

Town of Panton
Selectboard Meeting
Tuesday, December 8, 2009
6:00 p.m.

Board:

Eric Carter
Beth Tarallo
John Viskup, Chair

Administration:

Rick Cloutier
Sue Torrey (late)

Guests:

Sharon Ashcraft Deb Brace
Joe Kuhn

Call to Order: Chair Viskup called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Motion by Eric Carter to approve the November minutes as written, seconded by Beth Tarallo.

Public Comment: Joe Kuhn commented that the highway expenditure is too high and asked that the Board consider reducing the highway helper to part time. Mentioned that he would like to go to the ACRPC regarding combining towns together to utilize one town manager. Chair Viskup commented it would be good to look into considering how complex it's gotten to run town business. Discussion of budget versus actual and why actual appear high. Deb Brace questioned if the town needs two full time highway people especially in today's economy. She suggested the highway department keep track of what they do. Chair Viskup asked Rick to bring in his log book for the next meeting. Discussion of town right-of-way and Chair Viskup explained that Dennis Mueller was correct and notified him as such. Further discussion on who has ownership of the right-of-way. Chair Viskup (Tree Warden) will bring his Tree Ordinance to the next meeting in hopes of clarifying this discussion.

Sharon Ashcraft discussed AFLAC supplemental insurance for town employees which would be payroll deducted and no cost to the town. She supplied informational booklets for employees to review.

Road Foreman Report: Work is complete on Arnold Bay Road and came in under estimate. Chair Viskup mentioned that he drove on Hopkins Road and it appeared to have pot holes but Beth said that most residents of Hopkins Road are happy with the road condition. Rick discussed with the Board the culvert problem that exists on Slang Road and advised that perhaps the town could apply for a structure grant to replace the culvert. Rick will get figures for concrete box culverts and report to the Board. Rick commented that he would like to see a bridge maintenance program implemented. The Board agreed this was a good idea. Rick mentioned he would like to take up any bended guardrails and straighten them out. He also would like to clean out old trees that are located by Dennis Mueller which the Board agreed would be ok as long as it is cleaned up after. Eric gave Rick a draft of the winter maintenance ordinance and asked for feedback. Discussion of replacement of Panton road signs per State of Vermont 911 directive. Signs must be wider than current road signs and must be done by 2012. It was agreed this be spread out over the next two years.

Brad Howe – Bixby Library: Brad gave a brief overview of the relationship between the five towns and Bixby and explained that Bixby depends heavily on support from the towns therefore he asked the Board to consider putting the library in the budget as a line item as opposed to an article. It was discussed that the current contribution is \$6,300. But to offset some of the library's debt it is hoped the town will consider increasing the contribution to \$9,000. Chair Viskup noted this is a fifty percent increase and explained the town is also in need considering the state of our town hall. Brad commented that the real reason for their visit is to get the Bixby in the town budget. The Board advised they will consider this request at their budget meeting next Tuesday.

David Raphael – Budget/Byway:

David advised that he couldn't open the spreadsheet for DRB expense but expects the expenses to remain the same with perhaps an additional \$200.00 for printing/typing [town plan]. He added that ACRPC will support the Planning Commission with the town plan. David gave the Board the information of how the town can become a member of the Lake Champlain Byway. He explained that money comes into Vermont each year for projects which Panton might be able to apply for and receive. The process to become a member requires that the town hold a public hearing (15 day warning), and if the hearing is favorable then the Selectboard will adopt a resolution. If that is approved the town should request that the Scenery Preservation Council recommend approval of Panton joining the Byway. Chair Viskup directed Clerk Torrey to warn a hearing for January 12th, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

Old Business:

Russett Dog Fines – As there has not been any response despite requests for a meeting, Beth will contact the Russetts by phone.

Panton School Board – Beth advised that ANWSU bylaws were amended to specify the process by which representation from Panton (and other towns without town school boards) would be ensured on the ANWSU board. The Panton School Board will dissolve in June 2010 with the end of the fiscal year.

Attorney Neuse follow-up – Motion by Beth Tarallo at 7:48 to move into Executive Session seconded by Eric Carter. The Selectboard came out of Executive Session on a motion from Eric Carter, seconded by Beth Tarallo at 8:16 with the following action:

1. To proceed with legal action regarding the Vorsteveld violations and send a letter to them as such.
2. Refund half the dog fines collected to the individuals fined, with the remainder paid to the Dog Warden. In addition the Dog Warden will receive the late registration fees. Going forward in 2010, there will be a budgeted stipend established for this position under Office Salary Expense.

New Business:

Beth advised she is reviewing the insurance for Rick Cloutier and has a call in to the VLCT representative. She asked that Chair Viskup and Eric review the information so this can be resolved quickly. Sue Torrey recommended the Board review the VLCT 2009 Salaries to compare Panton to other towns. She gave Beth the book to review.

Beth advised that by the end of December Panton should find out if we will be going into the second round of the EECBG Grant.

Discussion on the speed limit on Panton Road being set too low and Clerk Torrey explained that a traffic study should be performed and that the current speed ordinance is not legal because a traffic study wasn't done. Eric will contact VLCT to see how we should proceed legally.

Financials/Correspondence:

Correspondence was reviewed and check warrants signed. Eric commented about the percent of budget being over 102% and Sue explained that was because the total cost of the truck was expensed which skews the budget percentage. The expense was offset by the loan proceeds received to pay for the truck.

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The truck payment will be expensed when the loan becomes due. She added that much of the expense has been incurred, i.e. resurfacing, sand, Hopkins Road, Stove Pipe City Road, etc.

Chair Viskup recessed the meeting at 8:38 p.m. until Tuesday, December 12th at 6:00 p.m. (budget preparation).

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Torrey, Clerk