

Town of Panton
Selectboard Meeting
Thursday, September 11, 2008

Board:

Lynn Donnelly
Rejean Lafleche – Chair
John Viskup

Administration:

Rick Cloutier
Chris Dion
Sue Torrey

Guests:

E. Biello D. Dow
L. Giovanella M. Hermann
J. Kuhn D. Raphael

Call to Order: Chair Lafleche called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by J. Viskup to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by R. Lafleche. So voted.

Public Comment: D. Dow advised the Board that because he bought his property after April 1st he doesn't have a tax bill in his name therefore his mortgage company is escrowing the entire Bowden property, not just the property he purchased. The mortgage company needs a letter from the town stating exactly what he owns. The Board explained that he should contact the attorney who handled his closing as this should have been settled at that time.

Old Business:

Planning Grant - Planning/DRB Chair David Raphael explained that the Planning Grant was delayed due to staffing issues at ACRPC and the inexperience of the Panton Planning Board consequently the Planning Commissions weren't given the support required. He also advised that the time element for planning grants has always been a problem and the State recently extended grant periods by six (6) months. The Board will not apply for another grant in 2009 but will continue working on the issues and move ahead to update the Town Plan for re-adoption in 2010. L. Donnelly asked if there is an impact to the town from not completing the grant to which D. Raphael replied there wasn't. L. Giovanella added that they were planning to use some of the grant money to look at affording housing. It was mentioned that the town should get support from ACRPC considering the dues we pay. Discussion on the Laura Lee conditional permit, granted based on not having bathroom or kitchen facilities in the mobile home. D. Raphael will follow up with Zoning Administrator Ed Hanson to ascertain that there isn't any septic and/or water connected to the mobile home. It was further discussed that a permit goes with the property when purchased.

Unregistered Dogs – Clerk Torrey advised the Board that Curler's faxed their dogs' rabies certificates but didn't come in to pay the registration or the fine that was assessed. J. Viskup advised Clerk Torrey to send another letter and increase the fine to \$200.00. Clerk Torrey also received a call from Tiffanie Booska who said she did not have the money to vaccinate her dogs and would have to give them up. Chair Lafleche visited the Booska residence at the request of Chuck Booska. The Booska's indicated their dogs had an appointment that evening for vaccinations. Chair Lafleche told them they had until Friday this week to register the dogs. It was discussed that many warnings had been sent as well as personal visits by Dog Warden Mickey Billings, Selectman John Viskup and Chair Lafleche.

Road Helper Review – deferred until Chris Dion is in attendance. The Board reviewed the changes made in the Highway Helper and Road Foreman job description; no overtime changed to April 1 through November 1; evaluations to be within thirty (30) days of employment anniversary; salary and benefit package to be negotiated within thirty (30) days of employment anniversary. Chair Lafleche mentioned that all highway calls should be directed to the Road Foreman and that he advised C. Dion of this.

Road Foreman Report: The Road Foreman advised that he is not satisfied with the paving on Jersey Street and until it's rectified the bill should not be paid. Dennis Guillette from Pike's is scheduled to meet with R. Cloutier to look at the work. L. Donnelly advised that George Jackson called regarding the replacement of his driveway culvert. R. Cloutier stated that this was discussed in previous meetings and the culvert is so long it would be cost prohibited for the town to replace. The Panton Culvert Policy was discussed and the need for possible modification of the policy. R. Cloutier advised that he has done as much as the town is responsible for with regard to Valerie Congdon's mailbox. Per the Postmaster, they will start delivering her mail again when the post is straightened which is Ms. Congdon's responsibility. Chair Lafleche remarked that he and the road foreman drove up to the mailbox without any problem. Mentioned that there is a shortage of sand and that he has hauled only half the winter sand but is hoping to finish in the next couple of weeks. Adam's Ferry Road grant was discussed and R. Cloutier will begin work on Monday. For this year will only cold patch some problem areas on Arnold Bay Road. Discussion on the heavy farm equipment traveling Panton roads and the runoff from the fields going into the streams, rivers and lakes. R. Cloutier advised that grader tires need to be replaced but tire prices have increased to \$1,800.00 (\$1,000.00 budgeted). Motion by L. Donnelly, seconded by J. Viskup to purchase tires. So voted.

New Business:

Slang Road Garbage – the Road Foreman explained that bundles of the Burlington Free Press had been thrown over the bank on Slang Road. The Free Press was contacted and the papers were picked up. The Board commented that many of the town residents have complained about not receiving their daily paper. R. Cloutier also advised that someone was seen throwing out pizza boxes containing full pizzas on Slang Road and a witness knew the identity of the person. Although the State Police were notified they weren't interested in pursuing the issue therefore Vergennes PD was notified and spoke to the individual involved. They also recommended that the town place cameras in strategic places along Slang Road to catch any littering. It was mentioned that if the police don't do anything now cameras won't do any good either. L. Donnelly commented that she feels the town is getting farther in debt and that there are people who would be willing to come in and look at the budget to see where expenses can be cut so the town doesn't go into March with a deficit. S. Torrey stated that the town isn't in a deficit state in fact after the books were closed year ending June 2008; the town is out of their deficit with a surplus of \$4,700.00. L. Donnelly replied that she is concerned about the current year and would like people who know budgets to look at what can be done. S. Torrey said that she thought this was her job as Treasurer and that she has consistently recommended cost cutting possibilities at the meetings but perhaps she wasn't concise enough. Chair Lafleche said the town doesn't want to get in a situation where people are coming in and making recommendations of where the budget should be spent, as that this is the Selectboard's job. L. Donnelly expressed concern that their property bill has grown since they purchased their property and said although it isn't the town, it's the schools, and something should be done. She added that she encourages other Town Selectboards to attend school board meetings especially at budget time. J. Kuhn commented that he thinks because the school spends money the town spends money and he can show a graph to that effect. Chair Lafleche commented that he believes that there's been a sharp increase since Act 60.

L. Donnelly said that she would like to see the highway equipment updated but the way it's going there's isn't anyway it can be done. S. Torrey said that she would like to see someone work on a five (5) year plan for the town so voters have a better understanding of what is coming up before they have to vote. Motion by L. Donnelly for the Panton Selectboard to speak to other towns about attending school meetings. L. Donnelly will speak to Vergennes & Waltham, John Viskup, Addison and R. Lafleche, Ferrisburgh. Seconded by J. Viskup. So voted. L. Donnelly will find out when the budget process starts for the schools. S. Torrey mentioned that some of the young people registering to vote appear to be very under educated; can't spell, hand writing, etc. J. Viskup commented that he doesn't believe we're getting enough bang for our buck with regard to education. J. Kuhn said that parents aren't helping the schools. Comment was made that some students appear to be pushed through the schools. J. Kuhn commented that he didn't know why we had so many districts; there should be one. It was discussed that Panton has a high spending per pupil; base is \$8,210.00, Panton spends \$11,990.00. Various reasons for this were discussed such as the number of pupils attending schools outside the district.

Motion by J. Viskup to re-appoint Bill Clark as Panton Health Officer, seconded by L. Donnelly. So voted.

Financial Reports:

Correspondence was reviewed and warrants signed. Oil pre-buy from LeBeau & O'Brien was reviewed and it was decided not to participate this year. It was mentioned that Panton has not received the new fire contract from Vergennes. Comment was made that hopefully Panton is covered in the meantime but no one knows this for sure.

Motion by L. Donnelly to move into Executive Session at 8:00 p.m., to discuss the Road Helper review inviting C. Dion and R. Cloutier. Motion seconded by J. Viskup. So voted. The Board came out of Executive Session at 8:30 p.m. on a motion from L. Donnelly, seconded by J. Viskup with the action of giving C. Dion a 6% increase (\$.96) effective 7/5/08.

Board will ask Clerk Torrey for report of vacation time used and available. Motion by L. Donnelly, seconded by J. Viskup for the Road Foreman to purchase an impact gun \$1,080.00 to be expensed against the tools and equipment budget. So voted.

Chair Lafleche adjourned the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully,

Susan Torrey, Clerk