

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF SWANTON  
SELECTBOARD MEETING  
In-Person & By Zoom  
Town Office Building  
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488  
Tuesday, February 1, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m.**

Present: James Guilmette, Chairman; Earl Fournier, Nicole Draper, Mark Rocheleau, Ed White, Members; Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk; Brian Savage, Town Administrator; Joseph Cava, Administrative Assistant; Amy Giroux, Zoning Administrator; Patrick Parah; Oliver Manning; Ed Daniel; Joel Clark; Elizabeth Nance; Shaun Cheney; Chief Matthew Sullivan; Debbie Winters

- A. Call to Order – Mr. Guilmette called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.
- B. Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Guilmette led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
- C. Agenda Review
- D. Meeting Topics:

1. Minutes

- a) January 11, 2022, Special and Zoom Selectboard Meeting
- b) January 13, 2022, Special and Zoom Selectboard Meeting with Village Trustees
- c) January 19, 2022, Special Selectboard Meeting

Mr. White made a motion to approve the Draft Minutes from the January 11, 13 and 19, 2022, Selectboard Meetings, seconded by Mr. Rocheleau. Motion carried.

2. Public Comments

Mr. Fournier raised a concern over the legislature with seats in Franklin County changing. If the bill being put before the Governor Scott is approved, the bulk of Swanton will be in a 2-member district with Alburgh, Isle La Motte, and the north end of North Hero. The southern portion of the Swanton will be in a 2-member district with Highgate, Franklin, Sheldon and a portion of St. Albans Town. Mr. Savage explained that during General Election Day, voters will need to know what district they live in to receive the correct ballot. Mr. Savage will be giving testimony tomorrow morning to the House Government Operations Committee that will be against this proposal.

3. Law Enforcement

- a) SW Police Chief Report

Chief Sullivan explained that there were 50 incidents reported during the month of January including motor vehicle violations, sexual assault reports and an arrest. Some of these incidents also occurred in Highgate, but the majority were in Swanton Town. Mr. Guilmette asked how many of these violations were ticketed? Chief Sullivan responded that he does not have the specifics for every incident but reminded the board that the time frame begins on the first of the month and ends on the last day of the month. Mr. Fournier asked about a referral at the high school on Thunderbird Dr.? Chief Sullivan responded that these referrals were addressed by the School Resource officer of the Police Department

- b) SW Health Officer Report

The Selectboard members briefly reviewed the Health Officer Report. Mr. Fournier asked if one of the homes mentioned in the report was recurring? Mr. Guilmette responded that this was a new case.

4. New Town Business

a) Appoint Brian Savage Deputy Zoning Administrator

Mr. White made a motion to approve the appointment of Brian Savage as Deputy Zoning Administrator, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

b) Appoint Oliver Manning to the Planning Commission for a 4-year term

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion to approve the appointment of Oliver Manning for a 4-year term on the Planning Commission, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

c) Stipend increases for members of the DRB and Planning Commission

Mr. Guilmette asked Ms. Fournier if this increase could be accounted for in the budget? Ms. Fournier responded it could.

Mr. White made a motion to approve a stipend increase totaling \$45.00 for members and \$55.00 for chairpersons of the DRB and Planning Commission per meeting, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

d) Tax Map Maintenance Contract Renewal

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion to approve \$3,800.00 service fee for the renewal for the Tax Map Contract and that Mr. Savage be authorized to sign the contract on behalf of the Town, seconded by Mr. Fournier. Motion carried.

5. Old Town Business

a) ARPA Update – No Update

b) ERSA Grant Update – No Update

c) Beebe Road Culvert Update

Mr. Savage led in a summary of the latest update towards starting the Beebe Road Culvert project. Mr. Savage was on site with the project engineer and the property owners to address their questions and concerns. Mr. & Mrs. Beebe then came to the office to sign the deeded easement. The project contractor has also signed a contract to begin work in the spring.

6. Community & Economic Development

a) Report from Elisabeth Nance

Ms. Nance led by discussing the highlights of her report. The Agency of Commerce and Community Development (ACCD) through the State of Vermont made several alternative recommendations for rest areas following the closure of several facilities during the state of emergency brought on by COVID-19. Ms. Nance expanded upon a recommendation for a Northern Gateway rest area north of Exit 21 on I-89. This plan could include vending machines but would not encompass other commercial ventures at the site. This type of project for a welcome center would be beneficial for Swanton, and many surrounding communities including

Alburgh and Highgate who support this plan. Mr. Savage recommended writing a letter to the Governor Scott's office to support this venture for inclusion on next year's budget. Mr. Daniel expressed a concern about wasting money on another welcome center when countless centers have closed.

There are interested parties in the Mylan building and the Swann building in the industrial park. The businesses in these buildings have since ceased operations.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts are a growing need for rural communities that rely highly on grant funding. Swanton is not a likely candidate for a TIF district because it requires an infill of new development in the Village. Ms. Nance proposed a project based TIF district, but this did not pass in the legislature. Another idea was a neighborhood development TIF district which is based on housing projects. Again, Swanton Village is already densely occupied and is not a good candidate for this type of TIF district.

Northwest Regional Planning approved \$50,000.00 for Brownfield remediation for Phase II of the Riviere Hotel site out of the \$100,000.00 to demolish and remediate the Riviere Hotel site. Mr. Cheney asked about the Phase cleanup costs? Ms. Nance responded that Phase I is an investigation of what to look for. Phase II is the identification of hazardous contaminants. Finally, the cleanup is included in a project Phase III.

Mr. Guilmette asked Ms. Nance about a secondary grant for investigations around environmental concerns in Maquam Bay. The grant that the Town already applied for was centered around invasive species. The Friends of Northern Lake Champlain are conducting a separate study and recommended waiting on the invasive species Aquatic Nuisance Grant with a tentative February deadline.

In terms of regional priorities, Northwest Regional Planning is required to submit a list to ACCD for the top 10 project list. Some of Swanton's projects include the Riviere Hotel cleanup, the Champlain Theater building restoration, and the completion of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail as top community projects. The Franklin County Airport in Highgate is ranked number one on the list for Franklin County projects. Mr. Rocheleau asked how frequently the projects list is updated. Ms. Nance responded that it is updated annually.

7. Highway Department
  - a) Updates if Needed

Mr. Guilmette said that the truck body is fixed, running and is in the shop getting painted with an estimated delivery of spring.

8. Any Other Necessary Business
  - a) 911 Addressing

The Vermont State standard is a four-digit road numbering sequence. St. Albans is renumbering homes located along Maquam Shore Road. Mr. Savage said that this project does not need to be completed right now, but eventually it will become an issue in the future. The recommendation would be to follow St. Albans' lead in their process. It would benefit Swanton to follow in St. Albans' efforts. Mr. Savage also mentioned Swanton's primary concerns of renumbering French Hill Rd. Ms. Fournier also mentioned needing to rename roads with shared names including Church Rd./Church St. and Bushey Rd./Bushey St. The ultimate concern

is emergency vehicles and their ability to arrive at the right destination in the case of distress.

Mr. Fournier reiterated that issues like these are only going to get worse with time. Mr. Savage also explained the relationship with different buildings and places that share an address. An example of this is the Catholic Church whose address is listed as the Parish Center. There is also the church rectory and the cemetery to consider in relationship with the Catholic church.

b) Correspondence

Members of the Fourth Street Committee have been in contact with Mr. Savage about using the Fourth Street property for snowbanks for sliding hills. Mr. Savage asked the Selectboard about their thoughts since the Fourth Street property is a Brownfield site. Mr. Guilmette's concern was the debris that would be left behind from plowing snow on an unpaved surface and how this debris would affect surround property owners. Ms. Draper added that Swanton Recreation does something similar in the recreation field parking lot. The maintenance would be easier than at the Fourth Street property.

The Selectboard is working with the Fourth Street Commission to retest the site and identify what area the Brownfield occupies and how much contamination currently exists. Once the Brownfield is remediated, then the Selectboard can explore grant funding for future property improvements like green scaping and recreation fields.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to start the Brownfield site work at the Fourth Street property to move forward with remediation efforts, excluding community use of the property for safety reasons and exploring whether the Recreation Department will take on the property maintenance in the spring, seconded by Mr. Rocheleau. Motion carried.

c) Public Comments (Reprise)

Ms. Draper reminded those present at the Selectboard meeting that there is snow in the forecast and Swanton Recreation is still lending snow shoes for interested parties.

Mr. Rocheleau reminded the Selectboard that there would be an upcoming announcement on Swanton's citizen and business of the year. The banquet will be canceled again though over COVID concerns.

Mr. White reminded the board that Meals on Wheels is still looking for volunteers to deliver meals.

Mr. Fournier asked about the Town Report? Mr. Savage stated that he delivered the draft to the printer in Winooski.

d) Upcoming Events

- a) Next Regular and ZOOM Selectboard Meeting – Tuesday, February 15, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m. in the SW Town Hall, 1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488
- b) Planning Commission Meeting – Wednesday, February 16, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m. in the SW Town Hall, 1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488
- c) President's Day Holiday – Monday, February 21, 2022 – Town Offices and Operations Closed
- d) Town and Village Informational Meetings – Tuesday, February 22, 2022 @ 7:00 p.m. in the SW Village Municipal Complex, 120 First Street, Swanton, VT 05488

e) DRB Meeting – Thursday, February 24, 2022 @ 6:00 p.m. in the SW Village Municipal Complex, 120 First Street, Swanton, VT 05488

e) Executive Session (Personnel)

Mr. White made a motion to enter Executive Session at 8:26 p.m., seconded by Mr. Rocheleau. Motion carried.

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion to exit Executive Session at 8:54 p.m., seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.

No action taken.

E. Adjournment

Mr. Rocheleau made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 p.m., seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joseph Cava  
Administrative Assistant

Received and filed by:

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Cathy Fournier, Town Clerk

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Date