

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
May 18, 2017
(UNAPPROVED)**

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

Visitors: Charles Dolle and Bill Levine.

Sally Bohl, Sheila Pecor and Mary Lou Wright, Cemetery Commissioners.
Lori Shepard, Selectboard Secretary.

Nancy Bushika called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and opened with the pledge of allegiance.

CEMETERY COMMISSION

The Cemetery Commission was invited by the Selectboard to explain their budget. A motion was made by Barbara Malinowski at town meeting to table their budget because there was no cemetery member present to answer why they were requesting \$3,925.00 at town meeting when there is money in the cemetery fund. Sally Bohl read regulations that funds obtained from the sale of burial lots are to be kept separately and cannot be touched. The remaining money in the account, approximately \$14,000.00, is from interest accumulated over the years. Nancy Bushika asked what their intention was for this money. Sally Bohl stated that the \$3,925.00 budgeted equals \$500.00 for stone restoration, \$1,000 for repair and maintenance and the remainder is for mowing. Each year their expenses are greater than their budget and they draw the balance from the \$14,000. They have used almost \$7,000 from this account over the past five years. If the Selectboard would like to manage the cemetery, they can dissolve the Cemetery Commission and take it over. Dave Tatro stated it is not the Selectboard's intention to take over the cemeteries and agreed that \$3,925.00 is not a lot to maintain our cemeteries. This year the Commission has already paid \$700.00 to trim the trees. They have a quote of \$1,000.00 to repair the stairs and reset several corner stones. They were recently informed that a tree is down in the Lee lot. They also anticipate paying \$2,300.00 - \$2,500.00 to straighten out the dirt pile at Millard Cemetery. Mary Lou Wright stated many stones, especially at Houghton Cemetery, need to be cleaned. They had obtained a quote of \$50.00 - \$100.00 per stone. She would like to create a volunteer committee to preserve a number of stones each year. The stones have not been cleaned since 1994. Bill Levine suggested a statement in the town report explaining that the amount they ask for barely covers their expenses and lists what they've done during the year. Sally Bohl noted that the funds in the account have not come from tax dollars. The money is not building up as it used to. People used to pay \$1,000 for a 12x12 lot containing 4 full graves, and now people are cremated and are only buying one 3x12 grave which will fit 3-4 cremations. The price for residents for one 3x12 grave is \$200.00.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of May 4, 2017, as written. SECONDED by Dave Tatro. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #19 \$ 6,066.95 payroll

WARRANT #20 \$33,791.08 accounts payable

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. Dave Tatro looked at the culverts on Risky Ranch Road that Jim Williams had mentioned at the last meeting. He said they are older culverts. He had created a culvert plan to replace ten culverts/year. The state changed the regulations requiring an 18" culvert instead of a 15" culvert which is more expensive

and there is not enough money in the budget to replace ten per year. Dave Tatro said the roads are really in good shape.

2. The highway crew has been grading the roads.

3. The Freightliner was brought down to All States Asphalt for detailing. They did an excellent job. They acknowledged receiving our letter but have not responded. After discussion, the Selectboard will provide All States' phone number to those residents who have called about the tar so the residents can follow up with the company. Dave Tatro used Bug & Tar Terminator on his personal vehicle and has been told WD-40 works well also.

4. Dave Tatro said hiring a third laborer was no longer a want, but something that needs to happen. Since they did not budget for the position, he will not spend the \$5,000.00 in Special Projects to make up for the cost. The Selectboard agreed to post the position for a part-time laborer at Billmonts, the town office, the recycling center, and the library. Applications will be due June 1, 2017 at 3 p.m. and will be reviewed at the June 1, 2017 Selectboard meeting.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to advertise for a part-time, 20 hours/week, laborer for the highway department. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

5. Dave Tatro has been looking for a used excavator with low hours for around \$30,000 - \$40,000.

SNOW SEASON STATUS

There were no problems with the highway department handling winter storms.

MOTION by Mike Denault to allow the Snow Season Status four days compensation for David Tatro and Michael Brothers for outstanding winter road service. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. 4 in favor (Dave Tatro abstained). Motion APPROVED.

RECYCLING

1. Nancy Bushika noted that the recycling container is in bad shape. It will be cheaper in the long run to buy a new one than rent a container from Republic Services. Dave Tatro was asked to get prices.

2. Dave Tatro mentioned that the roof on the shed is leaking. The Selectboard asked if Dave Tatro could do the repairs. He felt it would take away from his highway work. Mike Denault mentioned someone willing to do the work, but he was not insured. Dave Tatro said he and Mike could probably do it; he will at least look into it.

SEED SAVERS GROUP

1. Nancy Bushika recalled that the group would not be using the town's Federal ID# to apply for grants.

2. Bill Levine noted that they started their public relations drive on Green Up Day. They gave free compost and seeds to all who were interested.

TENNIS COURT

A resident contacted the town clerk disappointed with the decision of changing the tennis courts into gardens. She said she enjoys playing tennis and uses the courts several times in the summer. She thought a compromise could be to allow the gardens on one court and tennis on the other court. Dave Tatro noted that the courts were locked last year with little reaction. They obtained quotes of \$10,000 - \$15,000 last year to repair the courts and the board thought that was too much to spend.

FIRE WARDEN

1. Charlie Dolle would like to continue as Fire Warden. He provided his new cell phone number so there will be no difficulty in reaching him and asked if it could be put in the town report. There was a question about his giving out burning permits on a red flag day. He did have one instance where he gave out a permit when he was not receiving the emails from the state. That has been rectified and he is again receiving the alerts from the state and following their recommendations.

2. Last year the Selectboard recommended Charlie Dolle and Harry Klein as Fire Warden and Deputy Fire Warden respectively. The state returned an appointment form for Charlie Dolle but never followed through with paperwork appointing Harry Klein. Lars Lund, from the Agency of Natural Resources, has sent new paperwork to complete Harry Klein's appointment. Charlie Dolle and the Selectboard signed the appointment form.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to reaffirm the recommendation and appointment of Harry Klein as Deputy Fire Warden. SECONDED by Dan Potvin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

BENNINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT

1. They will spend more time patrolling the back roads.
2. The Town of Readsboro has hired their services so they will be able to spend more time in our area.

DOGS

1. The town office received a phone call from a resident that their neighbor's dog was barking in excess of the 20 minute limit contained in our Dog Ordinance. At the Selectboard's request, the complaint was requested in writing but nothing has been received. No action was taken.
2. The delinquent dog list is down to 44 animals. It will be turned over to the Selectboard for action in June.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. MOTION by Carol Fachini to approve and sign the Local Emergency Operations Plan. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

2. Bill Levine obtained a container from Tapestry for needle disposal and it has been placed at the recycling center. The recycling monitors will bring the container in every night. Bill Levine feels this is a safer way to dispose of needles than putting them in the compactor. Nancy Bushika's only objection is if they forget to bring the box in at night and it would not be good if it stayed strapped to the dumpster when Republic comes to pick up the container.

MOTION by Dan Potvin to accept the contract with Tapestry to participate in the needle disposal program. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

3. Bill Levine presented some upcoming courses. He spoke to the school about a Pediatric Psychological First Aid class coming up.

4. Bill Levine attended the recent Western MA Emergency Planning meeting. It focused on the drug epidemic we are facing.

GENERATOR GRANT

1. Al McLain provided a proposal to change the automatic transfer switch from 200 amps to 400 amps for an additional \$1,000.00. He said the 200 amp switch would work, but it may limit future capabilities going forward.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to sign the generator proposal specifications with the 200 amp transfer switch. SECONDED by Dave Tatro. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

2. FEMA is willing to pre-pay the cost of the generator with proof of payment to follow. The town clerk has received the necessary forms.

ACT 46 MEETING/ELECTION

Bill Levine advised that there will be a meeting at the school on Monday, May 22, 2017 at 7 p.m. to inform residents of the interstate school district option with Clarksburg. The Act 46 informational meeting set by the School Board is Tuesday, May 23, 2017 at 7 p.m. at Stamford School. Nancy Bushika noted that the state is giving towns a 6 month window.

OFFER TO PURCHASE TOWN OWNED PROPERTY

1. MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the offer made by Anatol Safiejko to purchase Lot 354 in Alpenwald Village for the sum of \$500.00. SECONDED by Nancy Bushika. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.
2. MOTION by Nancy Bushika to accept the offer made by Innocenzo J. Visceglia IV to purchase Lots 130, 130A, and 131 in Alpenwald Village for the sum of \$900.00. SECONDED by Dan Potvin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.
3. MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the offer made by Michael and Jennifer Lefevre to purchase Lot 347 in Alpenwald Village for the sum of \$200.00. SECONDED by Dan Potvin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

TOWN OWNED PROPERTY

1. The deed was signed completing the transfer of Lot 367 in Alpenwald to Michael and Jennifer Lefevre.
2. The Selectboard reviewed the letter from Attorney Kevin O'Toole enclosing the deeds to the lots acquired by the town at last year's tax sale. He outlined the procedure necessary to resell the lots. The Selectboard felt the article passed at town meeting provides the authorization from the voters to resell the lots.

TOWN OFFICE HOURS

The town clerk announced new town office hours that will be starting this June: Monday: closed, Tuesday: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.; Wednesday: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.; Thursday: 12 p.m. – 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.; and Friday 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

DUMPING TRASH/BURNING ON BACK ROADS

Mike Denault updated the board on the trash dumping on the back roads. He has forwarded all the information he received to the State Police and now we just need to hope the police will do their job and have faith that the system will work as it should. Dave Tatro said he picked up six TVs last week dumped on County Road.

PACIF GRANT

The application was submitted recently and the town was awarded the grant. The highway department will receive two dozen orange highway cones and the fire department will receive one dozen cones. The total cost is \$403.20 and the grant will cover half (\$201.60). The fire department will pay their share of \$67.20 and the town's portion will be \$134.40.

TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE

The treasurer stated that it is time to borrow money in anticipation of taxes. In the past, three bids were obtained and Berkshire Bank has always provided the lowest rate and is the easiest to work with. The treasurer will pursue a quote from Berkshire Bank and if it's not acceptable, other banks will be contacted.

GREEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST

Representatives from the National Forest would like to attend the June 1, 2017 Selectboard meeting to discuss the plan to treat several invasive species of plants in town.

GREEN UP DAY

Green Up Day was another success. The Selectboard thanked Pat Sullivan and her volunteers for a job well done.

FINANCIALS

Reports with first quarter budget vs. actual expenses will be discussed at the next meeting.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by Dan Potvin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Daniel J. Potvin
Clerk

DJP/las

REMINDERS

1. The free Household Hazardous Waste Day will be at the Bennington Transfer Station on May 20, 2017.
2. The yearly deadline to license all dogs is April 1, 2017. Please come in to the town office if you have not yet registered your dog.
3. The recycling center has started its summer hours and will be open on Wednesdays from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.
4. A meeting to inform residents of the interstate school district option with Clarksburg will be held on Monday, May 22, 2017 at 7 p.m. at the school.
5. The Act 46 informational meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 23, 2017 at 7 p.m. at the school.
6. An election will be held on Wednesday, May 31, 2017 at the Stamford Elementary School from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. to vote on the merger and to elect School Board Directors to the Southern Valley Unified Union School District if the merger is approved.

Elected positions to be filled are:

Southern Valley Unified Union School District School Director – one (1) year term
Southern Valley Unified Union School District School Director – two (2) year term
Southern Valley Unified Union School District School Director – three (3) year term

7. The deadline to register to vote in the May 31, 2017 election is Wednesday, May 31, 2017. Applications for addition to the checklist will be accepted up to and during the voting hours of 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
8. Absentee ballots are available until 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 30, 2017. Please call the town office at 694-1361.
9. The town office will have new hours starting this June: Monday: closed, Tuesday: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.; Wednesday: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.; Thursday: 12 p.m. – 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.; and Friday 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.