

**DRAFT MINUTES  
TOWN OF SWANTON  
SELECTBOARD MEETING  
Town Office Building  
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488  
In-Person & By Zoom  
Tuesday, February 17, 2026**

Present: Joel Clark-Chair, Nicole Draper, Earl Fournier, Nick Brosseau-Members, Brian Savage-Town Administrator, Cathy Fournier-Town Clerk, Christina Candels-Assistant Town Administrator, Bob Nielson, Chief Matthew Sullivan, Ron Underwood, Josh Aldrich

Zoom: No Attendance

Absent: Steve Bourgeois

A. Call to Order

Mr. Clark called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

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

C. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL/LEGAL

**Mr. Fournier made a motion to enter executive session for Personnel and Legal at 5:02 pm, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.**

a) Discussion of Employee Evaluations

**Ms. Draper made a motion to exit executive session at 6:02 pm, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.**

**Action Taken:** made progress on employee reviews.

D. Agenda Review

No Changes.

E. Topics

1. Minutes

a) Regular Selectboard meeting of February 3, 2026

**Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Regular Selectboard meeting minutes of February 3, 2026, as written, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.**

b) Public Hearing of February 9, 2026, on Local Option Tax

**Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Public Hearing for Local Option Tax of February 9, 2026, as written, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.**

2. Public Comments

None

### 3. Law Enforcement.

#### a) Swanton Police Department

Chief Sullivan came before the board to share the January 2026 incident analysis. In January Swanton Village Police responded to 152 incidents in the Town. The top 10 incidents were as follows: 62 traffics stops, 46 directed patrols, 7 property watches, 5 suspicious person/circumstances, 4 driving/license suspended, 4 motor vehicle complaint, 3 crash /property damage, 3 motorist assists, 2 thefts.

Of the 62 traffic stops 15 tickets and 70 warnings were issued. There were 9 arrest charges of 8 individuals resulting in 13 charges.

Chief Sullivan said they provided 47.5 hours of additional services outside contract hours. Chief Sullivan said the additional hours are due to the use of Governors Highway Safety detail money, the new officer is coming in on a regular basis to do traffic control. Chief Sullivan shared and updated from the homicide on First Street in 2022. The main individual from this drug robbery was sentenced to 20 years in prison and followed by 4 years of supervised release. This was charged in the Federal Court system so he will serve most of that sentenced time. Chief Sullivan shared the press release.

Mr. Fournier noted the increase in incidents for the month was due to Governors Highway Safety money? Yes, the majority of it is the increase in traffic enforcement.

This will have a positive impact on the driving in the Town.

Mr. Clark asked if they still have two positions open? Yes, but as of July 1<sup>st</sup> they will be fully staffed. The school district will take the funding for the 2<sup>nd</sup> SRO and that will free up the funding for the 9<sup>th</sup> positions. They anticipate hiring 2 people, the candidates are in process.

Chief Sullivan shared they are using the St. Albans Police Department pay as of last year. That department has recently gone through contract renewal.

Mr. Clark asked if there has been a shift in the environment and with the State? Chief Sullivan said there has been turnover at the State's Attorney's office, this is the biggest frustration for officers. Work at the street level and the feeling of people not being held accountable.

Mr. Brosseau asked if this is the normal seasonal shift from winter and summer? Yes.

Chief Sullivan said the increase in traffic enforcement has a positive impact.

Mr. Clark asked if they have had much interaction with ICE on the northern boarder? No, they are still participating in Operation Soundgarden. The Fair and Impartial Policing Policy is a strict policy that has been morphed into an Immigration Policy, it was supposed to be an Anti-Bias Policy. Chief Sullivan shared how this policy works; it designed not to discourage victims and witnesses not to report crimes regardless of immigration status. Illegal immigration into the United States has dropped drastically. There is a fair number of illegal immigrants heading north, therefore self-deporting.

#### b) Swanton Animal Control

The board reviewed the report from Mr. Benson.

Mr. Savage shared he spoke with Mr. Benson regarding the incident from last month that continues from 16 Gallup Court and Mr. Benson can only keep writing tickets. Mr. Savage shared the recent news article stating the statewide problem of not having a place to put seized animals under investigation.

The shelter the Town contracts with has stopped taking animals as well.

Mr. Fournier asked if an individual refuses to license a dog or pay the penalty what would they do? Mr. Savage said they cannot impound the dog or take property. The Town would need to hire an attorney and take them to court.

Mr. Brosseau said there is a Rabies clinic coming up. Yes, and they will be able to register their dog as well. Highgate will also hold a clinic two weeks later.

#### 4. Highway Department

##### a) Report

Mr. Clark shared the salt shed is about a third full right now, with plenty of sand to mix. Mr. Fournier said they don't have a salt shortage right now like other Towns? No, they have the amount they predicted they would need and ordered it ahead of time.

Mr. Clark said the 2015 has had intermittent issues but are still using it.

Mr. Clark said he has talked to Mr. Lapan and will continue to say they need to work on tree removal, especially on Maquam Shore Rd. The emerald ash borer has destroyed 100's of trees in the area.

Mr. Clark said he has a document that was given to Mr. Bourgeois regarding salt, brine and sand use and other suggestions. Mr. Clark will review this with Mr. Lapan and share it with the rest of the board.

#### 5. Expenditures

##### a) General Orders

**Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the General Orders of 1/1/2026 to 2/17/2026, in the amount of \$127,776.86, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.**

Mr. Fournier asked if the \$1,312.62 for propane was for a month? That was for the Railroad Depot, and they fill it twice a year.

##### b) Highway Orders

**Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Highway Orders of 1/1/2026 to 2/17/2026, in the amount of \$101,167.82, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.**

Mr. Fournier said this included two police payments? Yes, January and February.

##### c) Library Orders

**Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the Library Orders of 1/1/2026 to 2/17/2026, in the amount of \$12,037.15, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.**

Mr. Fournier noted the amount for the elevator company, regular work? Yes, they come in and clean, as well as the date they came to look at the sub pump with the engineer.

That work has not been done yet.

##### d) Highway & General Payroll Orders

**Mr. Brosseau made a motion to approve the Highway & General Payroll Orders of 1/1/2026 to 2/17/2026, in the amount of \$58,287.13, seconded by Mr. Fournier.**

**Motion carried.**

##### e) Library Payroll Orders

**Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the Library Payroll Orders of 1/1/2026 to 2/17/2026, in the amount of \$15,076.27, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.**

f) Special Orders

**Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the Special Orders of 1/1/2026 to 2/17/2026, in the amount of \$8,369.11, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.**

6. Old Town Business

a) Camping and Access to Public Lands Ordinance

Mr. Clark said he has reviewed the ordinance from the last meeting and asked for clarification on camping at all times vs dusk 'til dawn as written in another area.

Mr. Savage will delete the dusk 'til dawn for clarification. The board reviewed the language for discretion.

Mr. Clark discussed the properties listed. Mr. Savage will add the Thompson Fit and Healthy Trail and Swanton Public Library.

Mr. Savage verified with Chief Sullivan and Mr. Sheets that any tickets are at the officer's discretion.

**Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the Camping and Access to Public Lands Ordinance with the changes noted tonight, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.**

b) Update on Library elevator pump

Mr. Savage said they received two replies to the RFP to have the system installed suggested by the engineer to fix the water situation under the elevator. Fournier Plumbing & Heating and Brock's Plumbing & Heating. Fournier Plumbing & Heating was the low bidder.

Mr. Savage and Mr. Clark met with Mr. Ben Fournier, who has experience of working with elevators and pumps. Mr. Ben Fournier has ordered the pump and will schedule also with the elevator company in March.

Mr. Earl Fournier asked if this would change the base for the pump? No, Mr. Clark reviewed how the pump system will be installed.

Mr. Clark said they also need to have the hydraulic pipe changed and painting done in the pit. The pipe has scaling and needs to be changed.

c) Update on demolition at 366 North River Street

Mr. Savage said Mr. Guilmette has signed the contract and proceeding.

7. New Town Business

a) Draft of Power Point for Joint Informational Meeting of February 23, 2026

Mr. Savage drafted a Power Point and Ms. Draper created a Power Point and sent it to Mr. Savage.

The board members reviewed Ms. Draper's Power Point and gave her suggested edits. Ms. Draper will send out an updated copy with these edits to review.

b) Review Draft of Soil Management Plan for Fourth Street Property

Mr. Clark said they have a couple of choices on how to move forward with this plan.

Mr. Clark will review how much money is set aside for the 4<sup>th</sup> street project as well as what is left from the LVRT project to see what is needed for this project.

Mr. Clark said they should discuss putting the Recreation building on this site. The board agreed to invite the Recreation Commission to a future meeting to discuss this before they move forward with this plan and send it to the State for approval.

c) Liquor Control

**Mr. Brosseau made a motion to recess the Regular Selectboard Meeting and enter into Liquor Control Board Meeting at 7:04 pm, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.**

### **License Renewals**

- DG Retail LLC Dollar General- Second Class License & Tobacco License  
No Violations
- Caitlin's Creations LLC Mother Hubbard's- Second Class, Tobacco & Tobacco Substitute Endorsement  
No Violations

**Mr. Fournier made a motion to approve the license renewals as presented, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.**

**Mr. Brosseau made a motion to adjourn the Liquor Control Board Meeting and reenter the Regular Selectboard Meeting at 7:05 pm, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.**

## 8. Community and Economic Development

a) Promote Swanton update

Mr. Fournier shared an example of a new sign for the park.

The board reviewed the design and suggestions. Mr. Fournier will get more information and pricing.

Mr. Fournier said he talked with Tim Smith from FCIDC, and they have grant funding called Grow Vermont. Mr. Fournier said this is to promote Franklin County. Mr. Fournier said they need to put something in there. Mr. Smith will send an email to Ms. Draper because it falls under promotion. The board can then discuss it, maybe add some of the drone pictures they already paid for.

Mr. Fournier also spoke with Mr. Smith about adding additional economic development information from them on the website.

## 9. Next Meeting Agenda Items

a) Special Meeting – March 4, 2026 – Annual Organizational Meeting

Ms. Draper requested to add Capital Plan input and a calendar of things for the Selectboard for 2026.

## 10. Any Other Business

None

11. Correspondence

None

12. Public Comment (Reprise)

None

13. Upcoming Events

- a) Monday – February 23, 2026 – Joint Town/Village Informational Meeting – 6:00 pm Village Municipal Complex, 120 First Street – In person and on TEAMS
- b) Thursday – February 26, 2026 – DRB Meeting – 6:00 pm- Town Offices
- c) Tuesday – March 3, 2026 – Town Meeting Day – Polls open from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm – Swanton Village Complex, 120 First Street – Town Offices are CLOSED.
- d) Wednesday – March 4, 2026 –Special Selectboard Organizational Meeting – 6:00 pm – Town Offices and Zoom

14. Executive Session (Legal)

**Ms. Draper made a motion as stated: I move that we find that we enter executive session for the Selectboard to Legal information for which the premature disclosure of it to the general public would clearly place the Selectboard & others at a substantial disadvantage, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.**

**Ms. Draper made a motion as stated: I move that based on our just made findings that premature disclosure would place the Selectboard & others at a substantial disadvantage, we now enter executive session, seconded by Mr. Brosseau. Motion carried.**

**Enter Executive session at 7:19 pm.**

**Ms. Draper made a motion to exit executive session at 7:42 pm, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.**

**Action Taken:**

The board will seek legal advice on a recent MVR issue they were made aware of.

15. Adjourn

**Mr. Fournier made a motion to adjourn at 4:43 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, 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.