

**TOWN OF STAMFORD**  
**SELECTBOARD MEETING**  
**July 19, 2018**  
**(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Christopher Warren, Daniel J. Potvin, Michael Denault and Carol Fachini.

Visitors: Deborah Darling, Helen Fields, Micah Hayre, Victoria Jefferies, Bill Levine, Pat Sullivan and Pam Tworig. James Stimpson, Administrative Officer.  
Sheila Lawrence, Kurt Gamari and David Saldo, Planning Commission.  
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. The agenda was reviewed and the Planning Commission and deeds to the Bellofattos were added per 1 V.S.A. 312(d)(3)(A). The order of the agenda was changed pursuant to 1 V.S.A. 312(d)(3)(B).

#### BUILDING COMMUNITY GROUP

Pat Sullivan and Victoria Jefferies presented the goals and ideas for the project. The group received 92 survey responses obtained through CJ Vadnais' website and two weekends at the recycling center. 77% of the people surveyed support an outdoor gathering space. Community members would like to see a welcoming area and sign in the front of the school as a Phase I project and a building structure (pavilion) in the back of the school as Phase II. Many questions were asked concerning the project, financing, maintenance, trash removal, scheduling and conflicts between school and community use. The group is looking for Selectboard support before taking the next step. Carol Fachini suggested looking at Clarksburg's pavilion policy. Dan Potvin suggested contacting John Dupras who is a structural engineer. Chris Warren suggested creating a line item in the budget for their use, which will not be funded at this time. The Selectboard was in agreement.

MOTION by Chris Warren to support the Berkshire Community Group's project and allow them to take the next step. SECONDED by Dan Potvin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### PLANNING COMMISSION

Nancy Bushika stated that the Planning Commission was invited to discuss updating the By-laws. Jim Stimpson, the Administrative Officer, feels the By-laws are too vague. Sections could be updated a little at a time if that is easier. Sheila Lawrence stated that their next meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 6, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. Jim Sullivan from the Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) will be attending to discuss renewable energy incentives with the Planning Commission. Helen Fields would like to see the By-laws available online. She would like the specific topics being discussed listed on all meeting agendas. Dan Potvin hopes to receive a lot of public input when updating the By-laws.

#### SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #31 \$ 6,635.86 payroll

WARRANT #32 \$66,725.01 accounts payable

#### FINANCIALS

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

#### ROAD CONDITIONS

1. Carol Fachini noted that some of the dump trucks are using excessive speed on County Road. Mike Denault will let the sheriff know.

2. The Selectboard received the state's hazardous waste disposal plan for their Bridge #9 project. They will be scraping and cleaning the bridge north of Brookside Drive and the lead paint chips will be stored in two 55-gallon drums and removed.
3. Klondike Road/County Road reclassification will be tabled until next meeting.

#### RECYCLING

1. The town must approve and post an Electronics Release Plan in the event any electronic device is broken. The Selectboard agreed with the plan and Bill Levine, Emergency Management Coordinator, will be the contact person. This plan is necessary in order to sign up as an e-waste collector with the state.
2. A free Home Hazardous Waste Collection Day will be held on Saturday, July 28, 2018 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Stamford Transfer Station. Nancy Bushika and Michael Batchner from the BCRC will be there to help set up. She asked for another Selectboard member to attend.

#### LETTER FROM ATTORNEY/ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

The Zoning Board of Adjustment proposed several questions to the attorney. Nancy Bushika added the question of whether the Selectboard could adopt interim By-laws until the Planning Commission had time to update them completely. The attorney's letter said anyone, including the Selectboard, has 15 days to appeal the Administrative Officer's decision to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Jim Stimpson complained about the lack of communication in this town. He feels the people serving on boards, especially those in charge, are doing things that are wrong and against the law. He asked why he was denied a copy of the attorney's letter. Nancy Bushika felt that correspondence should not be distributed before the Selectboard had a chance to review and discuss it. Jim Stimpson argued that this violated the law and that she did not have the right to authorize a call to the attorney. The board previously decided only Lori Shepard as Administrative Assistant would call the attorney with Selectboard approval. Dan Potvin acknowledged that a lot of mistakes were made by all of us, but feels it is best to move forward. Mike Denault agreed that the board needs to be more careful and email should only be used to distribute information. If a topic cannot wait two weeks for a regular meeting, the board will call a special meeting. Jim Stimpson said he has absolutely no confidence in the town processes currently in place. Dan Potvin suggested Jim Sullivan from the BCRC could be a resource when the A.O. has questions about the By-laws and Dave Saldo offered the Planning Commission as a resource. The Selectboard does not want the ice cream truck owners to be the victims of this issue and does not want to do anything that will negatively impact their business during the short summer season. Jim Stimpson wants the board's full support moving forward. Jim Stimpson would like more people appointed to these boards. The board will check state statute to confirm that the Planning Commission can have up to seven members, but it is hard to find people willing to serve. Bill Levine felt that if members of the town boards and commissions are not acting responsibly and participating, then the Selectboard can replace them. The board decided they will not override the Administrative Officer's decision that a permit was not needed for the ice cream truck business.

MOTION by Mike Denault to stand by the Administrative Officer's decision in his interpretation of the By-laws. SECONDED by Dan Potvin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### WEBSITE

Peter Grudin emailed several questions to the board concerning the website. Chris Warren agreed to respond to him.

MOTION by Chris Warren to accept and sign the Website Policy as written. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The policy was signed.

#### DOG UPDATE

1. Luke McKay spoke to the Berkshire Humane Society and Second Chance Animal Shelter. Neither one is willing to enter into any contracts to accept lost/stray dogs from the town. The Administrative Officer recommended the board call the Windham County Humane Society in Brattleboro. He believes they will take

our dogs. He provided Windham's contact information. Mike Denault asked Nancy Bushika to call Second Chance to ask why they are not willing to work with the town.

2. Luke McKay is having a dog kennel blue print designed and will get it to the board.

3. Bette Arnold advised that they have a vet appointment in August and will license the dog after it has its shots. The Selectboard appreciated the update. There has been no response from Shawn Senecal. A letter will be sent to him giving him two weeks to license his dog and imposing fines and penalties.

#### CLASS ACTION SUIT

Two other Vermont towns have decided to join the class action suit to recover funds under the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Act. Many other towns have not yet decided.

MOTION by Chris Warren to join the class action suit and sign the Opt-In Notice in order to obtain any PILT funds due the town. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. Dan Potvin will be listed as the contact.

#### EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. Bill Levine stated that there is an upcoming LEPC meeting. He and Sheila Lawrence will be attending. Jim Stimpson would like to attend.

2. Vermont Emergency Management will be hosting a two day conference on emergency preparedness this September. They will have many speakers on building resilient communities and learning best practices in emergency management.

3. Bill and Joan Levine have been riding the roads looking for 9-1-1 house numbers. There are many houses without numbers and some have numbers but they do not meet the 9-1-1 visibility requirements. Bill Levine will compose a letter to be sent to all who do not have functional 9-1-1 house numbers.

#### 2018 TAX RATE

1. Due to the paving project and other costs, the town is low on funds and will need to send out tax bills in July to bring in money. Having to bill so early will cause a large amount of extra work because the state has not finished processing over 14,000 homestead declarations and state payments. Last year the treasurer was able to wait until September to send out bills which gave the state more time to process returns and meant less revised bills were necessary. Nancy Bushika asked if other town funds could be used to borrow from ourselves. MOTION by Chris Warren to use \$100,000.00 from the reappraisal fund CD which is up for renewal to cover town expenses until September when it will be reinvested with interest at the CD's current rate. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

2. Lori Shepard provided a spreadsheet explaining the calculation of the 2018 tax rate. The state's homestead residential rate is \$1.3031 (last year's rate was \$1.1724). The state set the non-residential rate at \$1.4873 (last year's rate was \$1.4059).

MOTION by Dan Potvin to set the 2018 tax rate as follows: to accept the state education residential rate of \$1.3031 and the non-residential rate of \$1.4873 as calculated by the State of Vermont. The Selectboard set the municipal tax rate at \$0.2970 and the highway rate at \$0.4060. The total residential tax rate will be \$2.0061 and the total non-residential tax rate will be \$2.1903. SECONDED by Carol Fachini. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The 2018 tax bills will be mailed in September. Chris Warren would like to discuss moving to a cash-positive position.

3. The Selectboard reviewed the 2018 tax bill insert and made some minor changes.

#### NEMRC CONTRACT

Nancy Bushika spoke with NEMRC. \$37.50/hour is their standard rate for travel time. Hiring NEMRC to do individual inspections will be a separate contract in addition to this contract. This contract is for 18 months but terms can be negotiated after one year. Debbie Darling stated that either Dover or Wilmington uses different software than NEMRC and suggested we talk to them to see if changing software would benefit Stamford. She

felt the NEMRC assessor keeps poor documentation and that many people are being assessed unfairly, making the taxes inequitable.

MOTION by Dan Potvin to sign the NEMRC contract for 18 months for assessor services beginning July 1, 2018 through December 31, 2019 for \$75.00/hour and \$37.50/hour travel time. SECONDED by Chris Warren. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

#### DEEDS

The deeds transferring Lots 382 and 383 in Alpenwald and the Haynes lot on Main Road to Rev. Robert and Sarah Bellofatto, Jr. were signed. The correct documentation and money has been received from the buyers.

#### SCHOOL/TOWN BUILDING

The paving contractor hopes to put the final blacktop coat on the school parking lot this Monday, July 23, 2018, weather permitting. The building will have to be closed on that day. The following day the building will be open, but there will be no parking in the school lot to allow the surface to harden. If Monday is rainy, it could push the project out another day or two. There were several things scheduled on the first day of paving which made it very difficult for the paving contractor. The town office, school and library are asked to cooperate with the paving contractor to complete this project.

#### TOWN OFFICE

The town office will be closed on Thursday, July 26, 2018 from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. for election training. The office will be open from 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. on that day. The town clerk described many of the changes made in the election laws affecting how votes are to be counted in the upcoming election.

#### ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK/ASSISTANT TREASURER

Mike Denault acknowledged Angela Brothers' resignation as Assistant Town Clerk/Assistant Treasurer. She worked hard and did a good job for the town. A letter will be sent thanking her for her service.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by Dan Potvin. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Christopher Warren  
Clerk

CW/las

#### REMINDERS

1. The primary election will be held on Tuesday, August 14, 2018 at the Stamford Elementary School Hall from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
2. Applications for addition to the checklist will be accepted during regular town office hours and throughout election day.
3. Absentee ballots will be available until 11:30 a.m. on Friday, August 10, 2018. Please call the town office at 802-694-1361.
4. A free Home Hazardous Waste Collection Day will be held on Saturday, July 28, 2018 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. in Stamford.
5. The town office will be **closed** on Thursday, July 26, 2018 from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. for election training. The office will be open from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on that day.
6. The town clerk's office hours are: Monday: closed; Tuesday: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.; Wednesday 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.; Thursday 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.; and Friday: 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.