

TOWN OF STAMFORD
SELECT BOARD MEETING
June 5, 2025
(UNAPPROVED)
6:00 p.m.

Present: Select Board: Nancy L. Bushika, Chair, Michael G. Denault, and Douglas Wright.
Kurt Gamari and John Dunn were not present.

Visitors: Debra Burchard, Jedidiah Gramlin, Lisa Gramlin, Gerald Guerena, William Levine,
Marta Miller, Thomas Nazzewski, Sheila Pecor, Debra Righi, James Righi, Stephanie
Shelburne, James Stimpson, Beth Thomas, Pamela Tworig, and Christopher
Vadnais.
Scott Grimm-Lyon, Bennington County Regional Commission.
David R. Tatro, Road Commissioner.
Lori Shepard, Select Board Secretary.

Nancy Bushika opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance, welcomed everyone, and read a statement with procedural rules for the meeting. Additional correspondence was added to the agenda. Jed Gramlin recorded the meeting for his YouTube.

HEARING OF VISITORS

1. Scott Grimm-Lyon from the Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) spoke about the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance and advised that the plan needs to be updated to meet new state requirements.

MOTION by Mike Denault to approve the update to the plan. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

2. CJ Vadnais thanked Dave Tatro for keeping our roads in such great shape.

3. CJ Vadnais questioned Doug Wright's call to the Fire Marshall. Doug Wright responded that he called to ask if any permits were filed and during the conversation mentioned that he was a Select Board member. Discussion ensued regarding the phone call which resulted in the state Fire Marshall visiting the property and determining no permit was necessary. Stephanie Shelburne wished people would approach her personally with questions. The Select Board has received several letters regarding a person acting as a town official without the authority of the board. Mike Denault stated that the board would discuss this at greater length in executive session. CJ Vadnais would like the results of the executive sessions published upon completion of the matter.

4. CJ Vadnais mentioned a Vermont Law stating that cars need to be registered. There are many properties in town in violation and a junk yard in the flood plain. Deb Burchard agreed. She feels the Zoning Administrator should be compensated not just through permits but also for enforcement. Jim Stimpson feels the town needs an Ordinance Enforcement Officer or the Select Board can begin to issue citations for By-law violations. Jim Stimpson advised that BCRC representatives recently attended the Planning Commission meeting. With grants, they are willing to work with the town to begin updating the Town Plan, create new ordinances, and can help update the Zoning By-laws.

5. Jim Stimpson has done some research on the sign and said the state does have an easement and the Select Board needs to file an S.1111 Permit and then the town can put up its sign. Nancy Bushika said she would look into it.

6. Deb Burchard asked the Select Board to stop the upcoming Zoning Board of Adjustment hearing from going forward. She feels that the appellant jumped protocol and stated several problems with the complaint and feels the wrong precedence is being set. Stephanie Shelburne stated that the complaint is full inaccurate information and was concerned that abutters who do not know her received a copy of these allegations. She was also concerned with the financial burden it has put on the town. Discussion ensued regarding whether a hearing should have been scheduled and many gave their opinions regarding the complaint. The board will discuss the matter further in executive session.

MINUTES

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept the regular meeting minutes of May 15, 2025 as written. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

FINANCIALS

The board reviewed and approved financials for the month of April.

SELECT BOARD ORDERS

The Select Board reviewed and approved the following orders:

- WARRANT #21 \$ 8,958.51 payroll
- WARRANT #22 \$46,033.17 accounts payable

ROAD CONDITIONS

1. The street sweeper is scheduled for next week and the shimming is scheduled for the week of July 16, 2025.
3. Mike Denault asked if private citizens could replace culverts on Risky Ranch Road. Dave Tatro stated that the culvert would have to be at least 18" wide, the work would have to meet code and standard and the person doing the work would have to be insured.
4. The town received a \$200,000.00 grant to replace the East Road culvert, but the quote to do the work was almost \$600,000.00. Dave Tatro will try to submit an alternate culvert design for the state's approval.
5. Dave Tatro has obtained a quote to replace the man door at the garage.
6. Dave Tatro would like to thank Bill Lincoln for loaning the town his jumping jack without cost to complete a highway project.
7. Dave Tatro updated the board on equipment repairs and grading.

RECYCLING

1. The tires are building up at the transfer station. The board suggested Dave Tatro contact Green Dream to dispose of the tires.
2. The state will no longer be contracting with Federal Express for its battery return program. After that date we will need to use the regular postal service.

TAX ANTICIPATION NOTE

The treasurer provided two proposals. One from Adams Community Bank for 4.85% and one from Berkshire Bank for 4.25%. Last year's loan rate was 4.60% for a \$300,000.00 loan with Berkshire Bank.

MOTION by Mike Denault to borrow money in anticipation of taxes and approve the application for a loan of \$300,000.00 at the rate of 4.25% per annum interest with Berkshire

Bank to be paid in full in November when taxes are due. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Mike Denault to authorize Nancy Bushika to sign the promissory note when ready to complete the loan process. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

911 HOUSE NUMBERS

Nancy Bushika received a complaint about a house without its 911 number displayed. Bill Levine has sent out letters in the past. Bill Levine said it is a state law and penalties can be assessed for non-compliance. Lisa Gramlin will send out letters to Alpenwald homeowners through the Alpenwald board. Nancy Bushika will work on it. Bill Levine received an email from the state regarding camps without 911 numbers. A state 911 worker helped him assign difficult numbers a few years ago and he will look into it again.

ETHICS COMMISSION/ETHICS ORDINANCE

1. On May 1, 2025 the board approved the Ethics Ordinance, but they did not sign it on May 15, 2025 because the state pulled out.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to rescind the motion made on May 1, 2025 accepting the ordinance and to wait for further guidance from the state. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

Doug Wright suggested the board revise the ordinance so that it is pertinent to the town.

2. The Select Board received a letter of interest from Jean Kurpiel for appointment to the ethics investigation pool. Her name will be added to the list.

JOINT MEETING WITH SCHOOL DIRECTORS

The Select Board will meet with the School Directors on Tuesday, June 24, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. during the School Board's regular meeting.

EMPLOYEE POLICY HANDBOOK

Discussion was tabled until the next meeting with a full board.

FLAG CEREMONY

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks has invited a designee of Stamford to their annual Flag Day Ceremony on June 14, 2024 in Bennington, Vermont. Unfortunately there were no board members available to attend.

DELINQUENT DOGS

The town clerk advised that there are 13 dog owners (19 dogs) that have not yet been licensed with the town. There are also some new dogs in town that need to be licensed due to veterinarians submitting new rabies certificates. The Select Board will turn the list over to the Dog Officer for action.

ROAD COMMISSIONER JOB DESCRIPTION

It was discovered that a duty was inadvertently left out of the job description which was reviewed and signed in April 2025.

MOTION by Mike Denault to accept and sign the corrected job description. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

BENNINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF

Mike Denault stated that the sheriff contacted him to see if the Select Board had any interest in discussing a new contract. Mike Denault feels we can't afford what we need, and what we can afford isn't worth it. Doug Wright felt it can't hurt to listen to his proposal. Mike Denault will get back to the sheriff.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. The executive session for pending or probable civil litigation will not be needed.
2. MOTION by Nancy Bushika to find that premature general public knowledge of a personnel matter would place the town at a substantial disadvantage. SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED.

MOTION by Nancy Bushika to enter executive session for a personnel matter pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(B). SECONDED by Mike Denault. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The Select Board entered executive session at 8:00 p.m.

MOTION by Mike Denault to exit executive session. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The board exited executive session at 8:42 p.m. Action: A Select Board member will contact a Planning Commission member to invite them to the next Select Board meeting.

MOTION by Mike Denault to adjourn. SECONDED by Doug Wright. All in favor. Motion APPROVED. The meeting ended at 8:45 p.m.

Nancy L. Bushika
Clerk pro tempore

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REMINDERS

1. 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.
2. Anyone interested in applying for the transfer station substitute position should submit a letter of interest to the Select Board.
3. Anyone interested in joining the town highway crew should fill out an application or get in touch with a Select Board member.
4. The dog license due date was April 1, 2025. Please come in as soon as possible to license your dog. The new dog license fees for 2025 are \$18.00 for spayed/neutered dogs and \$24.00 for real/intact dogs.
5. 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.