



Town of Panton Chartered 1761

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Selectboard Zoom Meeting

June 23, 2020

Selectboard Member's present: Howard Hall, Teresa Smith, and Zachary Weaver. Also present was Town Clerk/Treasurer Pam Correia, Bob Groff, and Toni Mikula.

At 6:34pm, Howard Hall called the meeting to order.

2. Additions, removals, or adjustments to the agenda – Howard Hall moved to make two additions to the agenda - the letter of support to Green Mountain Power regarding the Panton solar field and voting by mail/changing the polling place to the Town Garage for the August 11th Primary, Teresa Smith seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

3. Teresa Smith moved to accept the June 9, 2020 minutes as written, Zachary Weaver seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

4. Public Comment – There were no public comments.

5. Addison County Sheriff's Department 2020 Contract – The Board tabled the discussion to later in the meeting to wait for Sheriff Peter Newton to arrive via Zoom.

6. Approval of VT Fish & Wildlife Department Potential Land Acquisition – Toni Mikula of the VT Fish & Wildlife Department joined the meeting to discuss a potential land acquisition at the Dead Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA) and is seeking support from the Town in the State acquiring a 124-acre piece of farm land from the Jackson property. The property adds significant wetland restoration and wildlife habitat conservation benefits to the WMA and will provide permanent protection of public access for hunting, trapping, fishing, and wildlife viewing. Howard Hall stated that he is in favor of the potential acquisition but also shared his concerns about chronic dumping in the area by Third Bridge, shooting, and keeping the land clean due to staffing restraints. Toni confirmed that the Fish & Wildlife Dept would be patrolling the area more often and would spend more time taking care of the property. Toni stated that the purchase of this piece of farm land would improve water quality in Lake Champlain by restoring wetlands and the State would be trying to convert land use that is detrimental to water quality by buying up really wet marginal farm land and restoring the wetlands there. She added that Mr. Jackson is a willing seller and the State is trying to move forward with the purchase of part of his farm. Toni explained that part of the process of the State purchasing land is seeking approval from the Town. The Board endorsed the efforts of the Fish & Wildlife Department and their goal for the 124-acre Jackson property. Teresa Smith moved to affirm this and to accept this, Zachary Weaver seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

7. Delinquent Dog Warrant – The Board briefly discussed and reviewed the delinquent dog warrant.

Howard Hall moved to accept Nathan Barcomb, Constable of the Town of Panton to oversee the dog warrant, Teresa Smith seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

8. Internal Financial Controls Document per 24 VSA § 1571(d) – The Board reviewed the Internal Financial Controls Document and with no further discussion, Teresa Smith moved to accept this document, the financial management questionnaire, Howard Hall seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

9. Approval of FY2021 Employee Wage Schedule effective July 1, 2020 – The Board discussed the current CPI and being in line with surrounding towns relative to employee wage increases. The Board is comfortable with an increase of 2.75% and believes this is a reasonable and fair amount for employees. The Board would like to air on the side of conservative and look towards getting the increase back up in future years while maintaining a safe zone. Howard Hall moved the pay raises will go from zero to 2.75% for fiscal year of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021, Zachary Weaver seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

10. Review/Approval of Accounts Payable Warrant, Timesheets, & May Financials – The accounts payable warrant, timesheets, and May financials were reviewed. Howard Hall moved to accept the Town of Panton accounts payable, Teresa Smith seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

- Approval to Open Boat Ramp Project Account for Donations – Pam Correia advised the Board that she has received a couple of donations in the form of checks for the boat ramp project and would like to get them deposited into a separate account specific for the boat ramp. With no further discussion, Teresa Smith moved to open an account for the boat ramp project with \$100 from the general fund, Howard Hall seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.
- Approval to transfer \$10,000 from Highway Capital Project Fund for Fresh Coat sealing – Howard Hall noted that Rick Cloutier was having the work done on Jersey Street, Pease Road, and Panton Road. With no further discussion, Teresa Smith moved to transfer \$10,000 from the Highway Capital Project Fund for the sealing project he is doing, Howard Hall seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

11. Communications –

- A letter was received from the Addison County Sheriff's Department outlining a rate increase over the next couple of years. Starting July 1, 2020, patrol rates will increase to \$31/hour and mileage will start being charged again. Since this rate is well below where the Sheriff's Department needs to be, starting July 1, 2021 the patrol rates will increase to \$34/hour and then to \$37/hour on July 1, 2022. Howard Hall advised the Board that Rick Cloutier is happy with the Sheriff's Department and has a good relationship with them. He added that he does not see the need to go anywhere else. Teresa Smith moved to accept these rate increases by the sheriff, Zachary Weaver seconded. All in favor, the motion passed. The Board noted that their voice vote is fine and no contract in writing is needed at this time. The Board would like to continue to meet with the Sheriff's Department twice a year.
- The Selectboard received notice from DRB member Mary Rudd that the Town of Panton Planning Commission supports Green Mountain Power's planned upgrades to the solar storage field. At their June 11, 2020 meeting, Mary Rudd moved "to have the Selectboard send a letter of support to the PUC for the islanding." After no further discussion, Zachary Weaver moved to support Green Mountain Power letter of support for the Panton solar storage field and islanding equipment and protocols for the Town of Panton, Teresa Smith seconded. All in favor, the motion passed. Howard Hall added that this upgrade will now mean that if there is a power outage, the Town of Panton will have a battery backup.

- August 11th Primary – The Board discussed early voting in the Town Office as well as mailing absentee ballots to all Panton registered voters. Pam Correia noted that she expected any early voting in the Town Office would go smoothly while following CDC guidelines. The Board discussed holding drive-thru voting at the Town Garage. Pam advised the Board that the change of polling place would need to be warned and will confirm that the Board of Civil Authority has the authority to change the polling place by meeting and holding a vote to change the polling place.
- Summer Selectboard Meeting Schedule – The Board briefly discussed the summer schedule for Selectboard meetings and determined that there has been enough on the agendas to warrant keeping the meetings twice a month on the second and fourth Tuesday.
- Howard Hall complimented Bob Groff for the great work he is doing and noted that he is a great example of the Panton community.

At 7:26pm, Howard Hall moved to enter executive session for the purpose of evaluating job performance under the provisions of 1 VSA § 313 (a) (3), Teresa Smith seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

At 8pm, the Board returned to open session. Zachary Weaver moved to approve the schedule of pay increases for town employees effective July 1, 2020, Teresa Smith seconded. All in favor, the motion passed.

At 8:02pm, Teresa Smith moved to adjourn the meeting, Zachary Weaver seconded. All in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Correia
Town Clerk/Treasurer