

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

Present: Joel Clark-Chair, Steve Bourgeois, Nick Brosseau, Earl Fournier, Nicole Draper-Members, Brian Savage-Town Administrator, Cathy Fournier-Town Clerk, Christina Candels-Assistant Town Administrator, Bob Nielsen, Jason Hodgdon, Mark Reilly, David Davio, Betsy Fournier, Chief Matthew Sullivan-Swanton Village Police Chief

Zoom: Denny H

A. Call to Order

Mr. Clark called to order at 6:03 pm.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

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

C. Agenda Review

Mr. Clark reviewed the agenda.

Mr. Clark requested to move the library update with Mr. Scangas up on the agenda after Public Comment.

Mr. Clark requested to add Garage Parking lot under Highway.

Mr. Clark requested to move Hodgdon Bros up on the agenda after the library update.

Mr. Savage requested to add Swanton Hill Blasting bid opening to Swanton Hil update.

Mr. Savage requested to add Swanton Historical Society request for picnic tables under New Town Business.

D. Meeting Topics

1. Minutes

a) Regular Selectboard meeting of April 15, 2025

b) Special Selectboard meeting of April 22, 2025

c) Special Selectboard meeting (tele-conference) of April 30, 2025

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve April 15, 2025, April 22, 2025, and April 30, 2025, minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

2. Public Comment

None

3. Old Town Business

a) Library project update with Laz Scangas

Mr. Scangas came before the board to share and update on the library insulation project.

Mr. Scangas said they found additional duct work and refrigeration lines in the attic.

They have been removed. The contractors also found blown in insulation in the attic that

will be removed. Everything has been done on the same timeline so far. Mr. Scangas shared they also checked the east entrance and determined a plan for insulation. Mr. Scagnas shared the timeline for all of the work to be completed. The increase for the insulation company Chey Insulation is \$3,826.73 for the increase costs as well as insulating the east entrance that has significant ice build up in the winter. Once the project is completed, they will perform another blower test and submit it to Vermont Gas. This should provide an efficiency incentive to offset some of the costs. Menard Handy Man has done extra work as well but has been responsive and done all the extra work requested.

Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the change order/ increase from Chey Insulation in the amount of \$3,826.73, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

4. New Town Business

a) Hodgdon Bros-Renew Junkyard Permit

Mr. Savage said every five years Hodgdon Bros needs to review their salvage yard license with the State. They need the Selectboards approval to do so. Mr. Savage said the Town has not received any notice of violations from the State.

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to renew Hodgdon Bros license for five years, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

5. Law Enforcement

a) Swanton Police Department

Chief Sullivan came before the board to share the April 2025 incident analysis. In April 2025 the Swanton Village Police responded to 120 incidents. The top ten incidents were as follows:

46-traffic stops, 24-directed patrol, 7-suspicious person/circumstance, 5-threatening, 4-agency assist, 3- community outreach, 3-restraining order, 2-motor vehicle complaints, 2-crash/property damage and 2-custody disputes. All tickets and warnings were associated with traffic stops. There were 3 arrests of 3-individuals. The 46 traffic stops resulted in 9-tickets and 33-warnings.

Swanton Village Police provided 48 hours of additional services in April. Chief Sullivan said some of these hours were funded by the Governors Highway Safety Detail during the daytime in the Town.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if the increase in incidents is due to the weather? Yes, the numbers due to the increase with nice weather. The increased traffic stops will increase the incidents as well.

Chief Sullivan shared he has also been approached by the MVSD regarding a second school resource officer (SRO) for the elementary schools. This is in the preliminary planning. The school district currently pays for the SRO at MVU. It is important to build these relationships as well as school safety. Chief Sullivan said there are some grants for these programs but he is unsure if this would qualify yet. The current grant for school safety is not for sworn officers. Mr. Fournier said they would need additional personnel for this? Yes, Chief Sullivan shared he has been in contact with an officer who may be interested in retiring from another location.

Ms. Draper asked if the position would be split between Franklin, Highgate and Swanton? Yes, it would be split.

Mr. Brosseau mentioned at the Village Trustee meeting Chief Sullivan said he had an officer interested in returning to the Swanton Village Police. That is the officer that may be able to fill the second SRO.

Mr. Brosseau asked what the credit card fraud in the report was? Chief Sullivan said it can be a credit card or theft of checks.

Mr. Clark noted the speeds on the report seem to be in the 10-20 mph range. Mr. Fournier stated he has heard of complaints on VT 105 also.

b) Swanton Health Officer

The board reviewed the Health Officer report for April 2025. Mr. Fournier asked why the Health Officer is included in dog bites? If someone goes to the hospital for a dog bite the Animal Control and Health Officer are both notified.

The Health Officer sent a letter to a landlord regarding a tenant burning. No update was provided on the letter.

6. Highway Department

a) 2025 Paving Bids Opening

The Town of Swanton received 4 paving bids as follows:

Pike Industries \$80.64 per ton Total \$387,072.00 with AC Cost of \$621

F.W. Whitcomb \$88.90 per ton Total \$426,720.00 AC Cost of \$626

Hungerford Construction \$88.00 per ton Total \$ 422,400.00 AC Cost of \$621

J. Hutchins Inc \$103.95 per ton Total \$498,960.00 AC Cost \$626

Mr. Clark said Pike Industries is the low bidder. Mr. Clark shared that the board could discuss these bids in the executive session if they choose a contract. The board chose not to the bids were not close enough.

Mr. Davio from Pike said the prices have been competitive this year, they have done a lot of work for Swanton and have a plant in this community.

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve Pike Industries paving bid contract \$80.64 per ton with an estimate of \$387,072.00 total cost, and to have seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

Mr. Fournier said this does not include the grant to pave sections on Maquam Shore and Country Road? No. The Highway budgeted \$450,000 for paving as well.

Mr. Fournier suggested paving the library parking lot. Ms. Betsy Fournier said they can also pave the Rec parking lot.

Ms. Draper said part of the library parking lot is owned by the church.

The board will discuss it more later.

b) Swanton Hill update

Mr. Savage said they received one bid from Ledge Tech for the blasting needed for the project.

Blasting mobilization \$1,600.00 and blasting cost \$67,500.00. Total \$69,100.00

There could be a reduction of \$6 per square foot depending on the ledge.

The Highway crew will do the rest of the work.

Mr. Clark said they did not have on hand the estimates from last year, that was significantly less, but the project plans have changed. Mr. Clark said they could wait until the next meeting to award the project.

Mr. Fournier asked if delays would impact the start date? It could but the scope of work is different now. They reviewed the Highway budget amount for this project. The budget this year is \$60,000 plus carried over \$149,500 from last year for this project.

They will need stone, diesel fuel and paving.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to award the contract to Ledge Tech in the amount of \$69,100.00, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried

Mr. Fournier made a motion for Mr. Savage-Town Administrator to sign the contract with Ledge Tech, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

c) Paving Grant update

Mr. Savage shared a email from Steven Stanley stating the Town was selected for the grant applied for. This is pending approval of the State budget.

This grant was applied for to pave a 1-mile section on County Rd and 1 mile section on Maquam Shore Rd. This grant was close to \$200,000.00 the Town will have a match. They have applied for a \$25,000 grant for design for a new culvert on Barry Rd also.

d) Discussion of the north end of the former Sholan Road

Mr. Fournier said he suggests closing off this entrance to traffic, so they have to use the new State Dr for access.

Mr. Clark suggested adding barriers so cars cannot access. Mr. Fournier said they can also add signs to State Dr. that so no access to Bushey Rd.

Mr. Fournier has spoken with one of the landowners and they think the new entrance is much safer.

Mr. Fournier asked if there should be access for snowmobilers so they can reach Mother Hubbard's store.

e) Garage Parking Lot Paving

Mr. Clark said they added \$35,000 in the Highway budget to pave the parking lot. Part of the conversation with F.W. Whitcomb to use the parking for their job trailer for the interstate. They gave an estimate of \$95.00 per ton for paving plus \$6,000 credit for the use of the parking lot. If the Highway crew does the prep, there will be more savings.

The estimate is \$26,875.00 (after discount) to pave the parking lot.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve F.W. Whitcomb \$26,875.00 estimate to repave the Town garage parking lot, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

Mr. Fournier amended his motion to include Brian Savage-Town Administrator to sign the contract, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

7. Old Town Business (Reprise)

a) Quarterly Financial Review 2025 Budgets

1) General Fund

The board reviewed the update from Ms. Cathy Fournier. Notable budget increases are Selectpersons stipend increase the internal auditors increase that did not get added.

Election expenses, no more elections this year.
Computer Consulting, NEMRC disaster recovery cost increase was not budgeted.
None of these categories will have any more charges this year.

2) Highway Fund

The board reviewed the update from Ms. Cathy Fournier. Notable budget increases are legal fees from the land swap, Precision Lane and the Truck purchase that was paid out of the reserve funds.

3) Library Payroll/Maintenance Budget

The board reviewed the update from Ms. Cathy Fournier. No notable increases.

4) Swanton Recreation

Mr. Bourgeois asked if there was any grant income reported? Ms. Betsy Fournier said no, this is revenue income.

Mr. Brosseau asked why the copier is leased vs buying? The cost of leasing is much better and includes toner and repairs. The Town leases as well.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if the tractor loan has been paid off yet? Ms. Betsy Fournier said no as the bylaw has not been approved yet. Once they are approved, they will have spending/purchasing authority. This has been added to the bylaws.

Mr. Bourgeois said he sent an email memo to have it paid off. Ms. Betsy Fournier said she did not receive any memo to pay it off.

Mr. Clark said at the last meeting they did give her purchasing authority of \$5,000. That should cover the tractor.

Mr. Clark asked if they have received any special funds? None this quarter. That account has not been reconciled. Once it is Ms. Betsy Fournier will share with the Selectboard.

b) Update to Swanton Recreation's Constitution and By-Laws

Mr. Bourgeois said Vice Chair needs to be added to Article V Officers, Section 1. Noted

Mr. Bourgeois said Article IV Expenditures, Section 1 add non-aggregate.

Mr. Bourgeois thought the Special Funds have a limit of \$60,000? No they cannot limit Special Funds because if they received more, they cannot accept it. Mr.

Brosseau said they agreed to get rid of the Special Funds cap but adding a cap on Capital Improvements.

Mr. Bourgeois said Article VI Responsibilities hiring regular part-time employees, non-seasonal employees.

Mr. Clark Article III Membership, Section 2 the Recreation Commission will submit names to the Selectboard, the word submit is missing.

Mr. Clark said the work Grants should be added Article V: Recreation Special Funds Section 2.

Mr. Clark asked if the Recreation Board is comfortable with these changes the Selectboard can sign at the next meeting. Mr. Fournier said they can approve it tonight with recommended changes.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the Swanton Recreation's Constitution and Bylaws with changes noted in the discussion, Selectboard will sign at the next meeting, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Mr. Bourgeois opposed; Ms. Draper abstained. Motion carried.

c) Update on Land Swap with Rowell, MVSD and Town of Swanton

Mr. Savage shared the Rowell property they are seeking a partial release for a lien on the property. The draft deeds have been sent to the School District and Rowell attorneys. The Selectboard needs to pass a resolution for this as to how the property was acquired via tax sale. They will need a record of the tax sale, notice of tax sale and certified receipts. Mr. Savage read the resolution.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to sign the resolution, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried. Motion carried. With the date correction.

d) Update on LVRT

Mr. Clark said the contactor anticipates starting Monday May 12th.

e) Discussion of vacancy on Northwest Regional Planning Commission & Development Review Board

Mr. Brosseau recommended advertising filling both positions together. Mr. Clark said he would recommend they be separate. Mr. Fournier asked if someone resigned from the Development Review Board? Yes, Harold Garrett. Mr. Clark shared that Mr. Garrett stated he received a phone call from him and said the Selectboard no longer wanted his services on TAC and NRPC boards, so he resigned from the DRB.

Mr. Clark said for the record he received a phone call from the DRB Chair (Spencer LaBarge) the next morning upset, once Mr. Clark explained what took place he was fine with the decision.

Mr. Clark said for the record on March 6th he left a phone call with Mr. Garrett after the Selectboard reorganizational meeting with the change, Mr. Clark did not want to leave a voice mail but wanted to ensure he was informed before he received a phone call from NRPC. Explained the decision made by the Selectboard and asked him to call him. Mr. Garrett did not return his call. Two months later Mr. Garrett resigned.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if they need to make a motion to accept his resignation? It was not given in writing but is on recording and documented in the DRB minutes.

Mr. Clark asked Ms. Draper as a member of Northwest Regional Planning Commission if they need two seats for the Town? Is that second seat critical? Mr. Clark said he has not seen a lot of feedback from them.

Ms. Draper said yes, with NRPC involvement in the LVRT and other elements of growth two seats at the table is important for the Town of Swanton.

Mr. Clark said the reason he would suggest they be separate a new DRB member will take a while to come up to speed. The NRPC holds 10 meetings via zoom and 1 in-person.

Mr. Clark asked Mr. Brosseau if he was interested in the positions.

They meetings are one Wednesday a month at 6 pm via Zoom.

Mr. Fournier shared he thinks two positions are important.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to appoint Nick Brosseau as the second Town of Swanton member of the Northwest Regional Planning Commission, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried. Mr. Brosseau abstained.

Ms. Draper said NRPC will reach out so they can highlight the things Swanton is doing at an upcoming meeting, to continue to promote Swanton. Ms. Draper is grateful to be a part of this board. Mr. Savage will contact NRPC with Mr. Brosseau's information. DRB position will be advertised on the website, social media and the digital sign in the park. Ms. Draper will add to the front porch forum. Mr. Clark recommended reaching out to Brendan Long to see if he is interested.

7. New Town Business (Reprise)

a) RFP for Interior Painting of Town Offices

Mr. Savage shared some of the areas of the Town Office that need to be repainted. It has been 10 years or more since the office has been painted.

They have \$20,000 budgeted for building improvements.

Mr. Clark suggested sending an RFP out, breaking the building into three areas.

b) Discussion of compensation for Animal Control Officer

Mr. Savage said AOC Jim Benson has been the AOC for 5 years and has commented he has not received a raise since he started. His current salary is \$600 plus milage. Mr. Benson does a great job and is responsive.

Mr. Bourgeois suggested finding out what the average increase has been each year since he started then they can discuss it at the next meeting.

c) Historical Society picnic table request

Mr. Savage received a request from Jay Barney if the Town would purchase the materials to build two picnic tables they have someone who will build them as a community service project.

The cost is estimated at \$190 each total for 2 is \$380.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve up to \$400 for picnic tables out of the Railroad Depot expense, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried. Mr. Brosseau abstained.

Mr. Brosseau said they have had issues with vandalism int the past at the Railroad Museum.

Ms. Cathy Fournier suggested taking the money out of the Railroad Depot expense line item.

8. Community and Economic Development

Mr. Fournier and Ms. Draper said they will have a graphic update for Promote Swanton.

9. Any Other Necessary Business

None

10 Correspondence

Mr. Clark asked who has issue with their Swanton Vt emails? Mr. Fournier said he is not able to access it with his current computer. Mr. Fournier is going to work on this.
Ms. Draper asked said she currently has a numeric selectboard email at what time should they update emails to names? Mr. Savage said other boards have issues with their emails as well. Mr. Savage will find out how long the old emails need to be archived. This could save money on old emails and use the money to create new ones.

10. Public Comment (Reprise)

Ms. Draper shared a May update flyer from Swanton Recreation and the work they have been doing. May is Youth Appreciation Month.

Mr. Clark said anyone interested in putting a float in the Memorial Day parade to contact Adam Paxman.

11. Upcoming Events

- a) Wednesday – May 7, 2025 – Planning Commission – Public Hearing on Zoning By-law Revision – 6:00 pm – Town Offices and Zoom
- b) Saturday-May 10, 2025- 10am-3pm National Train Day-Railroad Depot
- c) Tuesday – May 20, 2025 – Regular Selectboard Meeting – 6:00 pm – Town Offices and Zoom
- d) Thursday – May 22, 2025 – DRB Meeting – 6:00 pm – Town Offices and Zoom
- e) Saturday & Sunday May 24, 2025, Community Wide Garage Sale-Sign up on Swantonvt.myrec.com
- f) Saturday & Sunday May 24-25 Abenaki Heritage Festival-Swanton Rec
- g) Saturday May 24, 2025-Put up Veterans Flags-9am Village Green
- h) Monday – May 26, 2025 – Memorial Day – Town Offices and Operations CLOSED
- I) Monday – May 26, 2025 – Memorial Day Parade – 2:00 pm

12. Executive session (if needed)

None

13. Adjourn

**Ms. Draper made a motion to adjourn at 8:04 pm, seconded by Mr. Brosseau.
Motion carried.**

Respectfully Submitted by
Christina Candels-Assistant Town Administrator

MOTIONS FOR ENTERING EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION #1: I move **that we find** that we enter executive session for the Selectboard to receive confidential contract & personnel information for which the premature disclosure of it to the general public would clearly place the Selectboard & others at a substantial disadvantage.

MOTION #2: I move **that based on our just made findings** that premature disclosure would place the Selectboard & others at a substantial disadvantage, we enter executive session.