



Town of Panton Chartered 1761

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Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 23, 2021

Attendance via Zoom: Selectboard Chair Howard Hall, Selectboard Vice-Chair Teresa Smith, Selectboard Member Zachary Weaver, Emergency Management Coordinator Bob Groff, Acting Town Agent Sandy Fogg, Clerk-Treasurer Maggie McCormick, Sharon Ashcraft, Gerard Vorsteveld, Tree Warden David Raphael joined the meeting in progress at approximately 6:00 p.m.

1. Howard called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.
2. Additions/deletions to agenda: None
3. Approval of the minutes of the March 9, 2021 Selectboard meeting
 - a. Teresa moved to accept the minutes of the March 9, 2021 Selectboard meeting as written. Howard seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
4. Public comments: None
5. Emergency Management Coordinator's Report
 - a. Bob reported on the Covid-19 vaccine schedule and will provide the breakdown if requested. He also asked that residents not become complacent and especially watch for variants.
 - b. Bob also reported that the Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) has been submitted and he'll advise once it's approved.
6. David Raphael: moved to later in the agenda because David had not yet arrived.
7. Salt shed and equipment barn financing
 - a. Teresa reported that she had worked the numbers. She stated that First National Bank of Orwell was not feasible because the loan would be written for a 5-year term and then be re-written for another 5 years at the prevailing interest rate at that time. She discussed the very-involved processed required to borrow from the VT Bond Bank that also makes this option unfeasible. She went on to cite the Town's long-standing and favorable relationship with National Bank of Middlebury (NBM).

Maggie added that NBM's Chris Lapierre said the loan will likely be structured as a line of credit and invoices submitted to NBM and they will issue payment.

- b. Teresa moved to pursue financing through NBM. Zac seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
8. Clerk Treasurer's Update
- a. Election expense reimbursement: Maggie reported that she has submitted the Town's request for reimbursement of election expenses due to Covid-19 accommodations in the amount of \$4259.15.
 - b. Phone system: Maggie reported that she has discussed Pantan's phone system pain points with Symquest and they plan to send a quote this week.
 - c. Budget Status: moved to later in the agenda due to technical difficulty.
9. David Raphael
- a. South Road update
 - i. In Section 1, the Farm has agreed to preserve the tree line for the first half-mile. The Town will retain trees and vegetation 25' in the middle of the ROW. Section 2 has a lot less vegetations than the aerial photo shows. In Section 2, David recommends that the Farm be allowed to ditch and remove trees 12.5' in from each edge of the ROW. The trail will remain intact through there, while the Farm will remove the mostly dead and overgrown trees in this section. Section 3 will be left alone at this point. David has requested that he be present when the Farm does cutting/clearing. David requested the Selectboard support his report/recommendations and allow the Farm to start work. Howard requested creation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to memorialize the agreement to protect bot the Town and the landowner. David stated that trail width is between 5' and 10' and there will be a remaining hedgerow along the entire length. David confirmed the trail will be wide enough to be mowed with the brush hog.
 - ii. Teresa moved to accept David's recommended plan. Zac seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
 - iii. David will draft the MOU for signatures on Wednesday, March 24, 2021. The Selectboard agreed that the Farm can proceed now under the understanding reached and the Selectboard will formalize the MOU at the April 13, 2021 meeting.
 - iv. Sharon asked for clarification on the ROW borders and David confirmed that the total width of the ROW will be 25' which will include the width of the trail and the vegetation on each side.
 - b. Vergennes Economic Corridor update
 - i. The State is on the verge of selecting a consultant. In addition to being Pantan's appointed representative on the technical committee, he volunteer to review consultant submissions and made sure Pantan's interests on the budget and the scope of work are represented. Once a consultant is selected and a contract executed, the project is likely to begin by late spring.

- c. Arnold Bay Beach planning grant update
 - i. David wanted to alert the Selectboard that Arnold Bay Beach is on the Planning Commission's agenda this month. The first step will be to determine scope of work so that work can be put to bid for an engineering consulting bid. He will reach out to various stakeholders, including Road Foreman Rick Cloutier, Vergennes-Panton Water District, and beach users. He plans to develop a questionnaire for residents and possibly hold an informational gathering at the Beach around July 4, 2021.

10. Clerk Treasurer's Budget Status

- a. Maggie reviewed several line items that she reviewed and analyzed for over-expenditure and reported that despite individual lines being over budget, appropriate budget money is available for all expenses with re-allocation of those expenses to other appropriate lines, e.g., Assistant Clerk wages is over-budget, but Clerk wages is under-budget, so that overall Town Hall wages are still within \$2000.00 of the budgeted amount.

11. Communications

- a. Addison County Sheriff's 5% clause: Maggie informed the board of the Sheriff's letter indicating that he won't be taking his allowed pay augmentation of 5% and instead direct that money toward the AC Sheriff's Dept operating budget.
- b. Homeward Bound Contract: the Selectboard discussed whether to contract for \$450 for up to three dogs turned in with any additional surrenders billed at \$75.00 each versus \$600 for any number of surrenders. Panton had only one dog delivered to Homeward Bound in the past year.
 - i. Zach moved to contract for \$450 with Homeward Bound. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
- c. Prevent Child Abuse Vermont Pinwheel program
 - i. The Selectboard discussed the pinwheel program at \$1.00/pinwheel with a suggested order of 100 pinwheels. The board reflected that the Town receives a number of similar requests that are all worthy causes and determined all requests should be made through the Town Meeting Appropriations request process.

12. Review/approval of accounts payable warrant, timesheets & payroll warrant

- a. Howard moved to approve the accounts payable warrant, timesheets & payroll warrant. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

13. Howard moved to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing potential litigation and town office appointments. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the board entered executive session at approximately 6:25 p.m.

14. Zac moved to exit executive session. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the board returned to open session at 6:45 p.m.

15. Teresa moved to adjourn. Zac seconded. All in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maggie McCormick
Clerk-Treasurer