

**MINUTES
TOWN OF SWANTON
REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING
Town Office Building
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488
TUESDAY
May 20, 2025**

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

Zoom: No Attendance

Absent: Earl Fournier

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.

Mr. Savage said the Friends of Northern Lake Champlain have been rescheduled to the June 3, 2025, meeting.

Mr. Savage said Mr. Cummings will not be attending, he will need a meeting with the State of Vermont AOT before coming with his request to the Selectboard.

D. Meeting Topics

1. Minutes

a) Regular Selectboard Meeting of May 6, 2025

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve the Regular Selectboard Meeting minutes from May 6, 2025, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

2. Public Comments

None

3. Law Enforcement.

a) Swanton Animal Control

The board reviewed Mr. Benson's report from April 2025.

4. Expenditures

a) General Order

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve the General Order for 4/16/25 to 5/20/25 in the amount of \$101,985.39, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

b) Highway Orders

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Highway Orders for 4/16/25 to 5/20/25 in the amount of \$54,984.94, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

c) Special Orders

Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the Special Order for 4/16/25 to 5/20/25 in the amount of \$17,710.20, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

Mr. Clark asked when they will receive a report on the soil testing on 4th Street?

(These orders included charges for the testing.)

Mr. Savage said the testing is complete, but the report has been sent to the State of Vermont's before approval before the Town receives the report.

d) Library Orders

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve the Library Orders for 4/16/25 to 5/20/25 in the amount of \$5,077.60, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

e) Highway & General Payroll Orders

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Highway & General Payroll Order for 4/16/25 to 5/20/25 in the amount of \$44,228.37, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

f) Library Orders

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Library Payroll Order for 4/16/25 to 5/20/25 in the amount of \$9,787.72, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

5. Highway Department

a) Monthly Report on Highway Department Matters

Mr. Clark shared the Highway crew has been cleaning out ditches and culverts, dealing with beavers on Swanton Hill Rd.

They have been prepping the road planned for paving, cutting back the shoulders.

The paving dates have not been set yet.

Mr. Clark said he has spoken with L&D Safety Markings to get a price for line striping roads. They are the only company in the area offering this currently.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if this includes crosswalks? No, Swanton Village paints them, and they will plan this to be done soon.

Mr. Clark said Swanton Hill Rd, they will meet with the landowners soon with the easements needed for this work. The plan is to do this work late July.

Mr. Clark said Mr. Savage has prepared three easements for the Brooklyn St. stormwater work; this will be done late in the summer/fall as it is to wet to do this project now.

The next Selectboard meeting is the date for bids on the truck for sale.

Mr. Clark said they have not finalized the RFP for the ¾ ton truck they are talking about purchasing.

Mr. Clark & Mr. Lapan still have to review the extended warranty for the new highway truck to make a proposal to the Selectboard if they should purchase the extended warranty.

LVRT contractor is scheduled to begin working 5/21/25.

b) Proposal from East Engineering for Barry Road culvert

Mr. Clark said the State has sent an email awarding the \$25,000 grant the Town applied for to pay for the design. This is pending the State budget approval. No work will begin until after July 1st.

East Engineering has submitted a proposal. The design cost is \$25,000. The total project is estimated to be \$400,000-\$500,000.

Tyler Billingsly from East Engineering has done a lot of work for the Town of Swanton. This project will require a lot of permits.

Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the proposal from East Engineering to do the design of the Barry Rd culvert replacement, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

Ms. Draper wanted to take a moment to commend the Highway Department and the work they did for Swanton Rec, they did a great job and were incredibly helpful.

They put down stone in the driveway and around the bathrooms making them ADA accessible and help move the garden shed for the community garden. The area is being redesigned to be more accessible for the community.

6. Old Town Business

a) Swanton Public Library insulation project schedule

Mr. Savage said the project is complete.

The windows in the Kings Daughter's Room, they are still waiting for the parts.

June 3rd they will perform another blow test to determine if Vermont Gas will give the Town a rebate for the work done.

The library will remain closed until Tuesday.

Mr. Savage also thanked the Highway Department for their help with moving items and picking up items for this project.

Mr. Clark asked if the building cleanliness is? The floors need good vacuuming.

Mr. Clark thanked Mr. Savage for his work coordinating this project and keeping things moving.

Mr. Brosseau asked if the electric work from the light that fell? Mr. Savage said that was not part of this project. The replacement light is very expensive, and the architect felt the area has enough light without it.

b) Pay increase – Animal Control Officer

Mr. Savage said Ms. Candels did research on the amount of increase Town employees have received since Mr. Benson was hired in 2020 as well as if Mr. Benson had received the same increase as Town employees how much he would be earning.

The board all agreed that Mr. Benson does a great job. Mr. Benson is always available when Mr. Savage or Ms. Candels call him.

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to increase ACO Mr. Benson to \$751.65 a month, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

This will take effect June 1st.

c) Friends of Northern Lake Champlain

Postponed until June 3, 2025.

d) Promote Swanton update

Ms. Draper shared the Promote Swanton group has been working with Synchronicity to design and rebrand the community. The members of Promote Swanton did a survey and gathered input and shared the responses.

Ms. Draper shared a concept draft drawing with the board.

Ms. Draper asked for the board members to share their comments and thoughts with her via email and she will share with the Promote Swanton group.

They have had a great opportunity working with Synchronicity with this project.

Ms. Draper said she shared the symbolism with the Abenaki tribal council.

Mr. Clark said the welcome to Swanton signs need replacement.

Ms. Draper said this logo on the sign really pops and with the work the Beautification committee has done makes the community very welcoming.

Ms. Draper said Promote Swanton is working to gather pictures of businesses to add to the business directory on the website when it is updated as well as a brochure.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if there has been any discussion about the noise from loud cars, for example when people are eating outside at Green Mountain Bistro. That would be a Village question.

7. New Town Business

a) Request of Rick Cummings to connect Lydia's Ridge to State Drive

Tabled until further notice. This needs to be a conversation with the State of Vermont, the Town has not taken ownership of the new section of State Drive yet therefore they cannot approve access for development.

b) Security Cameras upgrade for Swanton Public Library

Mr. Brosseau said he attended a Library Trustee's meeting last week and Abby brought up security cameras. A recent walk through with the Insurance company said there is grants available for security upgrades.

Mr. Savage said the insurance company is PASIF through VLCT.

Ms. Candels did request information on the grant. The grant would be awarded on a scale and can be up to 50% of pre-approved products. Abby thought they would cost \$5,000-\$10,000.

Ms. Candels said they also need to decide what to use the grant for because there was discussion about using the grant for backup cameras for the Highway Dept trucks.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if this should be a budgeted item next year? Therefore, sticking to the budget, they have.

The board suggested more research be done and come back to the board.

c) Pay increase – DRB and Planning Commission members

Mr. Clark said with openings on both boards it is time to look at their stipend.

Currently the Chair gets \$55, and the members get \$45 per meeting.

Ms. Cathy Fournier said they have been at this rate for at least three years.

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to increase the chairs to \$65, and the members to \$55 per meeting effective June 1st, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

d) Purchasing Policy

Mr. Clark said these are for review and send comments to Mr. Savage to add to the next meeting.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if the Recreation Committee not taking out loans was added? That was discussed yes.

Ms. Draper said those changes were added to the Rec Bylaws.

8. Community and Economic Development

Ms. Draper said businesses have asked about more signage directing people to the downtown, for example by the highway and coming in from West Swanton. Is there anything the Town can do, is something to think about.

Mr. Clark suggested Promote Swanton make suggestions for.

Mr. Bourgeois said some Towns have signs for this.

Mr. Savage and Mr. Clark said the State dictates what signs can be put up in those areas and it is very hard/limited what you can do for signs.

9. Any Other Necessary Business

Mr. Savage gave the board members each a copy of the A.M. Peisch 2023 audit report for them to review. This will be on the agenda at a later date.

10. Correspondence

None

11. Public Comment (Reprise)

Ms. Draper shared if anyone is an LVRT trial user and is interested in becoming a trail ambassador, please reach out to her at the Rec dept.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if there had been any discussion on sponsoring riders to take the trail? When the trailhead is finished this may increase.

Mr. Brosseau asked when they will sign the Rec bylaws? They are complete and will be signed at the next meeting.

Mr. Clark wanted to share if you want any type of float or group in the Memorial Day Parade please come out, the parade starts at 2:00pm on May 26th remembering those who gave the ultimate sacrifice.

12. Upcoming Events

a) Thursday – May 22, 2025 – DRB Meeting – 6:00 pm – Town Offices

b) Saturday – May 24, 2025 – Veterans Flag Display Set up – 9:00 am – Village Green

c) Saturday & Sunday – May 24 & 25, 2024 – Abenaki Heritage Festival –

10:00 am to 5:00 pm – Swanton Rec. Field – 16 Jewett Street

d) Monday – May 26, 2025 – Memorial Day Holiday – Offices and Operations CLOSED

e) Monday – May 26, 2025 – Memorial Day Parade -2:00 pm – Grand Ave to Village Sq.

f) Saturday – May 31, 2025 – Veterans Flag Display Take Down – Village Green

g) Tuesday – June 3, 2025 – Regular Selectboard Meeting – 6:00 pm – Town Offices

13. Executive session (Real Estate/Legal)

Ms. Draper made a motion to enter executive session at 6:50pm, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

Ms. Draper made a motion to exit executive session at 7:22 pm, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

No Action Taken.

14. Adjourn

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to adjourn at 7:23 pm, seconded by Ms. Draper. 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.

Received and filed by:

Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk

Date