

**DRAFT MINUTES
TOWN OF SWANTON
REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING
Town Office Building
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488
In-Person & By Zoom**

Present: Joel Clark-Chair, Earl Fournier, Steve Bourgeois, Nick Brosseau, Nicole Draper-Members, Brian Savage-Town Administrator, Cathy Fournier-Town Clerk, Christina Candels-Assistant Town Administrator, Bob Nielsen

Zoom: Liz Curry

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 reviewed the agenda.

Ms. Draper requested to add Vermont Evaluation of Rural Technical Assistance (VERTA) from Northwest Regional Planning information under New Town Business.

D. Meeting Topics

1. Minutes

a) Regular Selectboard Meeting of July 1, 2025

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve the Regular Selectboard Meeting minutes from July 1, 2025, as written, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

2. Public Comments

None.

3. Law Enforcement.

a) Swanton Animal Control

Mr. Savage shared the Swanton AOC report. Mr. Benson had two incidents with no issues.

Ms. Draper covered while Mr. Benson was on vacation and had one call about a lost dog found on Brown Ave. The dog spent the day at Swanton Rec and its owner was found.

4. Expenditures

a) General Orders

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve the General Orders of 6/18/25 to 7/15/25 in the amount of \$80,760.81, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

b) Highway Orders

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Highway Orders of 6/18/25 to 7/15/25 in the amount of \$45,478.65, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

Mr. Fournier asked if the new bicycle signs he has seen are included in the invoices? The invoice listed was for culvert/sign supplies.

c) Library Orders

Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the Library Orders of 6/18/25 to 7/15/25 in the amount of \$8,812.54, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

Mr. Clark asked if the planned inspection for the sprinkler system is included?

The invoice was for replacing the sprinkler heads that were in the budget. The inspection has not been completed yet.

d) Highway/General Payroll Orders

Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the Highway/General Payroll Orders of 6/18/25 to 7/15/25 in the amount of \$36,357.92, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

e) Library Payroll Orders

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Library Payroll Orders of 6/18/25 to 7/15/25 in the amount of \$10,529.00, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

f) Special Orders

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve the Special Orders of 6/18/25 to 7/15/25 in the amount of \$77,348.81, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if the invoice for Wright's Excavation was a partial payment? Yes, that is partial payment of the total contract.

Mr. Fournier asked for an update each month with the orders of the balance in the Special Funds.

PUBLIC HEARING – VCDP GRANT TO TOWN OF SWANTON

Mr. Clark recesses the Selectboard meeting and opened the Public Hearing at 6:07 pm.

a) Abenaki Food Pantry and tribal headquarters located at 100 Grand Avenue.

Ms. Curry shared the purpose of the Public Hearing is to close out the Town sponsored planning grant for architecture, engineering and other activities needed for the construction grant Swanton Village has sponsored.

Ms. Curry said they have been working on this project for two years, have gone out to bid and are awarded to a construction manager.

Construction is anticipated to begin in the fall, lasting roughly eight months.

Ms. Curry shared the project will greatly benefit the food pantry. They currently operate with freezers and refrigerators that the electric system is not designed for.

They will be replaced with an energy efficient walk-in freezer and refrigerator.

Most everything will fall under the Build America/Buy America. Efficiency Vermont was able to find an American manufacturer. The building will be upgraded for efficiency. The masonry will be restored as well.

The roof is getting structural upgrades as well as the entrance to the building.

The plans also have the addition of an ADA compliant parking space and restroom. Interior upgrades are planned as long as the project cost does not increase drastically from last year's estimates.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if the cupola is still there? Ms. Curry said yes, and historic preservation said it was not historic, but it will be left as is.

Mr. Fournier asked what the cost of the project is? Ms. Curry said it is just over a million dollars. The estimate in 2024 was \$920,000 and they anticipate it to be closer to a million dollars now.

Mr. Brosseau, if the grant was the only funding for the project? Ms. Curry said they received grants from: Village Community Grant, northern Borders Regional Commission, Arts Council, M&T Bank, Vermont Housing Conservation Board for Historic Preservation and Efficiency Vermont, Vermont Gas incentives.

No Historic tax credits, they are costly to do these.

Mr. Fournier asked if the grants are approved? Yes, before the project went out to bid. The board agreed this is a great opportunity for Swanton.

Mr. Clark clarified after closing the grant, will this be the end of the work for the Towns' perspective? Yes.

Ms. Curry will work with Mr. Savage to close out the grant.

Ms. Curry thanked the board and Mr. Savage for working on the project.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Clark closed the Public Hearing and resumed the Selectboard meeting at 6:15 pm.

5. Highway Department

a) Monthly Report on Highway Department Matters

Mr. Clark shared that the road crew has been dealing with beavers on Maquam Shore Rd, Swanton Hill has not been a problem for a little while. The road crew has been working on roadside mowing, removing asphalt on Swanton Hill in preparation for blasting. The crew has cut trees on Vien Rd prepping for paving. They assisted the Village on Lake St. in a water connection and working on vehicle maintenance.

Mr. Clark said the paperwork has been signed by Mr. Savage for the AOT to sign for the grant for additional paving. The grant is approved for \$175,000.

The Swanton Hill Rd. blasting could start next week. East Engineering's Tyler Billingsly will go up next week and mark the area.

Mr. Clark said the grant agreement for the Barry Rd culvert design has been signed and sent back. East Engineering has been given the go ahead to design.

b) Open bids on work truck cab and chassis

Mr. Savage received three bids as follows:

- 1) E.J. Barrette \$46,000
- 2) Nucar \$47,033
- 3) Handy GMC \$70,144

Mr. Savage, Mr. Lapan & Mr. Clark will compare the bids and bring them back to the board at the next meeting.

c) Proposed Road Takeover Policy Amendments

Mr. Clark shared details of a conversation he had with Terry Purcell (Operation Section Superior Watershed Management Division, Stormwater Program, VT DEC)

Regarding taking over a road where there is already a stormwater permit in place.

Mr. Clark said he was informative, and it can be done. According to the States rules all landowners are required to be part of the permit. Therefore, if the Town owns the road they will become co-permitters. Mr. Purcell said the Town would need to work with the developer and/or HOA and work out who applies and pays for the permits. The agreement can include these details that the Town incurs no cost.

Mr. Clark added these proposed changes to the Road Takeover Policy.

Mr. Fournier said this makes sense otherwise the Town would not be able to take over any new roads even though there is a policy.

Mr. Bourgeois said it needs to include the Town assuming no liability if the permits are not filed on time.

Mr. Brosseau said putting pressure on the HOA's to file these permits on time.

Mr. Savage said there are ways to pressure them to file on time. Some Towns do have Stormwater utilities to cover them.

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to accept the changes to the Road Takeover Policy as written, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

6. Old Town Business

a) Update on land swap

Mr. Fournier said if it is the attorneys' hands they should have what they need to do the work. Mr. Savage said by emailing the Town attorney, the school districts attorney and the Town have done what they need. They are waiting for Mr. Rowells attorney.

Mr. Fournier said if they do not hear from Mr. Rowells attorney this week he will go see Mr. Rowell.

Mr. Savage is unsure if they are requiring a partial release from a line of credit on the Rowell property which is delaying the swap.

Mr. Fournier asked if it is possible for the Town & school to swap land while they wait? The board agreed to wait on that, and Mr. Savage keeps in contact with our attorney.

7. New Town Business

a) Vermont Evaluation of Rural Technical Assistance (VERTA)

Ms. Draper shared with her work on Northwest Regional Planning she has been invited to join a focus group about the evaluation of rural technical assistance. Ms. Draper shared a flyer with information on the group.

Ms. Draper said the legislator made changes under Act 181, part of that is to have recommendations to enhance rural areas by providing technical assistance.

Ms. Draper told the board to share any feedback, questions or ideas they would like her to bring to the group.

Mr. Fournier asked if it is just for municipalities or for community members also? Ms. Draper said the invitation for this listening session has been put out to community leaders, elected representatives and providers.

Mr. Brosseau asked if Swanton is considered a rural community? Yes and NO. Ms. Draper said for some things they qualify as rural somethings no. Mr. Clark asked, “who are the technical assistant providers”, they are not listed? Ms. Draper said Northwest Regional Planning.

8. Community and Economic Development

a) Update on Swanton Promotion

Mr. Draper said the logo has been shared with the Village Trustees and nobody has said the design is not what they want to represent the community of Swanton. The designer has asked if they want to approve the logo and move forward.

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the logo, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

Ms. Draper said the designer will send the graphic design to be used how ever they choose.

Ms. Draper shared a generic brochure created by the Swanton Rec intern. They are still waiting for updated maps from regional planning. The brochure will include a QR code that will take you to the website. When the website update is completed, add local businesses that have been sending in information.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if anything like this exists now? Not on the website, the Chamber of Commerce has a directory for chamber members only. This is a directory for business in the whole Swanton community. The website will categorize them under Eat, Shop, Stay, Explore or Commercial Business listings.

Ms. Draper said the brochure is still in the early stages and if they decide to move forward, they can decide how to get them printed.

Mr. Fournier said they would like to move forward so this can be ready when the LVRT trailhead is complete.

Mr. Clark suggested adding hours for the railroad museum.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if the Village is ok with them promoting the Swanton Beach? Ms. Draper said the last time she talked to them they were looking for more people to use the beach. Mr. Bourgeois said they have work to do at the beach.

Ms. Draper said the LVRT has put out a user survey for people to complete and trial ambassadors. Ms. Candels added the information to the website & Facebook.

Mr. Brosseau asked how businesses get their information on the directory? Ms. Draper, Mr. Fournier & Ms. Kelleher have been visiting local business, asking them for information. Business that they have not heard back from the intern has been calling. The QR code will help people plan to come to Swanton.

Mr. Fournier said this business listings need to get added to the website. Ms. Candels clarified Ecopixel is doing the updates.

Mr. Fournier asked if they should get brochures printed now? Ms. Draper said they have to make some edits still. Ms. Draper for now will print them at Swanton Rec. Once they are ready to print more, they can get estimates from UPS store for higher quality.

Promote Swanton does have \$7,000 appropriation for the logo & brochures.

This might be good to budget for each year.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if they should consider adding these to the rest areas? Ms. Draper said there is a cost to do that but there are many other places where they can have them.

Mr. Fournier said it could also be a budgeted cost. They can look into the cost.
Mr. Fournier said the discussion is still ongoing about where to put the new Welcome to Swanton signs. Mr. Clark has asked for a new design with the new logo/graphic.

9. Any Other Necessary Business
None

10. Correspondence
None

11. Public Comment (Reprise)
None

12. Upcoming Events
a) Thursday – July 24, 2025 – DRB – 6:00 pm – Town Offices & Zoom
b) Friday – July 25, 2025 – Swanton Block Party -5:30 pm- 7:30 pm
c) Saturday-July 26, 2025-Chamber of Commerce Car Show - Village Green Rain Date
July 27, 2025
d) Tuesday – August 5, 2025 – National Night Out – Village Green – 5:00 to 8:00 pm
e) Wednesday – August 6, 2025 – Special Selectboard Meeting – 6:00 pm – Town
Offices and Zoom
f) Saturday-August 9, 2025, CornFest-Swanton Recreation Fields 3:00-7:00 pm
Corn Hole Tournament & 5K Run held that day also.

13. Adjourn
Ms. Draper made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:59 pm, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted by
Christina Candels-Assistant Town Administrator