

Town of Panton
Selectboard Meeting
Thursday, April 23, 2009
6:00 p.m.

Board:

Lynn Donnelly, Chair
Beth Tarallo
John Viskup

Administration:

Rick Cloutier
Sue Torrey

Guests:

Deb Brace
Joe Kuhn

Call to Order: Chair Donnelly called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Motion by John Viskup to approve the March minutes with the following correction: under Road Foreman Report, change 4th line from 50 gallons to 500 gallons. Motion seconded by Beth Tarallo. So voted.

Public Comment: Joe Kuhn thanked the Board for taking the Recycling Survey and presented them with feedback from the Director of Addison County Solid Waste. He then commented that he believes it appropriate for the Board to send a letter to Vergennes City Manager Mel Hawley requesting that the recycling fees be based on usage. He added that the fees should not come out of property taxes. Chair Donnelly advised that she was meeting with Mr. Hawley May 5th regarding another matter but will speak to him a little about this. Mr. Kuhn also commented on the mess being left by Davey Tree Service. John Viskup will speak with Bruce Bushey (Green Mountain Power) who is contracting the service.

Road Foreman Report: Rick advised that crack sealing will cost approximately \$4,200.00 day with Icon. He advised that this should be done on Basin Harbor Road and Lake Road (will take 2 -days). David Miner will contact General Paving to inquire on their fee. Contacted Champlain Valley Telecom to oversee ditching on East Road due to deep ditch and large fiber optic cables. Discussed paving and paving grants. It was discussed that the good roads need to be maintained so they don't get in such a state of disrepair. Rick mentioned that he saw someone dumping tires on private property and notified the landowner who came down and spoke to the offender. Is working with the Green -Up Coordinator to collect roadside rubbish. Discussed the need for driveway culvert replacements on Hopkins Road due to poor drainage which will undermine repairing Hopkins Road. Chair Donnelly suggested sending the residents a letter that the culverts must be replaced before work can commence on Hopkins Road (give a specific date). Clerk Torrey, Rick Cloutier and the Board, reviewed the Grant Agreement for road resurfacing. The agreement was signed and will be forwarded to AOT. John Viskup and Rick Cloutier will be contacts for any questions.

New Business: Credit Card Acceptance – Clerk Torrey advised that many people in town are asking to use credit cards for payments (property taxes, etc.). Feedback from other municipal clerks indicated Official Payments was most reliable. Fees are charged to the individual using the service and not the town. Clerk Torrey further explained that this is not a credit card machine but a service whereby the client would call a specific number or electronically connect through the internet. The payment would be then be forwarded to our bank with the pertinent information. The Board agreed that this could be an equitable service to the town residents and to proceed as presented.

911 Coordinator – Clerk Torrey explained that the Assistant Clerk has been acting as 911 Coordinator and now that she is retiring the Board will need to appoint a replacement. Discussion on the importance of the position but that it isn't a time consuming job. The Board will take this under advisement.

Tree Beetles – Clerk Torrey advised that the box elder beetles are very bad on the east side of the hall. They are coming into the office and making a mess. The beetles are coming from the tree located on Preston's side yard which is mainly dead which the beetles are attracted to. Beth Tarallo offered to contract the Preston's to see if the tree can be removed.

Dog Warden Fees – Clerk Torrey explained that in the past the Dog Warden was paid by a \$200.00 annual stipend which Mickey Billings didn't want. It was discussed that there is a great deal of time spent on dog problems/registering, etc. Paying the Warden from dog fees was discussed and Chair Donnelly asked that Clerk Torrey and Warden Brace decide the best compensation method and bring it to the next Board meeting. Deb advised that Ferrisburgh and Vergennes require all kennel fees be paid by the dog owner if a dog is picked up and brought to Vergennes Animal Hospital. It was agreed this is what Panton should do as well and not pay in advance as we have in the past. Warden Brace added that she did not have the equipment necessary to capture the dogs and John Viskup made the motion to approve a NTE amount of \$200.00 for equipment purchase, seconded by Beth Tarallo. So voted.

Old Business: Cemetery Fund – the Board directed Clerk Torrey to write a letter to the Cemetery Committee advising them to submit any and all invoices to the town for payment.

Town Hall Stimulus Funding – John Viskup advised that he attended a meeting in Montpelier with US Transportation Secretary LaHood regarding the stimulus status. He explained that Panton will not be included in the first phase funding but may have a chance at the second phase under enhancement grants. He added that Vermont is the only state to place restrictions on the stimulus funding. According to Curtis Johnson (AOT) they are writing the rules as they go along and what Panton should do is designate a part of the town hall as a visitor center and then Panton can apply for an enhancement grant (due by May 15th) which will fund up to \$300,000.00. They will also pay for design and plans and will pay 100% of septic and bathrooms. The visitor center should be coordinated with the Chamber of Commerce (Beth will do). The grant will pay 25% of the cost which leaves 75% for the town to raise. It was discussed that Panton needs a community space. Addison County Regional Planning will assist Panton in this endeavor. In mid May or June the Board must attend a meeting via inter-active tv at the Hannaford Career Center (mandatory) but prior to this Panton must also deliver a letter of intent (by the next Board meeting). Discussion ensued on bonding and the necessity of holding a special Town Meeting. Comment was made that considering the condition of the town hall something needs to be done soon.

Deb Brace mentioned that the debris left in the road by the large manure haulers should be cleaned off the road and the Board agreed that Deb, as Constable, should make sure this is done.

Chair Donnelly asked the result of the Russett tax abatement hearing. Clerk Torrey responded that she is still waiting for the information from Ann Sullivan as she wasn't at the hearing.

Joe Kuhn again recommended the town hire a town manager. Chair Donnelly said that this is why she is meeting with Mel Hawley to see if there is an interest in sharing with Vergennes and Ferrisburgh. Panton might use it differently than the other towns but it may be a way to get grant writing, etc. John mentioned teaming up with Waltham and Addison.

Chair Donnelly mentioned that she will be speaking to "Moose" Porter regarding the junk he is starting to accumulate on the corner of Panton Road and Jersey Street.

Discussion of breaking out the highway projects differently. Joe Kuhn asked that Clerk Torrey consider this but Clerk Torrey disagreed stating that the financials are being reported per GAAP. She added that the accountant agrees with the reporting being done and that individuals should not try to dictate financial reporting.

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Financials/Correspondence:

Correspondence and bills were reviewed and signed

Motion to recess by John Viskup, Chair Donnelly recessed the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Susan Torrey, Clerk