



Town of Panton Chartered 1761

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Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 22, 2022

In attendance: Selectboard Chair Howard Hall, Selectboard Vice-Chair Teresa Smith, Clerk-Treasurer Maggie McCormick

Via Zoom: Selectboard Member Zach Weaver, Emergency Management Coordinator Bob Groff, Lorraine Kayser, Paulette Bogan, Sharon Ashcraft, Bethanie Farrell, Paul Sokal

1. Call to order,
 - a. Howard called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.
2. Additions/deletions to agenda: None.
3. Approval of the minutes of the March 8, 2022 Selectboard meeting
 - a. Teresa moved to accept the minutes as written. Howard seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
4. Emergency Management Coordinator's Report
 - a. Covid cases down, Addison County cases moved to medium risk
 - i. BA.2 variant ramping up
 - ii. Booster vaccine for those 65+ being considered
 - b. Watch for thin ice as the weather warms
 - c. VT Emergency Management has instituted Integrated Preparedness Planning
 - i. EMC is reviewing for usefulness to Panton
5. ARPA funds discussion
 - a. Uses
 - i. Digitization
 - ii. Water
 - iii. Sewer
 - iv. Computers
 - b. Prohibited Uses
 - i. Tax relief
 - ii. Roads

- Lorraine Kayser: run down on website states Town will received approximately \$211,000
 - a. Expressed support for expanding internet capacity.
 - b. Asked for and received confirmation that about a quarter of funds (\$50,000) already allocated to Maple Broadband.
 - c. Expressed concern about Vergennes-Panton Water District (VPWD) with old pipes and repeated breaks and service disruption.
 - a. Asked for and received confirmation that VPWD came to Selectboard last fall asking for money.
 - Howard replied that the cost estimates VPWD presented were nine years old.
 - Teresa stated concern that VPWD is not resolving private water line issues. Many Panton residents are on private lines. The board wants to make sure any APRA money spent benefits all Panton residents.
 - Lorraine asked if the selectboard asked VPWD for a plan.
 - Howard stated that the board asked VPWD how the money would be spent.
 - Teresa noted that the board has had no further communication from VPWD since they made their presentation last fall.
- Paulette Bogan asked if there has been consideration of use of ARPA funds for green spaces
 - Teresa asked if Paulette had anything specific in mind
 - Trails/recreation
 - Arnold Bay Beach improvements
 - Howard stated that other funding is available for Arnold Bay.
- Paul Sokal suggested expending ~10% of ARPA funding on improving the pathway on South Road Trail to join West Road by removing stumps and brush-hogging, etc.
 - Sharon Ashcraft noted that last year she mowed South Road with her brush hog. She wondered if some ARPA funding could be used to plant trees on South Road. She asked the board if there is a plan to follow up on David Raphael's tree planting plan.
 - Teresa asked if David mentioned types of trees. Sharon will revisit the email.
 - Town is working to pick up the numerous projects that David was shepherding.

6. Town Officer Email Addresses

- a. Clerk stated the need for all Town business to be conducted on Town-owned systems and email addressed to ensure continuity of operations when there are personnel changes, either staff or volunteers.
- b. Clerk also reminded town officers that using a Town email address shielded their personal accounts from subpoenaed.
 - i. Howard clarified that town officers cannot discuss/transact town business in non-public setting and that group texts can also be subpoenaed.
- c. Clerk working with Town IT contractor to implement this structure.

7. Turkey Lane Survey Estimates
 - a. The need for a survey came out of the Right of Way (ROW) litigation between the Town and Korb/Viskup.
 - i. Court determined that the town ROW runs from Lake Road to the Lake Champlain waterline.
 - b. A survey will be done to confirm and/or establish boundary markers.
 - c. Howard noted that three bids were solicited, with one company declining to bid. Bids were received from LaRose Surveyors and Bernard & Gervais.
 - i. The board reviewed what was included in each bid, noting that the LaRose bid was approximately half the cost of the Bernard & Gervais bid and was specific on what was not included.
 - ii. LaRose could start in mid-May, with the survey potentially complete in time for the Town to apply for grant money for Turkey Lane improvement.
 - d. Teresa moved to hire LaRose for the Turkey Lane survey. Howard seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
8. Newspaper of Record
 - a. Teresa moved that the Addison Independent remain the Town's Newspaper of Record. Howard seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
9. Town Hall Maintenance Contractor
 - a. Ober Lopez willing to be "on-call" contractor at \$35/hour.
 - b. Teresa noted that \$35/hour is a very reasonable rate and that it is nearly impossible to find an available contractor.
 - c. Howard noted that Ober built the storage closet and chair rack, as well as replacing two interior doors and did good work in a timely manner.
 - d. The Selectboard agreed to use Ober Lopez as on-call contractor.
10. Revise Dog Ordinance to add waste pickup requirement
 - a. Teresa suggested any requirement be limited to shared public spaces.
 - b. Howard noted that it is nearly impossible to enforce this type of ordinance.
 - c. Sharon Ashcraft stated that last summer the waterline at the [Arnold Bay] beach was always littered with dog waste.
 - d. It was acknowledged that dog owners should not allow their dog on another person's private property without permission and if they do, removing their dog's waste is expected.
 - e. Teresa reiterated that it is not feasible for the Town to police and enforce waste removal.
 - f. Sharon stated that having a waste pick-up requirement in the ordinance would at least provide a mandate that would allow observers to request removal per Town ordinance.
 - g. Teresa agreed that the Town will investigate revising the ordinance.
 - h. Paulette Bogan spoke in favor of adding the waste removal requirement to the ordinance, so that observers could cite it as part of a "kind prompt" for potential offenders to follow the rules.

- i. Howard confirmed that the Town will investigate revising the ordinance.
11. Public comment: None
12. Communications
 - a. NEMRC is offering a seminar on understanding the audit process to Selectboards.
 - i. Panton board members are familiar with the audit process and Telling & Hillman, the Town's professional audit company, reviews their annual findings with the board.
13. Conflict of Interest Policy renewal for Selectboard members
 - a. Howard stated that it is imperative that all Town Officers conduct themselves so that their integrity is unquestionable. Community members must be confident that Town business is conducted with transparency and that Town Officers do not receive special treatment.
 - b. Howard and Teresa have signed their annual Conflict of Interest statement.
 - c. Zach will sign his in the coming week.
14. Review/approval of accounts payable warrant, timesheets & payroll warrant
 - a. Teresa moved to approve the accounts payable warrant, the time sheets, and the payroll warrant following pay discussion in executive session. Howard seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
15. Executive session for the purpose of discussing potential litigation and payroll matters.
 - a. Howard invited Bob Groff to Executive Session.
 - b. Howard moved to go into executive session. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the board entered executive session at 6:40 p.m.
 - c. Teresa moved to exit executive session. Howard seconded. All in favor; the board returned to open session at 7:13 p.m.
16. Adjournment

Howard moved to adjourn. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the meeting adjourned at 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maggie McCormick
Clerk-Treasurer