



Town of Panton Chartered 1761

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Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 12, 2022

In Attendance: Selectboard Chair Howard Hall, Selectboard Member Zach Weaver, Road Foreman Rick Cloutier, Town Advisor Sandy Fogg, VPWD Commission Chair Meddie Perry, Acting Panton Water Commissioner Sean Willerford, Bob Hartenstein, Clerk-Treasurer Maggie McCormick

Via Zoom: Selectboard Member Teresa Smith, Emergency Management Coordinator Bob Groff, Sharon Ashcraft, David Martini

- 1) Howard called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.
- 2) Additions/deletions to agenda: none.
- 3) Approval of the minutes of the March 22, 2022 Selectboard meeting
 - a) Zach moved to accept the minutes as written. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
- 4) Road Foreman's Report
 - a) Chris Dion's last day with the Town was March 24.
 - i) Rick will use per-diem helpers part time for the summer.
 - ii) Many towns currently looking for road crew so waiting until there is less demand in hopes of attracting more qualified candidates.
 - b) Rick will change up his work schedule some to accommodate availability of per-diem personnel so as not to accrue overtime
 - i) Most likely swap Thursday (off) for a weekend day (work) as needed.
 - ii) The Selectboard concurs with this plan and expressed their desire for Rick to avoid working alone on higher-risk tasks.
 - c) Two of the Goodyear tires purchased for the Mack last year have blown out and are not covered under warranty
 - i) Rick will go back to Michelin tires
 - ii) Will use the current winter tires which are at the end of their useful life for the summer and order winter tires.
 - d) Road Foremen's meeting in Salisbury on Wednesday.
 - e) Eight tires will be delivered on Thursday.
- 5) Emergency Management Coordinator's Report
 - a) Covid BA-2 cases increasing in the Northeast
 - i) VT Dept of health monitoring but no new guidance yet

- ii) New public transit mask mandate update expected
 - iii) New booster available for those over 50 or in high-risk categories. Info available at vaccines.gov.
 - b) There was a magnitude 2.2 earthquake in Quechee on April 1. While earthquakes are uncommon in Vermont, it is a good reminder to have an emergency kit. The VT Dept of Emergency Management website provides information on emergency kits.
 - c) The Dept of Health has contacted the Addison County Regional Planning Commission (ACRPC) to determine local interest in hot weather emergency planning. Pantons's Local Emergency Management Plan (LEMP) contains provisions for hot weather emergencies.
- 6) ARPA Funds Next Steps
- a) Town solar array
 - i) Howard outlined the first proposal received from Vermont Solar Fund LLC (VSF)
 - (1) Solar panels would be installed on the Town Equipment Shed at a cost of approximately \$35,000.00 to the Town after a tax credit of \$15,000.
 - (2) Pantons does not require a zoning permit for on-building installation.
 - (3) These panels would generate enough electricity to power the Town Garage and Town Hall, virtually eliminating usage charges
 - (4) Solar power will reduce the Town's carbon footprint.
 - (5) The Town installed energy efficient fixtures and systems through the e-Volve program when restoring Town Hall. Those costs are financed over a 10-year period. The Town electric bill will include monthly e-Volve charge until paid off in five years.
 - (6) The Town electric bill will continue to include Green Mountain Power "administration" fees.
 - ii) Howard will meet with Green Mountain Power on Friday, April 15 so they may develop and submit a proposal.
 - iii) Howard will request a proposal from at least one more vendor.
 - iv) Bob Hartenstein asked if there is a deadline on the available tax credit.
 - (1) The primary concern is the limitation for number of solar arrays within a geographic area.
 - b) Records digitization
 - i) Maggie outlined the proposal provided by Cott Systems
 - (1) System purchase: scanner, software, workstation, and research station set up at \$6,100.
 - (2) Imaging of documents in Volumes 18 to 40 (1978 to present) at \$3,550.
 - (3) Indexing of Vol 18 to Vol 40 at \$9,800.
 - (4) Historical indexing for NEMRC index at \$14,715
 - (5) Total one-time costs of \$34,165.
 - (6) Five-year contract for service billed monthly at \$180/month for a total of \$10,800 over five years.
 - (7) Clerk to ask Cott about digitizing surveys.
 - (8) Howard asked about going further back further and Clerk will request from Cott.
 - c) Making Town buildings more secure and useable

- i) Replace back door at Garage and re-key all road maintenance buildings to a single key.
 - ii) Replace security doors and locks at Town Hall and key to a single key.
 - d) Increasing remote work capacity
 - i) Obtain one more laptop for use by assistant clerk.
 - ii) Increased cybersecurity
 - (1) Already put into place
 - (a) Ironscales anti-virus, anti-phishing
 - (b) Two-factor authentication
 - iii) Town email addresses for all Town Officers
 - (1) Add five more email address
 - (2) Important for continuation of operations when there are personnel changes on volunteer boards and committees.
 - (3) Will be a web-based interface that officers can access from anywhere and includes SharePoint site for document sharing and archives, as well as user access to Microsoft Office programs such as Word and Excel.
 - (4) Important to protect volunteers from having their personal email and files subpoenaed if there is an investigation of Town business conduct.
 - (5) Cost is one-time fee of \$112.50 and \$65/month.
 - (6) Zach moved to implement another five town email addresses. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
- 7) Appointment of Constable
- a) Jill Harter is a Panton resident, a sheriff, and is willing to be Town Constable.
 - b) Zach moved to appoint Jill Harter as Town Constable. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the motion passed
 - c) Teresa moved to create an honorarium of \$300 for the Town Constable. Howard seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
- 8) Appointment of Maple Broadband Representative
- a) Howard moved to appoint himself as Panton's representative to Maple Broadband. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the motion passed. There is an opening for alternate representative.
- 9) Tax Map Update Estimate
- a) Chris Chamberlain Mapping did Panton's tax maps when they were last updated in 2019.
 - b) New maps reflecting current lot configurations and ownership is \$2,400. Adding subparcel data is an additional \$200. Adding acreage information for each parcel is an additional \$200.
 - c) Zach moved to have Chris Chamberlain Mapping create new tax maps. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
- 10) Town Officer Email Addresses: discussed in Item 6. d.
- 11) Dog Ordinance Change Process
- a) The change process:

- i) Selectboard adopts amended ordinance.
- ii) Panton residents have 44 days to file a petition with the Clerk if they want to have a vote on the amendment.
- iii) If a petition is filed, and the annual Town Meeting does not fall within 60 days of the receipt of the petition, the Selectboard must call a special meeting within 60 days of the receipt of the petition.
- iv) The Selectboard agreed that the amendment will be adopted at a date that would make any special meeting needed to coincide with the August primary.

12) Bank account signatory

- a) Zach moved to remove former assistant clerk, Robin Herbick, as signatory on the Town of Panton bank accounts at National Bank of Middlebury and add current assistant clerk Suzanne Snyder as signatory on those accounts. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

13) Move NEMRC to web-based system

- i) Migrate town accounting and grand list software, NEMRC, to web-based system.
 - (1) This will address the problem that the Town currently has no listers and allow the paid consultant to work on Panton's grand list remotely.
 - (2) This will allow Town staff to maintain town financial records remotely, independent of computer hardware at Town Hall.
 - (3) This will incur a one-time fee of \$435.
 - (4) Zach moved to move NEMRC software to a cloud-based system. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

14) Public comment

- a) Meddie Perry spoke in support of Sean Willerford being re-appointed as water commissioner.
- b) Meddie asked if the water commissioner would be appointed at this meeting and told that the appointment would be made the same evening.
- c) Sharon Ashcraft asked for clarification on the dog ordinance amendment.
 - i) Clerk asked Selectboard if they want a resident petition to amend the dog ordinance.
 - ii) Bob Groff said there was no problem with the internet or hearing the meeting proceedings.

15) Communications

- a) Homeward Bound annual contract for animal surrender.
 - i) Selectboard chose to contract \$450/year plus \$75.00 per animal surrender versus the \$600/year with no fee for individual animal surrender.
- b) Cemetery Landscape Maintenance Bid
 - i) Clerk proposed requesting bids for cemetery mowing, weed whacking, and tree/shrub pruning as needed.
 - ii) The request for bids will be put on Front Porch Forum, the town website, and in the Addison Independent.
 - iii) Zac moved to put cemetery landscape maintenance work out to bid. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

- c) Howard discussed putting the removal of the schoolhouse and old salt shed out for bid and reiterated the need for a performance bond from the winning bidder.
 - d) Ferrisburgh selectboard chair Jessica James wants to work with Panton on the fire protection contract with Vergennes Fire Department and the reconciling the Vergennes town borders.
 - e) Clerk is awaiting a return call from the Addison FD about possible contract for Panton fire protection.
 - f) Counseling Services of Addison County sent thank you for annual appropriation from Panton voters.
 - g) VLCT Town Officer trainings offered.
- 16) Review/approval of accounts payable warrant, timesheets & payroll warrant
- a) The Selectboard approved an out-of-cycle check for the LaRose Survey retainer.
 - b) Zach moved to approve the timesheets and payroll and AP warrants. Howard seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
- 17) Executive session for the purpose of discussing potential litigation, ordinance enforcements, water commissioner interviews, and personnel matters.
- a) Howard moved to enter executive session. Teresa seconded. All in favor; the board entered executive session at 6:48 p.m.
 - b) Zach moved to end executive session. Howard seconded. All in favor; the board returned to open session at 7:28 p.m.
- 18) Zach moved to appoint Sean Willerford to water commissioner until Town Meeting 2023, when the position will be up for election again. Howard seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
- 19) Zach moved to increase the hourly wage for seasonal employees as agreed in executive session at the March 22, 2022 Selectboard meeting. Howard seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.
- 20) Teresa moved to adjourn. Zach seconded. All in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maggie McCormick
Clerk-Treasurer