

Town of Panton
Selectboard Meeting
Tuesday, September 8, 2009
6:00 p.m. – Panton Town Offices

Board:

Eric Carter
Beth Tarallo

Administration:

Sue Torrey
Rick Cloutier

Guests:

Sharon Ashcraft Barb Fleming
Richard Jackson Joe Kuhn
Lou Lertola Gary Norton
David Raphael Paul Sokal
Kevin Sullivan

Call to Order: Beth Tarallo called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Beth, et al welcomed Eric Carter to the Board and thanked him for serving.

Sharon Ashcraft asked that it be noted that after the August Selectboard meeting she spoke to Larry Miner who stated that he had not previously visited her property regarding the drainage problem. Mr. Miner advised her that ledge wouldn't be a problem where the ditch is required and he could do the work for approximately \$2,000.00.

The minutes were reviewed and approved as written on a motion by Eric Carter, seconded by Beth Tarallo. So voted.

Lou Lertola: Expressed his thanks to the Board for their intent in asking the voters to increase the veteran's exemption to \$40,000.00 and gave a brief overview/history of the exemption.

Sharon Ashcraft: Reviewed information on Old South Road whereby it is still considered a Class 4 road and recommends that it be changed on the town mapping from Trail status to Class 4. It was commented that perhaps this could be done via mileage certification that is completed each year. Motion by Eric Carter to correct South Road and Grandy Road status from Trail to Class 4. Beth Tarallo seconded the motion. So voted. Further discussion ensued on the current use of the road and Sharon mentioned that the State of Vermont is allowing ATV's to travel the road. Discussion ensued on road classifications and Gary Norton commented that he believes the town shouldn't be putting money into West Road as the town doesn't get any funding for doing so. Rick Cloutier advised that he maintains the road for the farmers; dumping a few loads of gravel here and there. Sharon Ashcraft commented that perhaps the town could get help maintaining the road from Fish & Game. Eric Carter read the pertinent statute regarding Class 4 roads which gives the town discretion on upkeep. Sharon will forward Beth a copy of the information she has compiled to aid in the classification correction to the State of Vermont.

Ed Hanson: Zoning Administrator Hanson submitted to the Board a Notice of Violation on the Vorsteveld Farm regarding the unauthorized placement of a mobile home on Panton Road (between Russett lot and Huff lot). He added that although he spoke to Hans Vorsteveld and explained he was in violation, the mobile home was only moved down the road to another location. No appeal has been made by the Vorstevelds and time has elapsed to correct the violation. Also discussed Vorstevelds existing bunker violation on Jersey Street which was not pursued by the town (2004). Ed provided the Board with aerial photos of the farm and recommends the Board meet with their attorney Jim Carroll to discuss further. Richard Jackson mentioned that the Vorstevelds are currently in the process of building a larger barn. Ed will check on this and report his findings.

Ed explained that although farms are exempt from the permitting process, they are required by State Law to notify the town that they are putting up a structure; provide a site sketch indicating where the structure will be located and abide by the town's set-back requirements, unless granted a waiver by the Secretary of Agriculture, who will then notify the town. Ed advised that he will meet with the Board and town attorney if required. Sharon Ashcraft commented that the bunker contributes to bad smells and vermin. Zoning Administrator Hanson commented that with regard to zoning problems it appears to be consistent behavior with the Vorstevelds. Sharon Ashcraft mentioned that the Vorsteveld farm appears to have much more than 700 cows and would like the Board to bring this to the Secretary of Agriculture's attention.

Road Foreman Report: Rick advised that the shoulders have been done on the new pavement and the State will be stripping. A few people have look at the red truck and will be submitting bids. Brought the 2007 truck for warranty work on the body (hinge defects). Discussed Stove Pipe City road work to be done and Rick commented that the road appears to be in good shape and he believes Arnold Bay Road needs the work more. Sue Torrey commented that there appears to be quite a few new culverts at the town garage and expressed concern about cash flow. Rick advised that they all have places in the town. Asked the Board to walk Arnold Bay Road and Stove Pipe City Road with him to evaluate their condition. Board will meet Rick at the garage Tuesday, September 15 at 3:30 p.m. to walk the roads. Pulled up the dead trees across from the store at the little park; hauling winter sand. Board changed Road Foreman Report to be first on the Agenda.

Old Business: Enhancement Application – Beth gave an overview of the funding request to repair/overhaul the town hall and explained that the preliminary steps have been done and the application is currently be prepared and is due early October (12-13). Beth advised that she attended the September DRB meeting to advise them on our plans and to get their support. Prioritizing the work to be done on the hall is the next step as the grant (up to \$300k) will not cover the original cost. Beth advised that the grant requires a 20% match, 10% cash and 10% in kind work. The grants will be awarded March 2010 with work not beginning until 2011/2012 timeframe. The meeting 9/22 will determine if the town desires to move forward on applying for the grant. Sharon Ashcraft mentioned that she tried to get a historical society established in town but didn't find anyone who seemed interested. She added that the Panton Town Hall is not designated as a historic building according to the State of Vermont Historical register. Various means of fund raising was discussed and Sharon suggested a calendar similar to the "Men of Maple Corner."

Beth mentioned that David Raphael wanted to speak to the Board concerning the Champlain ByWay but had to leave. It is hoped that grant money could be obtained via this avenue as Panton is on the ByWay.

New Business: Sue Torrey advised that Chris Laberge from VLCT visited the garage and commented that the fire extinguishers should be checked monthly. The Board will recommend this practice to the highway foreman. Advised that the American Legion again requested money for flags and asked if Panton would put a budget line item in for \$80.00. Sue mentioned that the tax maps are getting very tattered and perhaps these could be redone in the future (2010).

Financials/Correspondence: Financials were reviewed and check warrants were signed. Joe Kuhn expressed concern regarding Panton paying the school tax in full when we have uncollected taxes. Sue advised that she looked into this and the town can pay the school tax minus uncollected taxes but taxes must be paid in full within 120 days. Discussion on the state of economy in town and how it will affect tax collection. Joe presented the Board with the monthly financial graphs. Sue mentioned that although we applied for Class II grant money for road resurfacing, no word has been received. She added that Rick Cloutier advised he spoke with someone at DOT who said we would be receiving a letter of approval from the State. It was commented that this hurts cash flow as does doing highway work in the summer but not collecting taxes until November. Sue advised that Board that she is having a difficult time scheduling a meeting with VLCT regarding Rick Cloutier's health insurance problems but will continue to pursue. Will be receiving a check from VLCT for reimbursement for computer expenses resulting from the lightning strike. Sue commented that Citizens Bank was wonderful with helping her get back on-line after the strike.

Sharon Ashcraft advised that Rick Cloutier "bashed" her sumac trees down (on the corner of Spaulding and Jersey Street) and is unhappy that this was done without her being notified in advance. She added that when she asked Rick he explained there was an accident at four in the morning, however neighbors had observed Rick clearing the sumac earlier. Sue added that Rick commented in the office that the trees were obstructing the roadway. Sharon advised that she had to hire someone to clean it up as Rick said he wouldn't have time for a couple weeks. Sharon commented that she wouldn't have been so upset if the trees had been cut rather than smashed. Gary Norton commented that appears a lot of dirt is being put on Slang/West Road unnecessarily and he doesn't understand why the road crew isn't out cleaning up the roadsides especially the brush on the corners which obstructs traffic. Joe Kuhn recommended the Board do a road walk periodically to see what is going on as he is concerned about the quality of work. Gary Norton commented that it used to be that the roads and roadsides were kept clean and mowed back more especially the corners. Kevin Sullivan commented that the Jersey Street/Panton corner is especially bad and should be cut back. Joe Kuhn commented that the roadside across from Pat Barrows looks very nice and it would be a good policy to follow on other roadsides. Eric Carter commented that in the past residents have complained about brush cutting. Discussion on cutting brush versus cutting trees/shrubs and that the town residents should be notified prior to anything being cut. Gary Norton suggested putting a notice in the Town Report that roadsides will be cut and any problems should be addressed to the Board. Eric Carter commented that it's quite hard to discuss these issues without the road foreman being present. Sharon advised that she called John Viskup about the trees. Gary Norton advised that he is working for free with his truck to take ditch/road dirt but commented that he doesn't want any asphalt in it.

Paul Sokal advised that he is working with Ralph Burt on the town website and would like to ad a page of photographs from around Panton. This would go out as a request via our town wide email. The Board agreed this would be a nice gesture.

Meeting adjourned by Beth Tarallo at 8:14 p.m.