

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

April 15, 2025 – 6:00 pm

Present: Joel Clark-Chair, Earl Fournier, Nicole Draper, Steve Bourgeois, Nick Brosseau-Members, Brian Savage-Town Administrator, Cathy Fournier-Town Clerk, Christina Candels-Assistant Town Administrator, Heather Lavoie, Bob Nielsen, Katie Underwood, Ron Underwood, Betsy Fournier, Melinda Antonucci
Zoom: Ben Kaufmann

A. Call to Order

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

B. Pledge of Allegiance

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

C. Agenda Review

Mr. Clark reviewed the agenda.

Mr. Savage said they do not have a report on Animal Control.

Mr. Clark suggested moving Liquor Control up on the agenda.

D. Meeting Topics

1. Minutes

a) Regular Selectboard Meeting of April 1, 2025

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the Regular Selectboard Meeting minutes of April 1, 2025, as written, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

2. Public Comments

None

3. Law Enforcement.

a) Swanton Animal Control

No Report from AOC.

4. Liquor Control Board

Mr. Fournier made a motion to recess the Regular Selectboard meeting and Convene the Liquor Control Board meeting at 6:03 pm, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

Ms. Antonucci came before the board. Ms. Cathy Fournier shared that Ms. Antonucci is the owner of Vermont Event & Wedding Rentals and is requesting a Commercial Catering Liquor License for the Champlain Country Club.

Ms. Antonucci said the requirement of Vermont Liquor Control is that they hold a commercial kitchen liquor license to operate at outside events. Ms. Antonucci said she will not be serving liquor/events at the country club and would still be required to obtain a special event liquor license for any town she has an event. This will allow her to serve liquor at any offsite event in the State. This will not affect the Country Club's ability to use the kitchen at all.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the Commercial Kitchen 1st & 3rd Class Liquor License for Vermont Event & Wedding Rentals LLC, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

Ms. Draper made a motion to adjourn the Liquor Control Board meeting and reenter the Regular Selectboard meeting at 6:07 pm, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

5. Expenditures

a) General Orders

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve General Orders from 3/18/25 to 4/15/25 in the amount of \$201,937.49, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

Mr. Fournier asked if these expenditures are included in the quarterly expense report?
Yes.

b) Highway Orders

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the Highway Department Orders from 3/18/25 to 4/15/25 in the amount of \$90,371.29, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried. Discussion: Add Brooklyn St. Stormwater permit.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the increase in the change of the Highway Orders to be the amount of \$92,871.29, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

c) Special Orders

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Special Orders from 3/18/25 to 4/15/25 in the amount of \$4,978.59, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

Discussion: These included a \$2,500 invoice for Brooklyn St Stormwater permit, this should be part of the Highway Department Orders.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve a decrease in the amount of the Special Orders to be \$2,478.59, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

d) Highway & General Payroll Orders

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve Highway & General Payroll Orders from 3/18/25 to 4/15/25 in the amount of \$42,346.78, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

e) Library Orders

Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the Library Orders from 3/18/25 to 4/15/25 in the amount of \$1,120.84, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

f) Library Payroll Orders

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Library Payroll Orders from 3/18/25 to 4/15/25 in the amount of \$4,797.57, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

6. Highway Department

a) Monthly Report on Highway Department Matters

Mr. Clark shared the highway crew has been filling pot holes, sweeping streets, picking up trash, straightening signs and prepping roads for the paving contract. There are a couple of culverts that may need to be changed prior to them being paved.

They will assist the library moving some stuff to storage prepping for the repairs at the library.

No vehicle or employee issues.

The paving has gone out to bid, to be reviewed and awarded in May. The Brooklyn St. stormwater permit has been sent back from the State and has been corrected by East Engineering. Mr. Clark will sign and send it back to the State.

The paving and structures grants have been submitted.

Mr. Clark would like to draft an RFP for the pickup replacement discussed at a previous meeting. They can review prior to sending the RFP out. Mr. Clark thinks the cost should be 50k-60k. Mr. Fournier said they can market and sell the truck as well. The balance if needed can come out of the vehicle replacement fund they have established.

Mr. Clark will have Mr. Lapan work with Mr. Savage to get the truck listed for sale.

7. Old Town Business

a) Swanton Historical Society – Heather Lavoie

Ms. Lavoie came before the board to share the proposed operating expenses, remodeling and repairs for the Swanton Historical Society Bank Building Museum. The Swanton Historical Society was gifted the building from Mr. David Horton.

Ms. Lavoie had a property inspection from the property report. The inspection found nothing serious. Mr. Horton conveyed the property as a gift to the Swanton Historical Society in the conditions listed:

a) to establish a historical museum; b) to preserve the property as a historical structure; and c) to provide a permanent home for the offices of the Swanton Historical Society.

Ms. Lavoie said they have a fundraising campaign to sell bricks that will begin in May.

This fundraising campaign will raise \$150,000 if all the bricks are sold, each brick will be \$150.

Mr. Brosseau said he is on the Swanton Historical Society board does he need to reclus himself from asking questions and/or voting? Mr. Clark said it depends on the topic being voted on wither it will enhance his position on the board. He is not a paid employee.

Ms. Lavoie shared the St. Albans Messenger has done an article on the history of the building and the future plans of the Swanton Historical Society.

Mr. Brosseau asked what would happen to the building if they cannot make this project work as planned? Ms. Lavoie suspected it would need to resort to Mr. Horton and/or what he wanted.

The last time Ms. Lavoie came before the board she was requesting the Town to help purchase this property, it has since been donated to them. The Selectboard is not interested in owning the building.

Ms. Draper asked how they intend to make the building sustainable after the fundraising?

Ms. Lavoie said they will continue to fundraise, many museums operate strictly on fundraising. They have also been approved to hold a coin drop in August.

The hours are planned to stay the same at the railroad depot.

Ms. Lavoie said their quotes for having the building renovated for their use are \$42,000 plus \$7,500 in annual expenses.

Mr. Clark said they still have some Special Funds (formerly ARPA Funds). Ms. Lavoie was seeking the same relationship with the Town as they have with the railroad depot building. The Town maintains/owns the building. (maintenance, utilities, heat & electricity etc.) The Selectboard is not interested in taking over another building at this time. The current space they occupy in the Swanton Public Library is not open to the public.

Mr. Clark suggested if they need \$40,000 to renovate, the Selectboard could possibly commit/donate to a \$10,000 contribution. This would be once the Historical Society has raised \$30,000-\$40,000. This was discussed, Mr. Bourgeois felt it was a little high of an amount to commit. Mr. Fournier suggested a \$15,000 commitment from the Special Funds. This would be a one-time commitment/donation.

The board said they would like to see volunteer commitment for this project.

Mr. Brosseau suggested a smaller amount on an annual basis. The board only showed interest in a one-time donation only once the Historical Society raised \$30,000-\$40,000.

Ms. Draper shared grant suggestions she has told Ms. Lavoie that they should apply for as well for this project, before asking the Town to sacrifice Special Funds that are once in lifetime funds for the Town, as well as the Historical Society's ability to be sustainable in the building.

Mr. Fournier made a motion that the Selectboard supports the concept presented, they have not set a financial amount at this time, any public support that can be shown to the Selectboard is going to help make the final decision, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried. Mr. Brosseau abstained.

b) Swanton Recreation Constitution and By-Laws review

Mr. Clark said they have the draft the Selectboard last reviewed, as well as two letters of support from Franklin Grand Isle Tobacco Prevention Coalition and Missisquoi Valley School District, and emails from Mr. Brosseau, Mr. Bourgeois and Mr. Clark with items for discussion. Mr. Clark suggested they start at the top and review the whole document. Mr. Bourgeois suggested taking the ideas and emails into the document, vs going through the draft. The Selectboard agreed to review this draft at the last meeting tonight, then pass it on to the Recreation board review, and have the boards work together.

The edits agreed upon are as follows with both the Selectboard and Recreation Board:

Constitution and Bylaws

- The Recreation Board is a department of the Town and its board of directors' report to the Selectboard.
- All Recreation Board vacancies will be posted publicly for 30 days, nominated to the Selectboard for approval.
- The Town Administrator will not be required to be a ex officio member. The Selectboard will appoint a representative who will attend the Recreation Meetings quarterly at a minimum.
- Replace Swanton Board of Selectrmen with Selectboard.

- All agendas will be posted on the SwantonRec.Org website. You can find a link on the Town of Swanton website.
- The minutes from Recreation Board meetings will be emailed to the Town Administrator to be shared with the Selectboard monthly.
- The Recreation Board will appoint a vice-chair for the executive board.
- All monies will fall under the Municipal Financial Policies.
- The Swanton Selectboard will review the constitution and bylaws every two years.
- The Recreation Commission Chair (\$5,000) and Executive Director (\$1,000) purchasing authority that is non aggregate. Over those amounts it needs to be approved by the Recreation Commission.
- The Recreation Commission will not be able to incur any dept without Selectboard approval. This will be part of the Town purchasing policy.
- None of the Recreation funds are managed by the Swanton Town Treasurer, they will be by the Recreation Treasure.
- Special Funds will not have a limit/cap \$60,000 limit. If there is a limit/cap, they will not be able to receive grants, donations or anything once they hit that limit if there was a limit/cap.
Special Funds will not be used to operate January 1st until the Town Meeting Day budgets are approved.
- Special Funds balance will be part of the quarterly reports provided to the Selectboard.
- Capital Improvements fund will have a \$50,000 limit/cap.
- Hiring/Firing of employees will be replaced with terminating.
- Permanent employees will be replaced with regular full-time or part-time employees.
- The Recreation budget should be present to the Selectboard in December.

These edits will be added/removed and approved by the Selectboard at the next meeting.

c) Purchasing authority for Swanton Recreation

Mr. Clark said the amounts discussed for the Recreation Commission Chair and Executive Director need to be approved until they are added to the Town of Swanton's Purchasing Policy.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the Recreation Chair having the authority to spend up to \$5,000 and the Executive Director to have the authority to spend up to \$1,000 as long as it is within budget line items, this is temporary until it is added to the Town of Swanton Purchasing Policy, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried. Ms. Draper abstained. Mr. Bourgeois opposed.

d) Discussion of SVPD Contract

Swanton Village has compared the amount warned \$478,117.00 for the Town of Swanton police contract and it is \$11,020.19 less than the amount the contract will be for. The breakdown is attached.

The board currently has not made a decision how to cover the shortage.

The contract was reviewed and needs the chair's signature.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the Selectboard Chair signing the contract with the Swanton Village Police Department for the amount of \$489,137.19 which is \$11,020.19 higher than what was approved on Town Meeting Day due to budget confusion for three months of 2026, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

e) LVRT Update

Mr. Clark said the approval process with the contractor is progressing.

f) Update on Scoping Study – Bushey Road

Mr. Savage said Northwest Regional Planning put out the RFP for the project and they did receive one reply. The anticipated project should start May 1st and be completed by October 31st. The Town should see the results after that.

g) Swanton Public Library insulation project schedule

Mr. Savage said the attic insulation schedule has been worked out with all the contractors involved. Mr. Menard will do the window & door insulation next week. The library will be open. The electrical work will also be completed next week.

The library will be closed April 28th -May 19th for the attic repairs.

Ms. Draper asked if they included professional cleaning of the library after the construction is completed? This would be above and beyond the regular cleaning performed. Mr. Savage will consult with the engineer is a plan to curtain or cover.

Mr. Brosseau said the library will try its best to continue programing at the local churches while the building is closed.

Mr. Fournier asked if they have pricing on gutters and the entrance yet? Mr. Savage said entrance is part of a contract with Mr. Menard. They will send out an RFP for gutters and snow guards.

8. New Town Business

a) Letter of Support for the Village of Swanton for annexation of 124 First Street

Mr. Savage said there is a hearing on Wednesday 4/16 with the Vermont Government & Military Affairs committee that Mr. Savage will testify to with the board's support regarding the Village of Swanton annexing 124 First Street from the Town to the Village of Swanton. The Village is amending their charter to do this. The Village does not legally need the support of the Town to do this.

Mr. Savage will give a testimony at the hearing.

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the letter of support for Swanton Village to annex 124 First Street from the Town to the Village for its garage facility and the Town Administrator to sign, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

b) New Street name for 911

David & Peggy Howrigan have been approved of a 5-lot subdivision of Viens Rd and would like to name the street Kashmir Drive. There are no conflicts with E-911.

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve the street name of Kashmir Drive, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

c) Quarterly budget update for Highway and General Accounts

Postponed until the next Regular Selectboard Meeting.

d) Quarterly budget update for Swanton Recreation Commission

Postponed until the next Regular Selectboard Meeting.

9. Community and Economic Development

None

11. Any Other Necessary Business

At the next meeting the board would like updates on the school/garage/Rowel land swap, Sholan Road and the quarterly budgets.

12. Correspondence

Mr. Savage shared a letter of thanks from the Franklin County Senior Center.

13. Public Comment (Reprise)

None

14. Upcoming Events

a) Wednesday – April 16, 2025 – Planning Commission – 5:30 pm Town Offices & Zoom

b) Friday – April 18, 2025 – Town Offices and Operations CLOSED in observance of Good Friday

c) Saturday – April 19, 2025 – Easter Egg Hunt – 8:45 am on the Village Green

d) Thursday – April 24, 2025 – DRB Meeting – 6:00 pm – Town Offices and Zoom

e) Tuesday – May 6, 2025 – Selectboard Meeting – 6:00 pm – Town Offices and Zoom

f) Wednesday – May 7, 2025 – Planning Commission Public Hearing for Zoning By-laws update – 6:00 pm – Town Offices and Zoom

15. Executive session (Personnel)

Ms. Draper made a motion to enter executive session at 8:49 pm, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

Ms. Draper made a motion to exit executive session at 9:08 pm, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

No Action Taken

Mr. Savage said a lifelong resident of the community, Mr. Gordon Cheney, will celebrate his 100th birthday 4-21-25, at the request of the Selectboard, Mr. Savage drafted a resolution to be signed by the Selectboard and delivered to Mr. Cheney on his birthday.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to adopt the resolution for Mr. Cheney, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

16. Adjourn

Ms. Draper made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 pm, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by
Christina Candels-Assistant Town Administrator

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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.

Received and filed by:

Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk

Date