



Town of Panton Chartered 1761

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Selectboard Meeting

February 25, 2020

Selectboard Member's present: Chair Howard Hall and Teresa Smith. Also present was Town Clerk/Treasurer Pam Correia, Bob Groff, Gerard Vorsteveld, and Sharon Ashcraft.

At 6:30pm, Howard Hall called the meeting to order.

2. Additions, removals, or adjustments to the agenda. – A public hearing on the proposed amended Panton Town Plan was held at 6pm just prior to the regular scheduled Selectboard Meeting on Tuesday, February 25, 2020. The Board amended the agenda to include the adoption of the proposed amendments to the Town Plan and the addition of a possible executive session.

3. Teresa Smith moved to approve the February 11, 2020 Selectboard meeting minutes, with no corrections. Howard Hall seconded. The motion passed.

4. Public Comments – Gerard Vorsteveld presented the Board with a newspaper from the Herald of Randolph dated March 7, 2019 which contained an article entitled “Emerald Ash Borer Occupies Brookfield Discussion” Gerard pointed out one particular section of the article which reads, “Trees in the town right-of-way still belong to the landowner.” This statement is relevant to the ongoing discussion Gerard has been involved in with the Board regarding the South Road Trail and the removal of the trees on both sides of the trail that are possibly within the Town right-of-way. Gerard advised the Board that a snowmobile cannot be ridden in the area through the South Road Trail as it is all enclosed.

5. Town Meeting Organizational Meeting – Teresa Smith summarized the highlights discussed during the Board of Civil Authority meeting pertaining to the March 3, 2020 elections. Howard Hall advised the Board that Town Moderator Eric Carter was prepared for Town Meeting and had been to a recent moderator's meeting. The Board briefly discussed a few maintenance items and viewed a preview of the PowerPoint presentation for Town Meeting. Howard stated that the Board could follow the Town Meeting Warning as their agenda and briefly touched on the

articles included on the warning. Howard added that he would also like to share at Town Meeting the highlights of the 2019 synopsis of services provided to the Town from the Sheriff's Department.

Pam Correia pointed out to the Board that Article 6 is included on the Town Meeting Warning to ask the voters to rename the Town Hall Restoration Fund to the Town Building Maintenance Reserve Fund to be used for the purpose of maintaining any Town building and the Board also has a budgeted line item of \$20,075 included in the proposed FY20/21 budget for the salt shed loan, but advised the Board that she is concerned that if the Town borrows funds over the course of 20 years for a new salt shed, voter approval may be needed and is not included on the Town Meeting warning. Howard Hall stated that the other alternative would be to borrow for five years and advised that it is a thought process. Teresa Smith stated that she appreciated Pam's concern about warning the borrowing of funds for the salt shed financing. Howard stated that the Board does not have to get voter approval for anything about highway. Pam Correia stated that she believed the borrowing of funds for the salt shed deals with construction and added that borrowing for construction and highway are really two different things. Pam made reference to one of nine situations in which a Selectboard may borrow funds without voter approval which reads, "Borrowing for the purchase of tools, equipment and materials necessary for the construction, maintenance or repair of highways and bridges for a term of five years or less" as cited in 19 VSA § 304(a)(3). Pam also stated in reference to this situation that if the Board plans to borrow funds for a term greater than 5 years, there must be specific voter approval as cited in 24 VSA § 1786a(b) and the article could be warned for the August 2020 or November 2020 election unless the Board would rather warn a special town meeting sooner.

6. Finalization of Security Cameras – The Board advised that recently there have been several incidents where the door has been left unlocked and the lights have been left on at the Town Offices; therefore, they have decided to take action for the security of personnel by installing a security camera in the Town Office.

Topics of discussion included:

- Placement of the camera outside the office door versus the work area inside the office;
- Recording with sound;
- The use of cameras in other towns;
- Viewing rights and access to monitor recordings;
- Public Records Law;
- Secure connection of Wyze camera

The camera had been positioned in the Town Office so that it covered both entrance ways and provided a very clear picture of the Town Office area. The Board advised that other than Pam, only the Selectboard has viewing rights to the recordings. Further discussion regarding the security camera was tabled in order to discuss it as a full Board.

7. Review/Approval of Accounts Payable Warrant, Timesheets, and Financials – The accounts payable warrant, timesheets, and January financials were reviewed. Pam Correia advised the Board that the accounts payable warrant included a payment of \$732.22 for the new lister's computer and would like permission to use funds from the Technology Fund to cover the expense as previously discussed. Howard Hall moved to move \$732.22 from the Technology Fund into the accounts payable, Teresa Smith seconded. The motion passed. With no discussion, Teresa Smith moved to accept the January financials as written, Howard Hall seconded. The motion passed.

8. Communications

- South Road Trail Survey – Pam Correia advised the Board that she had been in contact with some area surveyors regarding the surveying of the South Road Trail. She stated that she spoke with Rob Goodwin of Barnard & Gervais LLC regarding the trail and he suggested that a good first step would be to obtain a legal determination from the Town Attorney before they jump into a survey given the history of the trail. The Board briefly discussed contacting Attorney Benjamin Putnam of Neuse, Duprey & Putnam to obtain sequencing of what needs to be done in the matter. Teresa Smith moved to contact Benj Putnam regarding the South Road surveying and a sequence of events, Howard Hall seconded. The motion passed.

Pam Correia noted the email received by Paul Sokal on February 20, 2020 regarding the South Road Trail survey to be sure the Board was aware of it.

Howard Hall noted that the executive session was not needed.

The adoption of the proposed amendments to the Town Plan was not discussed. The item will be included on the March 10, 2020 Selectboard Agenda for adoption.

At 7:16pm, Teresa Smith moved to adjourn the meeting, Howard Hall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Correia
Town Clerk/Treasurer