

**DRAFT MINUTES
TOWN OF SWANTON
SELECTBOARD MEETING
JOINT MEETING WITH SWANTON VILLAGE TRUSTEES
Town Office Building
In-Person & By Zoom
Tuesday, October 21, 2025**

Present: Earl Fournier, Nicole Draper, Nick Brosseau, Steve Bourgeois-Selectboard Members, Brian Savage-Town Administrator, Cathy Fournier-Town Clerk, Christina Candels-Assistant Town Administrator, David Winchester-Village President, Neal Speer, Adam Paxman, Suzie Kelleher-Village Trustees, Bill Sheets-Village Manager, Bob Nielson, Darcy Benoit, BJ Benoit, Richard Cummings
Zoom: Joel Clark-SLB Chair, Pamela Marshall, Linda

- A. Call to Order
Mr. Fournier called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance
Mr. Fournier led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- C. Agenda Review
Mr. Savage requested to add the Swanton Health Officer Report under Law Enforcement and Executive Session for a Legal Matter.
- D. Meeting Topics
 - 1. Minutes
 - a) Regular Selectboard meeting of October 7, 2025
Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve the Regular Selectboard meeting minutes of October 7, 2025, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.
 - 2. Public Comments
None
- 3. **JOINT MEETING WITH VILLAGE TRUSTEES**

Village President Mr. Winchester called the Village Trustees meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

- a) Discussion of Local Option Tax & Revenue Split
Mr. Savage shared the Vermont Legislature did not take up the Town/Village proposal, so the Town and Village has proposed moving forward with the Town enacting a LOT with and agreed upon split with Swanton Village.
Mr. Savage also updated the Town will not need to adopt a charter to enact a LOT just a vote of the people.
Mr. Savage read the Vermont Department of Taxes How to Adopt a Local Option Tax in Your Community information. Please see attached.
Mr. Savage shared the data Ms. Candels collected with the potential LOT collected if Swanton had a LOT in 2021-2024.
Mr. Savage shared in 2024 if Swanton had a LOT they would have received \$331,894 after the State keeps .25% of the 1%. If the Town & Village were to split based on the grand list (77/23) as they do for fire protection, this would provide \$255,559 to the Town & \$76,336 to the Village. These are raw numbers. Please see attached.

Mr. Clark suggested if they move forward both boards should have a signed agreement (MOU) on that they should enact one tax, how it would be split and how to terminate if there is an issue between the boards.

Ms. Draper shared information she collected and proposals on what a LOT could do to benefit Swanton as a capital investment.

If the Town is to move forward with a LOT, it will need the Selectboards approval not the Trustees.

Ms. Kelleher said the reason the Trustees are here is to share that if the Selectboard/Town chooses to move forward the Village will not move forward with their own LOT if there is an agreed upon split in the revenue.

The Selectboard members and Village Trustees had an open discussion about the proposal of a LOT and agreed to move forward with a Public Hearing to explain the pros/cons of a LOT to community and business members.

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion that the Selectboard move forward with Swanton LOT, distributed with Swanton Village based on the grand list, the Town will use this revenue for Capital Improvement Fund, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

Ms. Kelleher made a motion saying that in support of the Town of Swanton passing a LOT in 2026 the Village will not seek a LOT, and they agree with division based on the grand list, seconded by Mr. Paxman. Motion carried.

The Selectboard & Village Trustees will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, November 12, 2025, at 7 pm at the Village Complex.

b) Promoting Swanton Activity

Mr. Fournier shared they have the updated website design back from Ecopixel as well as the drone pictures, this is ready to launch once given the ok.

Ms. Draper said this is a joint Town & Village website, so they want to ensure the Trustees agree on the new changes.

Promote Swanton is also looking to have a brochure and send a postcard to all Swanton residents to share the updated website.

Ms. Draper said they have received great feedback from businesses wanting to be added to the website.

Ms. Draper said the group has discussed having a line item in the budget to keep this going, this is not a one-time plan. They have spent the money on the website, the new welcome to Swanton signs they want to continue the momentum and updates for Swanton as one community.

Mr. Fournier said the current design does not include the branding added to the website and that is the next step, the cost to add it is \$3375. This is how they will promote the community.

Ms. Kelleher said the last time they discussed adding Promote Swanton to the budget they agreed it would come out of the Town's General Fund as well as the website maintenance from Ecopixel.

The updates thus far have been paid by the Town from Special Funds.

The Trustees and the Selectboard agreed with the Promote Swanton's direction on the website, go forward with adding the branding, comfortable with sending a mailer and having a brochure to promote the community.

Mr. Savage suggested adding to the Town vehicles the website www.SwantonVT.gov, branding design and the QR code. The Village Trustees agreed they should to the village vehicles as well.

Ms. Benoit added as a business owner she would like to see the new logo added to things like stickers or T-shirts that could be available to sell to the general public. To advertise in the Vermont Department of Tourism's book every year costs \$10,000 per page and business owners cannot afford that. To do something on a smaller scale locally would be great.

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to add the branding to the website in the amount of \$3375 from the Special Funds, seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion carried.

c) Law Enforcement

Mr. Sheets said he spoke with Mr. Savage and the discussion about the state of law enforcement after the discussion to seek additional speed enforcement.

Mr. Fournier said they did have that discussion, but they know the Swanton Village Police are short of help, but they had complaints for citizens especially early mornings and commuting times.

Mr. Fournier said they understood it is not practical with the present staff.

Mr. Clark said they wanted to make it very clear at the board meeting that it was not a reflection of services they got from the Swanton Village Police; this was trying to get extra hours.

Mr. Clark said even tight at the police are they mentioned very specific issues to the Chief and they have scene action on those times. They were looking for other options for traffic.

Mr. Sheets said the Trustees and the Chief does not take that as anything resembling dissatisfaction, they support the Town seeking alternatives for speed enforcement because they cannot provide those services right now.

Mr. Fournier said they have not met with the Sheriff's Office. They have had legitimate concerns from residents.

Mr. Speer suggested the Promoting Swanton group add some history to what they are doing, what has made Swanton and how they got where they are.

Mr. Paxman made a motion to adjourn the Village Trustees meeting at 7:14 pm, seconded by Ms. Kelleher. Motion carried.

4. Law Enforcement

a) September Animal Control Report

Mr. Savage provided ACO Mr. Bensons September report.

Mr. Savage will follow up regarding a sanitation investigation in the report and inform the board.

Mr. Fournier asked about chickens at large in the report? The Village has a pending ordinance regarding chickens that will address chickens.

Mr. Brousseau asked where Whiskers n Tails is located? Grand Isle.

b) September Health Officer Report

Mr. Savage provided SHO Ms. Kelleher's September report. The only incident she responded to was a question about mold on a rental property. Ms. Kelleher sent the report to the landlord.

Ms. Kelleher did leave a letter for the tenant to pick up.

Mr. Savage will follow up with Ms. Kelleher.

5. Highway Department

Mr. Clark shared they have the easement signed for the work to be done on Brooklyn St.

Mr. Lapan will start clearing the area and the project will be completed this fall.

6. Expenditures

a) General Orders

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve the General Orders of September 17, 2025, to October 21, 2025, in the amount of \$192,297.72, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

b) Highway Orders

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Highway Orders of September 17, 2025, to October 21, 2025, in the amount of \$771,952.16, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

Mr. Clark said the LVRT electrical bill is included, in the future it should be in the General Fund. The LVRT will be a separate line-item next year as there will be lights, sewer and water bill.

c) Library Orders

Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the Library Orders of September 17, 2025, to October 21, 2025, in the amount of \$13,543.12, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

Mr. Fournier asked if they have fixed the sub pump issue? Mr. Savage has asked for the quote and for it to be scheduled.

d) Highway & General Payroll Orders

Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the Highway & General Payroll Orders of September 17, 2025, to October 21, 2025, in the amount of \$41,944.46, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

e) Library Payroll Orders

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Library Payroll Orders of September 17, 2025, to October 21, 2025, in the amount of \$10,159.09, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

f) Special Orders

Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the Special Order of September 17, 2025, to October 21, 2025, in the amount of \$212,413.11, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

7. Old Town Business

a) Ronald Kilburn Railroad Museum update

Mr. Savage has met with Patrick Menard and has not received the quote yet.

Mr. Savage submitted the grant before the due date.

b) LVRT update

Mr. Clark said they metal for the roofs has been delivered and should be put on this week.

Mr. Clark said he has received a quote for a camera for the trailhead that will feed into Swanton Village camera system. Swanton Village is fine with the addition of the camera. The cost is \$4,200 and would be 80% refunded by the grant. The State confirmed it is reimbursable.

Mr. Fournier said they have not spent what they set aside for the trailhead? No, they have \$145,000 they set aside for the project, and they will not use it all.

Mr. Clark said they were informed by the State they needed a construction permit from the Office of Fire Safety that they were not aware of. The permit application was submitted with the \$624 fee. Again, that is 80/20 split.

Mr. Savage said the State received the application and called to inquire where to send it. Mr. Savage gave them the name.

Mr. Clark said in a future meeting they need to discuss who will maintain the grass and keep an eye on the buildings. Mr. Clark's thought should be part of the recreation facilities.

Mr. Brosseau asked who is in charge of plowing the trailhead? The Town highway crew will plow it as they already plow Robin Hood Dr.

Mr. Clark suggested shoveling and moving be handled by Rec.

Ms. Draper said she is not apposed to bringing that before the Rec board, but they have no way to transport the tractor, other than driving it down the trail.

Mr. Clark said it's the Towns decisions to drive equipment down the trail so it should be fine. They can discuss that at a future meeting.

c) MVSD Land Swap

Mr. Savage said there was a mortgage deed on Mr. Rowells property that had been paid off and the discharge was not recorded. The company has since been sold, and they don't have a record from the previous company. They send the information to Jesse Bugby's office. The office paralegal said they don't have a mortgage to discharge.

Mr. Savage is going to call Mr. Rowell and tell him to contact his attorney to discharge the mortgage. No matter what, the property cannot be sold in the future until this is taken care of. This is the only matter delaying the land swap.

d) Letter received from Richard Cummings relative to Jerry mill Lane takeover

Mr. Cummings came before the board to discuss his request that the Town of Swanton take over Jerry mill Lane. Mr. Cummings had previously sent the Selectboard the letter of request and letter of road construction from Peter Mazurak, Apex Engineering.

Mr. Clark said they received the letter at the last meeting and it has been reviewed. Mr. Clark said as road commissioner he has a couple of questions for clarification he will provide. They have road construction and the storm water to determine.

Mr. Clark will put these questions in writing for Mr. Cummings to give to his engineer, next week.

Mr. Cummings said the road was overbuilt vs today's recommendations.
Mr. Fournier said he is concerned they would rely on the engineers' information without core samples as that is not the precedence they have required in the past. If they ask one, they have to ask everyone.
Mr. Clark said that it is the board decision, that request was before they had a road takeover policy, they can ask for them. The policy doesn't determine if the road was built to their specs.
Mr. Cummings said the first request to have the road taken over was in November of 2020, sent to James Gillmette. Mr. Cummings expressed the concern that they keep changing and/or moving the goal post what they are going to require.
Mr. Bourgeois asked Mr. Fournier if he is suggesting validation of what Mr. Mazurak and Mr. Cummings have in writing with core samples? Yes.
Mr. Bourgeois asked if that is what they have done before? Mr. Fournier said that's what we did with the last road.
Mr. Brosseau agreed they need the core samples.
Mr. Fournier said its not in writing and not in the Road policy.
Mr. Clark said Mr. Fournier is the person who made the motion to require core samples.
Mr. Fournier said we cannot treat one applicant differently than another.
Mr. Clark said ideally, they view roads as they are constructed. If that is what the board would like to do, they can amend the Road Takeover Policy and add core sample requirements.
Ms. Draper said she agreed they have set a precedence in the core samples.
Mr. Fournier said they need an actual road policy also.
Mr. Clark said he is hearing if they are going to take over an existing road they need to require core samples. That's a clarification they can add to the policy.
Ms. Draper said other than that the road meets the other requirements, then they can move forward.
Mr. Bourgeois said they can move to accept pending the validation of the road.
Mr. Clark said they also need to address the stormwater permit.
Mr. Fournier felt if they are going to ask them to go forward, they should commit, pending some kind of legal issue with the stormwater permit. Mr. Bourgeois said these are two separate issues.
The HOA is established; the agreement needs to include the Town as a co-permittee on the stormwater application.
This can proceed once the core samples are completed.
Mr. Clark encouraged board members to go look at the road.

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to require core samples to ensure compliance with the composition that is required for A-76, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

Mr. Clark said this should include the board having a site visit.

The Selectboard will do a site visit to Jerry mill Lane on Wednesday, November 5, 2025, at 12:00 pm.

8 New Town Business

a) Personnel Policies and Ordinances Binder

Mr. Clark said Ms. Candels put all of the Policies and Ordinances together and made a schedule list of time to review them. Some will be left as is and move on, some will change.

Ms. Candels gave the board members the two-year schedule of review.

Each month's item for review will be added to the first meeting of each month's agenda.

9. Any Other Necessary Business

None

10. Correspondence

None

11. Public Comment (Reprise)

None

12. Upcoming Events

(a) Thursday – October 23, 2025 – DRB Meeting – 6:00 pm – Town Offices

- (b) Saturday – October 25, 2025 – Halloween in the Park 5-7 pm Village Green
- (c) Tuesday – November 4, 2025 – Selectboard Meeting – 6:00 pm – Town Office
- (d) Saturday – November 8, 2025 – Set-up of Veteran’s Flags – 9:00 am – Academy Street
- (e) Monday – November 10, 2025 – Planning Commission – 5:00 pm – Town Office
- (f) Tuesday – November 11, 2025 – Veteran’s Day Holiday – Office and Ops Closed
- (g) Wednesday – November 12, 2025-LOT Public Hearing – 7:00pm – Village Complex

13. Executive Session (Legal Matter)

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to enter executive session at 8:08 pm, seconded by Mr. Bourgeois. Motion carried.

Mr. Brosseau made a motion to exit executive session at 8:21 pm, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

Action Taken:

Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to request the Town Attorney take appropriate action in response to the court complaint filed, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.

14. Adjourn

Ms. Draper made a motion to adjourn at 8:23 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, Legal or Real Estate 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.