

**TOWN OF STAMFORD**  
**SELECTBOARD MEETING**  
**October 19, 2017**  
**(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Michael Denault, David R. Tatro, Daniel J. Potvin and Carol Fachini.

Visitors: Barbara Dolle, Charles Dolle, Helen Fields, Bill Levine, and James Stimpson.  
Stephen Bechtel, Sheila Lawrence, Kurt Gamari, Planning Commission  
Carolyn Carlson, VT Agency of Transportation Engineer  
Lori Shepard, Selectboard Secretary.

Nancy Bushika called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., opened with the pledge of allegiance, welcomed everyone and read a statement with procedural rules for the meeting.

**HEARING OF VISITORS:**

**KLONDIKE ROAD BRIDGE PROJECT**

Nancy Bushika explained that the Selectboard is very frustrated because the state is over on their budget, which makes the town over on its budget and the board is not happy about it. Carolyn Carlson is a civil engineer and has worked for the state for 32 years. She explained some of the state's billing procedures. Her salary is paid 80% in federal funds, 15% in state funds and 5% in town funds. Ms. Carlson said the project is nearing completion. She has sent the final quantities to the contractor for approval and once the quantities are accepted, the project will be near closure. She estimated this could take at least another six months and said the town should expect to receive several more months of small bills. Many of the costs are incurred by consultants and inspectors that they are required to hire who wait several months before turning in their bills. Nancy Bushika asked what would happen if the town chose not to pay any more bills. Ms. Carlson felt this was not a good idea and could jeopardize future grant awards. Dan Potvin asked who is in charge of holding the contractor and engineers accountable for their estimates. One of the problems was that the contractor's bid came in much higher than the state's estimated costs. This created a change order of \$103,000.00. Ms. Carlson explained that some of that amount was absorbed because the state included a contingency amount, but it still increased the project cost substantially. The board suggested that the state should be more forthcoming with these changes and anticipated costs so the town can budget accordingly. There was a discrepancy between what the state listed as a total job cost and what the town had calculated. Carolyn Carlson asked for a copy of the town figures and said she is available by phone or email if any of the Selectboard have additional questions.

**SEED SAVERS GROUP**

Helen Fields reported an excellent and productive first year for the Seed Savers. They received grant funds to help with their project, had a fun Harvest Day and have one final work bee planned for Saturday.

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER POSITION**

Steve Bechtel stated that the Planning Commission met on October 16, 2017 with a full board and unanimously voted to nominate James Stimpson for the Administrative Officer position. The Planning Commission feels his former law enforcement background is key to enforcing our zoning by-laws. Dave Tatro asked if they interviewed the candidates. Steve Bechtel said no, they made their decision based on the resumes in front of them. They knew the Selectboard wanted the position filled and did not want to take the additional time to conduct interviews. Nancy Bushika asked if the

Selectboard had to appoint their nomination. Kurt Gamari said it was just a recommendation and the Selectboard could appoint who they wanted. The Selectboard discussed conducting their own interviews. James Stimpson said he is a retired policeman. He is familiar with building and although Vermont building laws are different than Massachusetts, he is confident that he can do the research. He is well aware of setback requirements. Helen Fields asked about his paperwork and interpersonal skills. Mr. Stimpson feels he gets along well with everyone and is used to paperwork from his police background. Mike Denault felt the Selectboard should respect the work and recommendation of the Planning Commission and asked if the Planning Commission's personal opinions were involved in making their decision. Steve Bechtel responded that they reviewed the resumes carefully, they knew two of the candidates based on past experiences and they made their decision. Steve Bechtel said the type of person they were looking for was very well met with what Mr. Stimpson can offer. Kurt Gamari felt the town has been lacking in ordinance enforcement. Dave Tatro agreed that James Stimpson is qualified but does not like the way the Planning Commission handled it. They had one applicant who submitted an application by the original deadline, then after their meeting, the Planning Commission extended the deadline and received two more applications. Dave Tatro said it just seems fishy. Steve Bechtel responded that they did not have a full board at that meeting and they wanted to extend the deadline to have a broader pool to choose from. Helen Fields suggested the Selectboard change the appointment process if they would like interviews conducted. MOTION by Nancy Bushika to accept the recommendation of the Planning Commission and appoint James Stimpson as Administrative Officer for a three year term. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion approved. Dave Tatro asked that it be noted that although he voted yes, he doesn't like just picking someone based on resumes and because the Planning Commission thought they knew their personality.

#### DOG AND CHICKEN COMPLAINT

Barbara Dolle and Charles Dolle disputed the allegations made at the last meeting. Barbara Dolle brings all of her dog feces in a yellow bag to the recycling center. The only dog matter she has thrown back onto Debra Johnson's property is when Ms. Johnson's dog was loose and left it behind. Charles Dolle showed the Selectboard pictures of Ms. Johnson's dog loose and on his mother's property this past Sunday. Barbara Dolle saw in the minutes that Bill Levine made a point that moving property markers is illegal. Barbara Dolle said she has not removed any property markers. Dave Tatro and Mike Denault said the Selectboard is not accusing anyone and is not taking sides. Most of these issues are not under the town's jurisdiction. It was recommended that if Ms. Johnson's dog is out again, Mrs. Dolle contact Luke McKay, the Dog Officer, directly.

Kurt Gamari suggested the Selectboard should consider addressing the free range animal problem in town. The Selectboard discussed creating an ordinance or policy or whether it should be part of the zoning by-laws and how it could be enforced. Helen Fields suggested inviting the animal owners to come together to discuss and agree on the rules that should be followed. She felt it was a more creative approach to educate people in good husbandry and hope that people will be more respectful. Steve Bechtel said the Planning Commission intends to contact the Bennington County Regional Commission for advice.

#### MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of October 5, 2017 as written. SECONDED by Dave Tatro. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Dave Tatro to accept the potentially-vicious dog hearing meeting minutes of October 5, 2017 as written. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #43 \$ 6,609.66 payroll

WARRANT #44 \$22,922.96 accounts payable

#### FINANCIALS

The Selectboard reviewed and confirmed financial statements for the month of September.

#### ROAD CONDITIONS

1. The Lane bridge work is progressing slower than anticipated. It is very good that the repairs are being made. The contractor said the condition of the cement is the worse he's seen in his 17 year career.
2. The highway crew has been trying out the winter equipment.
3. The mower parts have not come in yet. Larry Arnold, the part-time laborer, has been blowing out the ditches. The blower works excellent; it cleans out all the sticks and leaves from the ditches. Larry Arnold has been working 16 hours/week. Dave Tatro would like to keep him on through the fall season and occasionally if they need a fill in over the winter.

#### RECYCLING

1. Helen Fields and Dave Tatro visited TAM in Pownal. Helen Fields took pictures and videos. She requested thirty kitchen counter compost buckets to give away to educate and promote composting. Nancy Bushika suggested the Seed Savers purchase the buckets. When the town was out of compliance with the food scraps collection at the recycling center, Helen Fields recalled the board was willing to contribute. Helen Fields has put in at least 30-40 hours working with TAM and reaching out to residents to bring the town into compliance. Mike Denault asked where the money to purchase the buckets would come from. Dave Tatro recommended that it come from the recycling expense line item. Dave Tatro felt if people used the buckets to compost, the trash disposal costs would be much less.

MOTION by Dave Tatro to purchase thirty kitchen counter compost buckets. SECONDED by Mike Denault. 4 in favor, 1 opposed (Nancy Bushika). Motion APPROVED.

2. The town submitted bills for reimbursement of the food scrap enclosure and Michael Batcher from the Bennington County Regional Commission will submit the costs. There is a \$250.00 town match and the grant award should be \$640.00.
3. One of our recycling monitors was injured outside of work. Anyone interested in filling in at the recycling center on Saturday mornings from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. until he is able to return should contact the town office or a Selectboard member.
4. Helen Fields arranged for a trip to TAM. Dave Tatro saw the sorting and separating process of recyclables and was able to speak with Trevor Mance. He feels the 10 yard dumpster at the school can be downsized to a 6 yard container which will save money. He also hoped to save some money on downsizing the composting bins, but Trevor Mance said he couldn't go any lower.
5. Dave Tatro will need to obtain a quote to install 3-phase wiring on the old incinerator pole so that the town can use a compactor instead of a container for single stream recycling.
6. Sally Bohl questioned Michael Batcher as to why Stamford charges \$40 and \$55 per TV when several other towns accept TVs for free. Nancy Bushika explained that when the program was

available the town did not sign up for it since we didn't have the storage capacity. Readsboro, Bennington, Goodwill and several other places accept TVs for free.

7. Scott Smith Trucking has registered as a hauler with the town.

#### DELINQUENT DOGS

1. Stephen Chipchase's daughter, with Carol Fachini's help, has licensed the dogs. She paid the license and late fee but did not have cash to pay the fine and certified mail fee. After discussion, the Selectboard agreed to waive the fees this one and only time.

2. It has come to the attention of the board that another dog on County Road is not licensed. A letter will be sent requesting compliance.

3. Luke McKay spoke with Amanda Kurpiel. She will be keeping the dog and will come down next week to license it.

#### REAPPOINTMENT OF TOWN HEALTH OFFICER

Kurt Gamari stated that he is willing to accept the reappointment of Health Officer.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to recommend to the state that Kurt Gamari be reappointed Town Health Officer. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### DINNER TO HONOR STAMFORD VETERANS

Dan Potvin has flyers and is trying to spread the word. He said the Planning Commission is very supportive. The potluck dinner is scheduled for Saturday, November 4, 2017 at 5 p.m. and everyone is invited. Dan Potvin would like flyers mailed to all vets in town. Nancy Bushika does not want to spend town funds. The Selectboard named as many vets as they could think of. Dan Potvin hopes this will become a yearly event. Two middle school teachers and their classes have volunteered to help. Nancy Bushika will donate the paper products, another will donate drinks. Dan Potvin will contact Big Y for a donation.

#### EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. The Selectboard reviewed the Emergency Management Ordinance and removed the two sections concerning violations and penalties. The final will be signed at the next meeting.

2. The next LEPC meeting will be Thursday at 6 p.m. in Bennington. The topic is cyber security.

#### CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

The Selectboard will review and discuss at the next meeting.

Dan Potvin agreed to recuse himself from the tax appeal matter in the best interests of the town.

#### VLCT INSURANCE RENEWAL

Dave Tatro will compare this year's values to last year's policy values. A copy was given to the fire department for their review as well.

#### EMPLOYEE POLICY HANDBOOK

The state has mandated paid sick leave for employees who average 18 hours or more per week. The Selectboard reviewed the draft, made some suggestions and will review again at their next meeting.

#### MOWING

Deferred until next meeting.

#### HALLOWEEN HOURS

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to set Halloween hours from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 31st. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The Fire Department will be out with trucks and flashing lights again this year.

#### FEMA GENERATOR GRANT

The project is completed but Al McLain will provide the manual and another set of keys.

#### TOWN PLAN

The public hearing was rescheduled for Thursday, November 16, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

#### TAX APPEAL

##### EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Mike Denault to enter executive session to discuss the tax appeal/attorney matter. SECONDED by Dave Tatro. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. Mike Denault, Nancy Bushika, Dave Tatro and Carol Fachini entered executive session at 8:50 p.m. Dan Potvin left the meeting.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to exit executive session. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 9:30 p.m.

The Selectboard decided to contact the attorney for further legal advice.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to adjourn. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 9:31 p.m.

Daniel J. Potvin  
Clerk

DJP/las

#### REMINDERS

1. The potluck supper to honor our veterans will be held on Saturday, November 4, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. at the Stamford Elementary School. All are welcome.
2. Summer recycling hours will end on the last Wednesday in October.
3. Real estate tax bills are due November 16, 2017.
4. New recycling punch cards for use beginning November 1, 2017 are available at the Town Office.
5. The public hearing for adoption of the town plan will be Thursday, November 16, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.
6. Anyone interested in filling in at the recycling center on Saturday mornings from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. should contact the town office or a Selectboard member.