roads separate from the paving of the Town garage lot and Swanton Hill Rd once the road is completed. They will also apply for grants for County Rd. and Maquam Shore.

Mr. Clark said the Barry Rd. culvert will request a grant for design.

Swanton Hill Rd., they have a draft of the construction easement to have the Town attorney review.

Brooklyn St. culvert final plan has been completed, wetland permit is submitted.

Mr. Clark said they would like to sell the 2012 International truck, have Mr. Savage put out an advertisement.

Mr. Bourgeois asked when they anticipate purchasing a new plow truck? Mr. Clark said they have not decided yet.

Mr. Clark said the $\frac{3}{4}$ ton truck, single cab has 260K miles on it and is using oil and the frame is getting tender. Mr. Clark is going to price out a truck and put the existing fiberglass body on it. Once he has an estimate, he will bring it to the board to discuss.

Maple Grove Estates, they would like the Town to take over and maintain the road. Mr. Clark said they would still maintain the storm water permit themselves with the HOA.

Mr. Clark said the engineer has given them possible locations to boring samples in the road. Mr. Clark said they will not take the samples from the same area.

Mr. Fournier asked if the Town, taking over only the road not the stormwater, would that stand up in court? That is still in review with the attorney.

Mr. Clark said at the next meeting he will have a cost breakdown on buying the extended warranty for the new plow truck.

8. Old Town Business

a) Swanton Rec. By-Laws update.

Postponed until the next selectboard meeting.

b) LVRT Update

Mr. Savage said Wrights Excavation will sign the contract this week for the project. They are waiting for the bond. They have signed the contract award.

c) Update on Local Option Tax

Mr. Savage said it is in the process. Mr. Savage has spoken with Carolyn Brannagan, and she sits on weights and means committee and she will help when it gets to them. Mr. Fournier asked if the bill made cross over? It is a money bill and there are exceptions. Mr. Bourgeois asked the timeline? If it doesn't make this year, they can bring it up next year.

Mr. Brosseau said Swanton cannot be the only Town that wants this? Mr. Clark said at present yes this is the only Town/Village this will affect right now.

d) Update on Scoping Study – Bushey Road

Mr. Clark said Mr. Fournier, asking the question to Northwest Regional Planning regarding the scoping study, they now have a timeline for this to be completed.

e) Jerry mill Lane-Water line request

Mr. Savage shared he has a draft easement for them to review. Mr. Clark and Mr. Savage have adjusted the areas needed.

The Town has no liability for this, just to ensure the road, if dug up for repairs, is put back to the current standard. Mr. Fournier asked if it states to the standard at that time, for example if it is paved someday.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if the HOA would take over control of the line in the event Mr. Cumming passes? It will go to his heirs & assigns. The board would like this reviewed and add the road will go back to the condition at the time of repair.

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve Mr. Savage of signing this easement with the suggested corrections & concerns, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

9. New Town Business

a) Discussion of 2024 Audit RFP

Mr. Savage said this conversation goes together with the Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting Policy adopted November 7, 2023.

b) Discussion of change needed in Accounting, Auditing, and Financial Reporting Policy adopted November 7, 2023.

Mr. Savage said they did not receive any response to the RFP of the 2024 audit with interest in performing the audit. Mr. Savage was told from A.M. Peisch's Chris that is likely due to the accounting change the Town adopted. Mr. Savage spoke with NEMRC representative, and the Town does not need to comply with GASPY 34 rules and that 50% of the Towns in Vermont do not. This would require complete overhaul and a new way of accounting that is not necessary. It is a very expensive process to switch to. You would need to hire a CPA firm to come in and do the process.

Does not affect the ability to receive grants either. Mr. Savage will contact A.M. Peisch to ask if they will conduct the 2024 audit if this policy is amended.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if they have begun the 2024 audit? Ms. Cathy Fournier said no, they are almost done the 2023. They will still request they bring the audit to the Selectboard.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to amend the Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting Policy which does not comply with GASPY policy retroactive to November 7, 2023, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

c) Approve Letter of Support for the 2025 Sap Run to be held April 27, 2025
Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve/sign the letter of support for the 2025 Sap Run to be held April 27, 2025, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

10. Community and Economic Development

Mr. Savage shared he recently received phone calls from two people seeking a 10k square foot building for retail space in Swanton.

Ms. Draper asked if the Maple City Candy building would work? He told them of that property, but they knew it was for sale. Mr. Fournier asked if the cheese plant would work? No, they're looking for retail. Also discussed is the building across the bridge and South River St and the building by the liquor store.

Mr. Fournier said Promote Swanton will meet next week. Ecopixel is working on updates.

11. Any Other Necessary Business

Mr. Brosseau said he read the minutes from the DRB meeting and it does not appear anyone was volunteering to join the Northwest Regional Planning board. Mr. Clark said he has spoken to Ross Lavoie, the Planning Commission chair and one person is considering being appointed.

Mr. Fournier asked if they should appoint someone temporarily if there was a vote Swanton Town has two votes? Ms. Draper agreed they are ok to wait a little bit longer.

12. Correspondence

None

13. Public Comment (Reprise)

Zander Yensan is new to Swanton and is the Sr. Loss Control Consultant for Vermont Leagues of Cities and Towns. Mr. Yensan said he lives in Swanton and wanted to observe the process. Mr. Yensan has done a safety audit on the Town Highway garage and plans to do the Swanton Public Library later this week for VLCT.

14. Upcoming Events

- a) Thursday – March 27, 2025 – 6:00 pm – DRB – Town Offices and Zoom
- b) Tuesday – April 1, 2025 – 6:00 pm – Regular Selectboard Meeting – Town Offices and Zoom
- c) Thursday – April 10, 2025 – 5:30 pm – Planning Commission – Town Offices and Zoom
- d) Tuesday – April 15, 2025 – 6:00 pm – Regular Selectboard Meeting – Town Offices and Zoom

16. Executive session (Personnel)

Ms. Draper made a motion to enter into an executive session at 7:40 pm, seconded by All Ayes. Motion carried.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to exit executive session at 7:59 pm, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

Action Taken:

Mr. Fournier made a motion to advertise & hire a Deputy Zoning Administrator, for 24 hours a week for a minimum of one year possibly to be extended longer, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

17. Adjourn

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to adjourn at 8:00 pm, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by
Christina Candels-Assistant Town Administrator