

**DRAFT  
MEETING MINUTES  
TOWN OF SWANTON  
SELECTBOARD MEETING  
Town Office Building  
1 Academy Street, Swanton, VT 05488  
In-Person & By Zoom  
TUESDAY, June 20, 2023 @ 6:00 p.m.**

Present: Earl Fournier-Chair, Ed White Sr-Vice Chair, Nicole Draper, Steve Bourgeois, Cody Hemenway-Members, Brian Savage-Town Administrator, Cathy Fournier-Town Clerk, Christina Candels-Administrative Assistant, Nick Michaud-Operations Manager Rec Dept, Bethany Remmers-Northwest Regional Planning.

Zoom: Lin

A. Call to Order

Mr. Fournier called the Selectboard Meeting to Order at 6:00 pm.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Fournier led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Agenda Review

Mr. Bourgeois requested to add a discussion about proposed joint meeting with Village Trustees.  
Mr. Fournier requested to add discussion to Swanton Library ice repair for proposals.  
Ms. Draper requested to add discussion in Public Comment about “Corn Fest” with Swanton Rec.

D. Meeting Topics

1. Minutes

a) June 6, 2023 - Regular Selectboard Meeting

**Mr. White made a motion to approve the Draft Minutes as written from 6/6/23 Selectboard Meeting, seconded by Mr. Hemenway. Motion carried.**

2. Public Comments

Mr. Michaud spoke to Selectboard about the planned event “Corn Fest”.  
This event is planned for August 12, 2023 2-8pm. Rain or Shine  
Major sponsor being HandyCars.Com  
Free events planned for attendees include games with corn, bouncy house, face painting, lawn games, touch a truck, many food and drink vendors.  
Nelly’s has signed on as vendor to sell alcoholic beverages. In alcoholic side will Corn Hole event as well (this is only paid event \$50 team) as security team “Chocolate Thunder” to

facilitate security & carding & I 'ding for alcohol. They have also reached out to Franklin County Sheriff & Swanton Village Police for foot patrol. Identified 5 check points of entry. Bands "North Hero Band" & "Mad Mojo" to close the event.  
Volunteers to park cars  
Portlets will be available  
Town will provide liability certificate.

**Mr. Bourgeois made motion to endorse Swanton Recreation in this event, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried. Ms. Draper abstained.**

3. Expenditures

a) General Orders

**Mr. Hemenway made a motion to approve the General Orders of 5/17/23 to 6/20/23 in the amount of \$71,415.59, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.**

b) Highway Orders

**Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to approve the Highway Orders of 5/17/23 to 6/20/23 in the amount of \$40,767.65, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.**

c) ARPA Orders

**Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the ARPA Orders of 5/17/23 to 6/20/23 in the amount of \$6,806.36, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.**

d) Library Orders

**Ms. Draper made a motion to approve the Library Orders of 5/17/23 to 6/20/23 in the amount of \$1,743.28, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.**

e) Highway / General Payroll

**Mr. Hemenway made a motion to approve the Highway/General Payroll Orders of 5/17/23 to 6/20/23 in the amount of \$41,176.96, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.**

f) Library Payroll

**Mr. Hemenway made a motion to approve the Library Payroll of 5/17/23 to 6/20/23 in the amount of \$8,892.14, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.**

4. Law Enforcement

a) Swanton Animal Control

Mr. Hemenway updated board on calls received during Mr. Benson vacation period. Mr. Hemenway has responded to two calls.

1<sup>st</sup> call was in regards to male dog with concern of genitals hanging to the ground and bloody. Mr. Hemenway responded with Swanton Police (due to potential of dog abuse) After meeting with the owners' daughter it was discovered that the dog was not male actually a female. The female dog has a tumor hanging and no open wounds. Mr. Hemenway did reach out to the Vet they named and has not received call back yet. Owner was given 15 days to provide proof of vaccination & license with the Town. Mr. Hemenway will follow up after the 15 days.

2<sup>nd</sup> call was in regards to a porcupine with head stuck in soccer net. Mr. Hemenway asked about an ordinance for any animals other than dogs. Owner stated they had called State Police & Game Warden with no help. Mr. Hemenway called State Police to notify them that he was going to humanly dispatch the animal. Mr. Hemenway expressed that in future we should only commit to dog complaints.

## 5. Old Town Business

### a) LVRT Update

Mr. Fournier reminded board members of the LVRT event July 15, 2023 @7am. This event will kick off Governor Phil Scott riding the whole length of the LVRT from Swanton to St. Johnsbury. Senator Bernie Sanders is scheduled to attend the event. Anyone is welcome to join in the ride but there will be no shuttle services.

After meeting with the event planner today, it is estimated 75 people will attend the kick off event. This will include closure of Robin Hood Drive from Short Street to Bushey Street. The Town Highway employees would need to place the barriers for the road short-term closure. Ms. Draper is working getting local youth to start the ride with Governor Phil Scott. They will leave @ 7:45 am.

Town will provide refreshments and snacks. (Cookies, water, coffee)

**Mr. Hemenway made motion allowing Mr. Savage to spend up to \$500 for refreshments for event, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.**

Mr. Savage stated they would need a couple Town Highway employees to direct traffic. Mr. Savage noted he will notify Swanton Police, MVR and Swanton Fire Department of road closure for this event.

Mr. Hemenway thinks will be good event for local Abenaki youth to drum. Ms. Draper will notify local groups of events. Swanton Enhancement Project, Abenaki Leaders, Swanton Public Library, Swanton Historical Society, Swanton Rec Dept.

### b) MVU Sidewalk

Ms. Remmers came before the board to discuss the different options for the Town after the Public Input meeting. Ms. Remmers, Mr. Savage, Mr. Fournier Mr. Gouin (VTRANS) had a Zoom meeting on how VTRANS would proceed with changing the project's direction. At this time, it is not known what VTRANS will allow for changes or still allow grant to cover project.

Mr. Fournier questioned how the Town match needed for grant was added to budget. Mr. Savage stated it's a line item in highway budget, which was not mentioned in Selectboard Report.

Ms. Fournier stated these matches are known as Match in Kind and you have to have the match to get grants and do not need voter approval. It's all calculated prior to grant award. Mr. Fournier questioned Community support for the project, Mr. Bourgeois stated they feel they got a pretty good feeling after Public Input how the Community feels.

Ms. Remmers shared visuals of the three options the town has  
#1 Continue project as designed  
#2 Continue project to Frontage Road then reroute up Frontage Road to alternative school entrance.  
#3 Pull the plug on project.

Ms. Remmers strongly advised if project continues a signed Memorandum of Understanding from Missisquoi Valley School District for their commitment to continue their ADA share of the sidewalk.

If changing project to option #2 which is what Community expressed support in will come at more cost to the Town. It also questions how much is the Missisquoi Valley School District supports project?

Mr. Hemenway spoke of his take away from the Public Input meeting was that people were in support of project just not as designed. He also stated concerns of Grant if school district does not continue the ADA sidewalk to the school, would the project be discontinued anyway. Ms. Draper discussed how will the Town of Swanton be looked at when they go to apply for future grants? Will discontinuing project effect future grants awards? Mr. Fournier asked Ms. Remmers her thought on the questions? Ms. Remmers said she did not know of this type of question on grant applications.

Mr. Hemenway questioned if it is worth time to request a meeting with School district on their intentions going forward? Members agreed they have had opportunities previously to attend meetings.

Mr. Bourgeois told Ms. Remmers how much he appreciated her work on the project. Her hard work and dedication are appreciated by all.

Ms. Remmers spoke of costs to Town if project changes vs original planning. These changes will come at a cost to the Town, what costs accrued in planning, redesign and permitting. Paying for new permits & studies.

Mr. White noted this project started in 2016, changing projects will add a couple of years before beginning construction.

Ms. Remmers noted Town of Bakersfield did do a sidewalk in stages as suggestion to Swanton. What needs to be noted it needs to start and stop at approved end point.

After much discussion:

**Mr. Bourgeois made a motion to discontinue the sidewalk project all together, seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.**

**Mr. Hemenway voted in agreement; Ms. Draper voted nay.**

Mr. Savage will draft a letter for Selectboard members for all members to sign to send to VTRANS to officially notify discontinuing project.

c) Bushey Road/207 Update

Ms. Remmers updated about VTRANS plan of scoping study for Bushey Road/207/Sholan Road intersection. VTRANS has approved this study and it has been sent to Transportation planner. Study will move ahead. NRPC will work with engineer to get quotes and study completed.

Timing looks like August – September.

Mr. Bourgeois asked if this will affect the States plan for construction of its new building? Ms. Remmers said this will not. Question is will it be more cost effective if VTRANS creates their own access road? If current intersection is updated. VTRANS project is much more accelerated. Ms. Remmers thinks there are ways to upgrade the intersection. Mr. Fournier spoke of future development in Southern Growth District as to what can happen with intersection also.

Ms. Remmers asked if there is a Master Plan for the Southern Growth District? Mr. Fournier said that is in the works and part of our executive session discussions.

d) Update on HVAC installation at Library

Mr. Savage updated the board about the installation of new HVAC units.

They anticipate completion next week. Mr. Savage spoke with contractor and they can reuse existing thermostats saving the Town \$900.00.

Mr. Fournier spoke about the need for a solution for build-up of ice on roof eaves. Board agrees they need evaluation and solution.

**Mr. White made a motion to have Mr. Savage send out a Request for Proposal for evaluation and solution to fix icing issue with roof, seconded by Ms. Draper. Motion carried.**

Mr. Hemenway asked for update with Plumbing & sub-pump issue? Mr. Savage has a meeting scheduled Wednesday 6/21/23 with Alliance Mechanical (HVAC company installing furnaces) to have them commit to a Preventative Maintenance Plumbing Contract with Town for Swanton Public Library. Update next meeting. There is already a Heating Contract in place.

6. New Town Business

a) Hazard Mitigation Program

Mr. Savage updated the board on Federal Government/ State of Vermont program currently offering residents 100% buyout who are located in the Town/Village flood zone. This falls under Emergency Management therefore falling under the Town. The process takes about 2 years. If a property owner takes the offer, when the buyout is completed the homes/buildings are removed from the property creating a vacant lot which will be seeded. The Town will then take ownership; however, the Town can never build on site and assumes maintenance of property.

**Mr. White made a motion authorizing Mr. Savage to sign on behalf of Town of Swanton for New Hazardous Mitigation Program for FEMA/State of Vermont, seconded by Mr. Hemenway. Motion carried.**

b) Ratification of addition of Juneteenth to the Town Holiday Schedule

**Ms. Draper made a motion to add Juneteenth to the Town Holiday Schedule; Mr. White seconded. Motion carried.**

c) Revolving Loan Fund Guidelines/Policy

Mr. Bourgeois suggested having committee meet and update Guidelines/Policies for Revolving Loan Fund.

Creating committee would be one Selectboard Member, Town Clerk & Town Administrator.

Mr. Fournier stated he understands the Town is not in the Banking business and that needs to be noted, accept some risk with these loans.

Mr. Savage noted in policy there will need to be someone to monitor the loans after, these businesses need to be in Town or Village of Swanton.

**Mr. Hemenway made a motion nominating Mr. Bourgeois, Ms. Fournier and Mr. Savage be on Committee to review and create Revolving Loan Fund Guidelines & Policies.**

**Seconded by Mr. White. Motion carried.**

**The board would like an update in 30 days.**

7. Highway Department

a) Barry Road Culvert – Hydraulic Study

Mr. Savage stated the Town of Fairfield agrees to joint meeting. Fairfield would also like to be included with meeting as they have a bridge issue Mr. Savage will schedule meeting with both towns selectboards as well at local State Reps.

b) Swanton Hill Road

The cost estimate for repair/redesign of Swanton Hill Road is \$650,000. The road currently has 20% grade. Mr. Lapan almost rolled a truck on this road; Town of Fairfield has also had same issue when covering the road for Swanton.

Mr. Fournier suggested to allocate \$300,000 of ARPA funds aside for this project as well as maybe loan for rest vs all on tax rate.

**Mr. White made motion to set aside \$300,000 of ARPA funds for Swanton Hill Road Redesign.**

Ms. Draper expressed she was not comfortable using ARPA funds for this project not knowing if they could meet the timeline. This is once in a lifetime money and there may be another place to use it.

Ms. Candels showed board pictures of the road in question for those whom have not seen the road.

**Mr. White rescinded his motion. Board agreed.**

8. Community and Economic Development

9. Any Other Necessary Business

Mr. Savage would like to schedule joint meeting with Swanton Village Trustees, at Mr. Bourgeois request.

Mr. Bourgeois explained why he thinks meeting is warranted. Mr. Bourgeois would like to speak with Village Trustees about reconfiguring John Raleigh Field and Fourth Street Property, Other properties and create master plan for Community center.

There also needs to be discussion about property in question as it is Village owned.

Ms. Draper asked to make sure any meeting included the Recreation Board.

Mr. Fournier said everyone he has spoken with agrees more Recreation programs are needed.

Mr. Bourgeois emphasized that the folks that he spoke with were supportive of the "concept" not the project because we still do not have any formal plans, costs, et.c and work to do

Mr. Bourgeois asked if there is planned schedule to meet with Swanton Village Trustees on a regular basis regularly. Mr. Fournier said this is good idea to plan going forward.

10. Correspondence

11. Public Comment (Reprise)

12. Upcoming Events

a) Thursday 6/22/2023 – DRB Meeting – 6:00 pm – Town Offices

b) Tuesday 7/4/20223 – HOLIDAY – Office & Operations – CLOSED

c) Thursday 7/6/2023 – Special Selectboard Meeting – 6:00 pm – Town Offices and Zoom

e) Wednesday 7/12/2023 – Planning Commission – 6:30 pm – Town Offices

f) Saturday 7/15/2023 Celebrate LVRT with Governor Phil Scott 7am

13. Executive Session (If needed)

**Mr. White made a motion to enter executive session at 8:01 pm, seconded by Mr. Hemenway. Motion carried.**

**Mr. White made a motion to exit the executive session at 8:19 pm, seconded by Ms. Draper Motion carried.**

E. Adjournment

**Mr. White made a motion to adjourn 8:21 pm, seconded by Mr. Hemenway Motion carried.**

Respectfully Submitted

Christina Candels  
Administrative Assistant