

**MINUTES
TOWN OF SWANTON
SPECIAL SELECTBOARD MEETING
Town Office Building
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488
In-Person & By Zoom
August 5, 2024 – 6:00 PM**

Present: Joel Clark-Chair, Steve Bourgeois, Nicole Draper, Earl Fournier-Members, Brian Savage-Town Administrator, Cathy Fournier-Town Clerk, Christina Candels-Administrative Assistant, SVP Office Don Gilber, Las Scangas
Zoom: Lin, Margaret Briggs
Absent: Cody Hemenway

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

Ms. Cathy Fournier would like to add under Any Other Necessary Business 2024 tax rate.

Mr. Clark would like to move to New Town Business to after Law Enforcement.

D. Meeting Topics

1. Minutes

a) Regular Selectboard Meeting of July 16, 2024

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve July 16, 2024, Regular Selectboard Meeting draft minutes as written, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

2. Public Comments

Mr. Clark said the Swanton Block Party was a huge hit and has seen a lot of positive comments about it.

Mr. Clark wanted to commend Swanton Village for opening the bridge early and traffic control and keeping everyone informed during the closure. Mr. Clark encouraged all board members to document their thoughts for improvements for the next meeting and they can forward them to Swanton Village. This is not the last closure, and this information could be helpful to them.

3. Law Enforcement

a) Swanton Police Department

Officer Gilbert came before the board to share July 2024 Swanton Village Police traffic data in Swanton Town service hours.

In the month of July 2024 Swanton Village Police responded to 125 incidents.

Of these 125 incidents the top 10 incidents were as follows:

38 directed patrols, 15 traffic stops, 11 suspicious person/circumstance, 10 motor vehicle complaints, 4 welfare/suicide check, 4 agency assist, 4 crash property damage, 3 citizen assist, 3 juvenile problems, 3 citizen disputes.

Of the 15 traffic stops; 12 tickets & 9 warnings were issued, 7 arrests of 7 individuals.

Swanton Village Police provided 19.25 hours of additional services.

Officer Gilbert reviewed with the board the arrests for the month.

Mr. Bourgeois asked the difference between a misdemeanor and felony drug possession; Officer Gilbert said the State of Vermont determines what is a misdemeanor vs. a felony.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if it is possible for the board to receive the incident analysis prior to the meeting so they would be able to review it prior to the meeting.

Officer Gilbert will pass that on to Chief Sullivan. Mr. Clark suggested via email the day before.

Officer Gilbert discussed the east bound SB Beebe Rd traffic data from the speed trailer from 7/16/22 to 7/22/24. During this time 17,588 vehicles (this is only one way) passed with 11,875 above the posted 40 mph speed limit. 85% of those vehicles were at an average speed of 48 mph.

Mr. Fournier said he travelled the detour route and found it hard to stay near the posted speed on Beebe Rd, South River St.

From 7/12/24 to 7/16/24 the speed trailer was on NB South River St by the walking bridge. During this time 15,585 vehicles passed with 11,663 above the posted 30 mph speed. 85% of those vehicles were at an average speed of 39 mph.

Mr. Clark said he will have a conversation with Chief Sullivan about patrolling VT Route 105. Officer Gilbert said they do patrol especially with the road being redone. Officer Gilbert said they have dates set with the Governors Highway Safety to get out there more.

b) Swanton Town Health Officer

Mr. Savage has been taking care of Health Officer calls for Mr. Clark.

Mr. Savage said the Platt St. sewer line complaint is scheduled to be fixed in mid-September. Mr. Savage reviewed other calls he has taken from Brault Park, Church Rd, St. Albans Rd & Church St.

Mr. Clark thanked Mr. Savage for his help with these calls. There have been no applicants for the open position.

4. New Town Business

a) Presentation of attic repairs of Swanton Public Library – Mr. Laz Scangas

Mr. Scangas came before the board to share what he proposes to do to insulate Swanton Public Library attic. Mr. Scangas said they have determined they can insulate the underside of the rafters of the roof and eaves. This will require removing roughly 3' down the wall from the top to seal. This will eliminate any outside air from going in the attic. Mr. Scangas said this also includes cost to fire rate the elevator shaft. They will insulate to R-38. This plan will require removing some duct work to insulate then installing duct work. This plan will have the whole attic in a warm space. Mr. Scangas has received one insulation contractor for an estimate and will have another next week. Mr. Scangas provided a proposed scope of work with estimated costs. **Please see attached.**

Mr. Scangas said if this is negotiated with contractor's vs having a general contractor for the whole project will save money. Arnold & Scangas is willing to line up the contractors for the Town if they would like it is only going to be 3 subcontractors. That will also lower the cost of design. Mr. Clark agreed this project does not need extensive drawings, it's very straightforward. Because they will be removing duct work, they will have to wait until after the heating season. Mr. Fournier agreed investing the money in a project coordinator vs a contractor is a better investment. This will bring the cost down vs proposed. Mr. Scangas will have a better estimate for the next meeting and include what his costs would be. Mr. Fournier said if they use the Special Funds, it will be at their discretion, everyone agrees this will be a good use of that money.

Mr. Clark suggested item #1 can be done this fall. Mr. Scangas will give them recommendations regarding that. Mr. Bourgeois asked if there is rebates for the work? Mr. Scangas said he has not spoken with Vermont Gas yet, but they did pay for half of the blower door test previously. Mr. Scangas said it will depend on the air leakage after the project is completed. Mr. Savage suggested item # 5 be done anytime as well, yes but he would like to review with them that it is done correctly.

Mr. Scangas will come back to the board with revised numbers. Mr. Fournier said they should let the library know this is in the works.

5. Highway Department

a) Discussion of change of Speed Limit on South River Street

Mr. Clark said they have the guidelines for lowering speed limits on Town roads vs. State Highways.

Mr. Clark reviewed the speed data from SB South River St at Beebe/County Rd in June. That data shows 85% of the traffic was 46 mph in a posted 40 mph zone. With this data it does not show the need to lower/keep the 30-mph speed posted during the bridge closure. Mr. Fournier said the numbers indicate 40-mph is ok. Mr. Clark read the requirements for lowering the speed limit and they do not apply. Bourgeois asked if landowners have asked for the speed to be lowered? Ms. Draper said they did express concern before the bridge closure of speed and being able to pull out on the road. Mr. Clark said he is comfortable returning the signs to 40 mph. If they get a request, they can reconsider it later. Mr. Bourgeois asked if they have discussed this with the Polic Chief? No. Mr. Fournier said the speed data does show the need and would it hold up. Mr. Fournier said the only compromise is 35-mph.

Ms. Draper made a motion to return the speed limit on South River St to 40-mph, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

6. Old Town Business

7. Community and Economic Development

a) Update on conversations with landowners in Southern Growth District

Mr. Fournier updated the board that he has contacted major landowners in the Southern Growth District, they believe sewer in the area would be positive. It is zoned for growth, to do that they would like those services available. Mr. Fournier said the landowners agreed if the Town wanted to pursue the effort it would be a wise thing for the area. Mr. Bourgeois asked what he means by “pursue the effort”. Mr. Fournier said that if the Town wanted to see what’s available and if there is funding. Mr. Fournier said with the armory coming that could give some leverage. Mr. Bourgeois asked whom Mr. Fournier spoke with. Mr. Fournier said the landowners are not developers and are unsure how to do it. Mr. Bourgeois said the Town is not developers. Mr. Bourgeois said there are developers out there that know how to do this and would pay for it as part of the development. Mr. Fournier asked the only question is to they pursue this or let it happen by itself? Mr. Bourgeois asked what the pros/cons? At some point if it’s feasible it will happen on its own. The landowners are good at what they do. Mr. Clark asked what is FCIDC’s role in all of this? Mr. Bourgeois said they are more for industrial development, but this could be because we need housing, they have more expertise in this. Mr. Fournier said he thinks they should come up with some kind of proposal to share with FCIDC. Mr. Savage asked if the landowners said what they wanted to do? Not really. Is there a way, is there a benefit to getting sewer to the area. Is St. Albans City open to an allocation. Mr. Savage will reach out to Tim Smith and invite him to a meeting. Ms. Draper said if they are inviting him, it would be nice to get a general update from FCIDC for Swanton as they allocate funds to them each year.

8. Any Other Necessary Business

a) 2024 Tax Rate

Ms. Cathy Fournier shared that they have received the education rates from the State of Vermont. Ms. Cathy Fournier shared the total increase in the tax rate education and municipal is .2205 (11.78%) residential and .2969 (14.55%) non-residential. Mr. Fournier asked if the grand list grew? Yes

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the 2024 tax rate of 2.0923% residential & 2.3373% non-residential, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

9. Correspondence

None

10. Public Comment (Reprise)

Ms. Briggs thanked the board for allowing her to speak. She currently owns 231 Lakewood Dr. Currently there is a road sign for Queens Court. Ms. Briggs would like to request the road be changed to a name more in harmony with the natural environment and her own values. Mr. Clark said this is public comment and they will do some research and come back to the board with what they can and cannot do. Mr. Bourgeois asked what

she would like to change the street name to? Its currently known as Queens Court and she would like it to be known as? Once they decided she would give her recommendations. Ms. Briggs said something referring to the environments, a natural species to the area. Mr. Clark asked if this is a private road or public road? This is a private road; it is a right-of-way that goes through their land. Mr. Clark said they would get back to her.

11. Upcoming Events
- a) Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2024-National Night Out – Village Green

5:00 pm to 8:00 pm

b) Wednesday, Aug. 7, 2024 – Planning Commission – Town Offices

6:30 pm

c) Saturday, August 10, 2024-CornFest Swanton Recreation-3pm-7pm

d) Tuesday, Aug. 13, 2024 – Vermont Primary Elections – Village

Complex – Polls open from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. Town Clerk’s

Office – CLOSED

e) Wednesday, Aug. 14, 2024 – Planning Commission – Town Offices

6:30 pm

f) Tuesday, Aug. 20, 2024 – Regular Selectboard Meeting – 6:00 pm

g) Thursday, Aug. 29, 2024 – DRB – Town Offices – 6:00 pm
12. Executive session (If needed)
- Not Needed
13. Adjourn
- Mr. Fournier made a motion to adjourn at 7:39 pm, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois.**
- Motion carried.**

Respectfully Submitted by
Christina Candels-Administrative Assistant

Received and filed by:

Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk

Date