



Town of Panton Chartered 1761

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Selectboard Minutes

Tuesday, May 11, 2021

Attendees via Zoom: Selectboard Chair Howard Hall, Selectboard Vice-Chair Teresa Smith, Selectboard Member Zachary Weaver, Emergency Management Coordinator Bob Groff, Road Foreman Rick Cloutier, Town Advisor Sandy Fogg, Clerk-Treasurer Maggie McCormick, Vergennes Panton Water District (VPWD) Superintendent Jon Deming, Panton Water Commissioner and VPWD Chair Meddie Perry, Panton Water Commissioner Sean Willerford, Sharon Ashcraft, Michael Catillaz, Martha DeGraaf, David Martini.

1. Howard called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.
2. Additions/deletions to agenda: None.
3. Approval of the minutes of the April 27, 2021 Selectboard meeting
 - a. Teresa moved to accept the April 27, 2021 meeting minutes as written. Howard seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
4. Road Foreman's Report
 - a. All but two of the posts have been installed. The remaining posts will be installed on Saturday, May 15.
 - b. The pad for the salt shed is nearly complete.
 - i. Get blocks in and paved
 - ii. Construction to start in June
 - c. Road sign locations need to be GPS-located
 - i. Fisher Lane sign missing
5. Vergennes-Panton Water District Information: Jon Deming VPWD Superintendent and Meddie Perry, Panton Water Commissioner
 - a. Meddie, Chair of VPWD, Jon Deming, VPWD Superintendent, Sean Willerford
 - i. Background: VPWD is its own municipal entity chartered in 1971. There are 1.2 million gallons of water stored in tanks on Green Street that provide gravity feed to ensure water pressure and supply, even if power is out. There are 26 miles of public water lines and 28 miles of private lines managed through private associations.
 - ii. Encouraged residents to stop by the office or call VPWD with questions
 - b. Howard asked about public/private: what happens if a private line breaks? Who is responsible to excavate and repair? Who pays for the repair and how do you collect the money from residents?

- i. Meddie answered that those with private water lines should call VPWD, who will put you in touch with contractor.
 - ii. Private lines part of associations and documented in Town land records, including agreements on cost sharing
 - iii. Howard questioned how a property owner or prospective owner would know about the private association if it is not mentioned in the deed.
- c. Teresa suggested calling a public meeting to encourage residents to learn if they are in a private association and explore asked if public notice about checking water association membership to address private water districts
- d. Howard asked how property owners would know where the private lines are.
- e. Howard asked if there is a requirement for a “qualified contractor” or if the homeowner can attempt the repair.
- f. David Martini reported that when he purchased his home 18 months ago, there was nothing about a private water association and it was represented as receiving municipal water.
 - i. David asked why private water association customers pay the same amount as customers who are on truly public water where repairs would be covered by VPWD.
 - ii. Meddie responded that it is not VPWD responsibility to monitor property transfers or the information contained in deeds.
 - 1. Private water lines are the same as private road or sending children to private school; one still pays the same taxes for road maintenance or public education.
 - 2. All customers are responsible for the line from the main to their residence.
 - iii. Howard stated that if a main breaks in Vergennes, VPWD digs it up and repairs it, but if the main breaks on Pease Road, VPWD would not come out and repair it.
 - iv. David asked why VPWD does not shut off water for people in private associations refuse to pay their share of private repair bill? Since the water delivered to the non-payer comes through the association’s pipes, VPWD could not bill them if the water could not come through the association line.
 - v. Meddie indicated the VPWD would have an internal conversation to determine if the District can help in some way.
- g. Mike Catillaz:
 - i. He had conversation with Jeff Stone, who helped him understand where the lines are. Can a map be made? Jeff indicated he would help but has not followed through, indicating he is too busy.
- h. Teresa:
 - i. Have a meeting to get questions answered and begin to create a strategy for how to move forward for water service.
- i. Howard stated that when you receive a bill from VPWD, you assume that your property has municipal water. Recommends VPWD inform that property has private water when they set up service/billing. Maybe ARPA funds can be used to help improve water distribution.

- j. Teresa suggested start with map of lines so that residents know whether they have public or private water lines. She will work with Meddie to get background and set a date for a Panton meeting on water supply.
6. Emergency Management (EM) Coordinator's Report
- a. 12 – 15 year-olds will be approved for vaccination
 - b. Bob is continuing to work on the River Corridor Plan with Andre L'Roe of Addison County Regional Planning Commission. He is working to provide the Selectboard all relevant information for their consideration/approval.
 - c. Local Hazard Mitigation Plan grant is awaiting FEMA reply.
 - d. EM is determining if vaccine boosters will be needed and if so, how boosters will be administered.
 - e. Bob requested the Selectboard and town staff provide information on daily, weekly, and monthly tasks Continuation of Operations Plan
7. Public comments
- a. Sharon Ashcraft
 - i. South Road trees cut this spring still on the ground
 - 1. Howard will confer with Tree Warden on this issue.
 - ii. The existing Right of Way (RO) ordinance states that no material of any kind may be deposited in the ROW without a permit. The State statute has a clause about "ingress and egress" but the Town ordinance does not.
 - 1. Sharon expressed her concern that she needed a permit for even simple cosmetic improvements
 - 2. Howard replied that enforcement would be consisted with the intent versus the letter of ordinance, which is to ensure the road and roadsides can be serviced and maintained.
8. Proposed Ordinances
- a. Tabled to a future Selectboard meeting
9. Clerk Treasurer's (C-T) Update
- a. Robin Herbick has been hired as assistant clerk., She has a strong background in bookkeeping, systems set up and operations, and customer service. Her standard schedule will be Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
 - b. Symquest completed their site survey and a formal quote is expected in the next tow weeks.
 - c. C-T met with Cott System representative to exchange additional information for pricing. Cott anticipates being able to digitize records back to 1978
 - d. Delinquent taxes at approximately \$60,000. List will be finalized
10. Communications
- a. C-T sent a letter of thanks you to Dock Doctors for providing a dock at Arnold Bay for the past several years.
 - b. The floating dock is installed at Arnold Bay and the Town is asking for donations to add one more 10' section of dock.
 - c. Howard posted to Front Porch Forum to thank all the volunteers, including Rick Cloutier, for their work on the dock and boat ramp.
 - d. Howard had a conversation with Moose Porter about his property continuing to be in violation of the junk ordinance. Mr. Porter was informed that there must be

noticeable improvement before June 22 or Panton will enforce the junk ordinance to its full extent.

- i. Zach expressed his appreciation to Howard for his handling of this matter.
 - ii. C-T will send a letter to Mr. Porter to document the Town's request.
 - e. Howard will attend a webinar on potential use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds.
 - f. Loan proceeds for the salt shed and equipment barn have been deposited in the Town's general funds account to reimburse bills already paid.
 - g. The National Bank of Middlebury signatory card for Bob Groff and consolidation of Town accounts is in progress.
11. Review/approval of accounts payable warrant, timesheets & payroll warrant
Teresa moved to approve timesheets and the payroll and accounts payable warrants. Zach seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
12. Howard moved to enter executive session for the purpose of discussing potential litigation
Teresa seconded and the board entered executive session at 6:35 p.m.
- a. Town Advisor Sandy Fogg joined executive session at 6:37 p.m.
 - b. Howard moved to return to open session. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the board returned to open session at 7:00 p.m.
13. Adjournment
- a. Teresa moved to adjourn the meeting. Howard seconded. All in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Maggie McCormick
Town Clerk-Treasurer