

**TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
September 21, 2023
(UNAPPROVED)**

Present: Selectboard: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Pamela Tworig, Kurt Gamari, Marie Kelly-Whitney, and Michael G. Denault.

Visitors: Laura Champagne, Tammy Elias, Jedidiah Gramlin, Lisa Gramlin, Sheila Pecor, Deborah Righi, James Righi, David Saldo, and James Merriam, Chief Executive Officer of Norwich Technologies.

Luke McKay, Dog Officer.

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 and an Executive Session were added to the agenda.

BIDS FOR AUDITING SERVICES

No bids were received. Nancy Bushika will contact the last audit company to see what happens if we don't have an auditor.

DIGITAL SPED RADAR SIGNS

Dave Saldo voiced support for the signs and spoke of the excessive speed on Main Road. Kurt Gamari felt the signs would be just as effective as the sheriff. Mike Denault suggested two permanent and one portable. He will look into the various models and costs.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of September 7, 2023 as written. SECONDED by Kurt Gamari. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

SELECTBOARD ORDERS

The Selectboard reviewed and approved the following orders:

WARRANT #37 \$ 8,870.51 payroll

WARRANT #38 \$47,963.84 accounts payable

FINANCIALS

The Selectboard reviewed and confirmed financial statements for the month of August.

ROAD CONDITIONS

None.

RECYCLING

The board would like to compare rates from the past few years before making a decision. It was noted that if fees increase so could dumping on the back roads. Dave Saldo felt increased costs could be a hardship for the elderly and the transfer station should be provided to residents as part of the tax base.

DEERFIELD VALLEY CUD

Bill Levine attended the monthly meeting. Approximately 80% of the guidewires are in place and around 20% of the fiber optic wire has been installed.

STAMFORD MAIN RENEWABLES WIND TURBINE PROJECT

Annette Smith of Vermonters for a Clean Environment conducted an informational session with the Selectboard and Planning Commission. She helped the boards understand what steps to take. Aaron Malachuk has filed a notice of Intervention on behalf of the Planning Commission. Nancy Bushika suggested all abutters should file as well. Pam Tworig asked about the financials. Jim Merriam from Norwich Technologies said the town could receive a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) and the town should get Jim Porter, the advocate from the Department of Public Services, involved. Nancy Bushika will contact Aaron Malachuk from the Planning Commission. Norwich Technologies is still on target to file their petition on October 16, 2023.

MOTION by Pam Tworig to sign up for intervenor status and appoint Nancy Bushika to be the Selectboard's contact person with all parties in this matter. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

Mike Denault suggested the Selectboard hold a public hearing to receive public input on the project.

SNOW REMOVAL

Pam Tworig spoke with the principal and recommended that the school custodian should be a full-time, benefitted position. She stressed that snow removal must be a priority and should be coordinated with the highway department.

STREETLIGHTS

Deferred until the next meeting.

ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT VACANCY

The board received two letters of interest, one from Sheila Pecor and one from Bill Levine. Both candidates were given the opportunity to state why they were interested. Various board members voiced support for the candidates.

MOTION by Pam Tworig to appoint Bill Levine to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Without a second the motion failed.

Marie Kelly-Whitney would like time to consider it further and Kurt Gamari agreed. Mike Denault hopes that the candidates are not running because of the one issue facing the Zoning Board of Adjustment, but should have the desire to sit for all matters that come before the board.

STAMFORD SIGN

Nancy Bushika consulted with Deb Burchard, the Zoning Administrator, and prepared a letter to the attorney.

LIQUOR BOARD MEETING

A Liquor Board meeting will need to be scheduled as a new entity, Laxmi 556 Inc., applied for a Second Class and Tobacco license to sell products at Bilmonts Store.

OFFER TO PURCHASE TOWN OWNED PROPERTY

Russell Newland submitted an offer to purchase Lot 384 in the Alpenwald Development for \$1,000.00. The board debated and will negotiate a price closer to the \$1,600.00 the town paid at tax sale.

WEBSITE

The elections page of another town's website was shared with the board as a model to improve our website. The board was interested and Marie Kelly-Whitney will speak with the website developer.

SCHOOL USE FOR MEETINGS

Nancy Bushika received verbal approval from the principal to use the gym on Thursday nights if there are too many people to accommodate in the Selectboard room.

NATIONAL FOREST

Kurt Gamari asked if the National Forest was still logging off of County Road. The board was informed that they are no longer logging.

FEMA FLOOD BUYOUT

Nancy Bushika received an email from Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) who was approached by two town residents expressing an interest in a buyout. The town would have to apply for a buyout grant on the residents' behalf and VEM would pay all associated costs for the buyout and building demolition. The town would have to assume ownership and maintain the property as open green space. The board is willing to discuss the program and will invite the VEM official to an upcoming meeting.

BUILDING PERMITS

Mike Denault said he was approached by a resident asking if they needed a building permit for a home repair project. He asked if our website contained a section explaining what you need a building permit for. The Zoning By-laws are on the website but there is not a quick list. Deb Burchard provided Nancy Bushika with copies of her building permit research from other towns and she will make copies for the rest of the board.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to find that premature public discussion of a personnel matter 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 a personnel matter 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 7:45 p.m. Luke McKay was invited to participate.

MOTION by Mike Denault to exit executive session. SECONDED by Marie Kelly-Whitney. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 8:35 p.m. The decision was made to send a letter of recommendation to NEMRC.

MOTION by Kurt Gamari to adjourn. SECONDED by Pam Tworig. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.
The meeting ended at 8:39 p.m.

Marie Kelly-Whitney
Clerk

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REMINDERS

1. Anyone interested in serving on the Zoning Board of Adjustment until the March 2024 reappointments should send a letter of interest to the town office or the Selectboard.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Residents who sustained flood damage are encouraged to apply for FEMA funds at disasterassistance.org. Information is also available at vem.vermont.gov/flood.
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.