

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
August 17, 2023
(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Pamela Tworig, Kurt Gamari, and Marie Kelly-Whitney. Michael G. Denault was not present.

Visitors: Debra Burchard, Aaron Malachuk, Thomas Nazzewski, Sheila Pecor, Deborah Righi, James Righi, and Trevor Tatro.

Martha Staskus and Jo Anne Young, Norwich Technology.

David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.

William Levine, Emergency Management Director.

Lori Shepard, Selectboard Secretary.

Nancy Bushika called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., opened with the Pledge of Allegiance, welcomed everyone, and read a statement with procedural rules for the meeting. Additional correspondence, a matter under Old Business and an Executive Session were added to the agenda.

GREEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST

Stacy Stratton did not attend as he is waiting for additional information and would like to come to a meeting once he has obtained all the information. When he comes Kurt Gamari would like to ask if National Forest is cutting trees on private property. He will also ask about the town roads.

PLANNING COMMISSION

Aaron Malachuk spoke on behalf of the Planning Commission. They currently have a 9-member board with two ex-officio members who are not allowed to vote. Because reaching a quorum can be difficult, the Planning Commission requests the Selectboard to reduce their membership to a 7-member board. He reviewed the other options discussed by the Planning Commission. Nancy Bushika asked how the ex-officio members felt. She would like to wait until the next meeting to decide so the topic can be placed on the agenda. Pam Tworig understood, but noted that the Planning Commission has two important meetings coming up concerning the windmill project and it is imperative that they have a quorum.

MOTION by Pam Tworig to accept the recommendation of the Planning Commission and reduce its membership to a 7 member board. SECONDED by Marie Kelly-Whitney. 3 in favor. Kurt Gamari abstained. Motion APPROVED.

Nancy Bushika agreed only because of the Planning Commission's Friday and Monday meetings and its very tight schedule.

STAMFORD MAIN RENEWABLES WIND TURBINE PROJECT

Pam Tworig asked for the status of the town's request for an extension. Martha Staskus stated that Norwich Technologies immediately filed a request with the Public Utilities Commission to extend the response date until October 15, 2023. Green Mountain Power was in support. The Public Utility Commission has not made a decision. As it stands, the 45 day response deadline is August 22, 2023. Norwich Technology will attend both the Planning Commission meeting on Friday and the public hearing on Monday and will bring maps. She described the size and height of the proposed windmill but did not have the sound analysis back yet.

MINUTES

Kurt Gamari requested the following revision to the Stamford Sign section of the August 3, 2023 minutes, the 9th line down: Kurt Gamari felt the board should be honest about all the violations and feels the Zoning Board of Adjustment **“could”** make the town **“move the sign back, or remove it, costing the town money.”**

MOTION by Pam Tworig to accept the regular meeting minutes of August 3, 2023 as revised. SECONDED by Marie Kelly-Whitney. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #31 \$ 8,991.93 payroll

WARRANT #32 \$12,737.65 accounts payable

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. The flood damage repair is about 99% done. Dave Tatro has contacted a guardrail company in Vermont for a price to replace the damaged guardrails.
2. There is a FEMA meeting scheduled for Tuesday, August 22, 2023 when a FEMA representative will view the damaged areas.
3. The highway crew has had to jump back and forth between repairing the flood damage and keeping up with the regular road maintenance. They may not complete the roadside mowing this year.
4. Deb Burchard felt there were several areas on Mill Road that need attention and although the highway crew has been very busy, she feels Mill Road is getting neglected. Dave Tatro did not feel the road was undermined but it does have a double ditch in a couple areas along the edge. Pam Tworig felt Dave Tatro is prioritizing the areas that are most in need and will continue to make improvements as he is able. Marie Kelly-Whitney asked about the log trucks. Dave Tatro stated that the logging operation stopped because of the flood so there are no more log trucks on the road. Dave Tatro feels their weight helps to pack the gravel so the trucks actually improve the road. The real damage comes from the amount of regular vehicles going up and down at 40 to 60 mph.
5. The Agency of Transportation will allow a digital speed sign on the Main Road. There is a fee and a form that needs to be filled out. The board will look at it.
6. Dave Tatro said we have to decide where we want to be as a town. Pam Tworig agreed that the town needs a plan because we can't keep doing it the way we have been. There are over 300 culverts in town and Dave Tatro has changed about 80 since he's worked here. His culvert budget is \$4,000.00/year which isn't even enough to replace a small culvert. Nancy Bushika asked if the board should consider sending letters to property owners asking them to clean out their driveway culverts regularly so the water flow doesn't damage the town roads.

RECYCLING

1. Pam Tworig will need information about the compactor when Dave Tatro has a chance.
2. The scrap metal container is full and Dave Tatro has called for it to be emptied.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

1. Bill Levine said at budget season he would like to look into purchasing sandbags and cones.
2. Nancy Bushika advised that the town has additional water testing kits for people who want to have their water tested.
3. Pam Tworig confirmed that Emergency Management will be involved in the proposed windmill project discussion.
4. The town clerk received an email that the state has calculated the town's ERAF (Emergency Relief Assistance Fund) contribution at 7.5% for the FEMA flood damage reimbursement. It is low because the

town's hazard mitigation plan has expired and not all of the Selectboard members have not completed the required NIMS course. The board members will look into taking the 101 basic course and the 400 series management course. Deb Burchard asked if the course was available to Planning Commission members but they will not be actively involved during an emergency like the Selectboard.

5. Nancy Bushika will contact VTAlert again to sign up for future town announcements.

MUNICIPAL EXCESS WEIGHT PERMITS

The permits are received by the town annually and there are several companies that do not submit them anymore. The board felt it's not worth chasing people for a \$10.00 fee. Dave Tatro felt it was an archaic process. They asked the town clerk to see how other towns are enforcing it and will hold off on a decision for now.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR 2023 AUDITING SERVICES

The board reviewed and finalized the request for proposal. Requests will be sent to all companies on the list with a bid due date of September 21, 2023 at 5 p.m.

STAMFORD SIGN

The Selectboard received a letter from a resident stating that the sign is beautiful and commended those who worked hard to complete the project.

REPRESENTATIVE NELSON BROWNELL

The board has asked Representative Brownell to attend an upcoming Selectboard meeting. He responded saying his health has been very poor and he no longer drives at night. He will not be able to attend an evening meeting but is available by email.

TOWN OFFICE MAIL SLOT

The locked mail box installation has been completed to protect all mail received through the mail slot.

POLICY REVIEW

The Selectboard will begin reviewing and updating town policies.

HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN GRANT

All of the paper surveys have been mailed out and the link has been emailed and is on the website. Survey responses are due August 31, 2023.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to find that premature public discussion of the website and personal matters would place the town at a substantial disadvantage. SECONDED by Marie Kelly-Whitney. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to enter executive session for website and personal matters pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(5) and 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). SECONDED by Marie Kelly-Whitney. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The Selectboard entered executive session at 7:50 p.m. Lori Shepard was invited to participate.

MOTION by Marie Kelly-Whitney to exit executive session. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 8:50 p.m. No action was taken.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to adjourn. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting ended at 8:51 p.m.

Marie Kelly-Whitney
Clerk

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REMINDERS

1. Individuals who sustained damages during the July flooding event should report their damage to vermont211.org or call Vermont 2-1-1 at 866-652-4636 or 802-652-4636.
2. Townspeople should sign up with the state's free communications network, VT-Alert. You can sign up at vtalert.gov to receive notifications. You can choose how you would like to be alerted (phone call, text or email) and can choose what type of alerts you would like to receive, i.e. weather, road closures, public health, etc.
3. Residents who sustained flood damage are encouraged to apply for FEMA funds at disasterassistance.org. Information is also available at vem.vermont.gov/flood.
4. Please return your completed Community Stakeholder Survey for Stamford's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan By August 31, 2023.
5. All dogs 6 months and older must be licensed by April 1st of each year. State law requires a valid rabies vaccination certificate to be filed with the Town Clerk's office. Licensing your dog is very easy. Rabies certificates can be faxed to the town office at 802-694-1636 or emailed to the town office at townclerk@stamfordvt.net. Once the current rabies certificate is on file, license renewals can be handled in person, by mailing a check, by utilizing the mail slot in the back wall of the town office or by telephone with a credit card. License fees are \$9.00 for each spayed/neutered dog or \$13.00 for each intact dog. Checks should be made payable to the Town of Stamford.
6. The town office is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. and on Thursdays from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. Closed Mondays.