

Final Minutes
SELECTBOARD, TOWN OF PAWLET
January 7, 2025
7:00 pm
Pawlet Town Hall
122 School Street, Pawlet, VT
& Virtually via Zoom

Members in Attendance:

Mike Beecher
Bob Jones
Jessica Van Oort
Tom Collard

Others in Attendance:

PEG-TV
Kristin Powers
Sue LaPorte
Cori Rail
Lauren Herbert
Tom Covino
Deb Hawkins
Harry Van Meter
Annie Nash
Nancy Morlino
Linda Lynton
Frank Nelson
Bob & Martha Schoenemann
Hannah Herbert
Joni Lee
Bob Herbert
Julie Mach
Grace Larson
Cana Williams
iPhone(5)
Jennifer Sullivan
John Lee

EVENT

1. Call to order at 7:02pm by Chairman, Mike Beecher, with the Pledge of Allegiance and a summary of the Selectboard's Rules of Procedure.
2. Introduction of those present, virtually and in person.
3. Addition or Deletion of Agenda Items.
 - a. Additions:
 - Library Board Vacancy – New Business
 - Municipal Ethics Liaison – New Business
 - b. Deletions: None.
4. Approval of minutes from previous meeting.
 - Motion made to approve the regular meeting minutes of December 10, 2024, with one edit to the Health Officer's report.
 - Mover: Jessica Van Oort
 - 2nd: Tom Collard
 - Discussion: None.
 - Result: Approved.
5. Pre-Requested Appearances by Local Citizens and Visitors: None.
6. Announcements: None.
7. Reports:
 - A. Zoning Administrator's (ZA) Report:
 - ZA Nancy Morlino shared an update with the Board:
 - 34 permits year-to-date in 2024 with three new-build permits.
 - 14 short-term rental registrations were received.
 - Grant for tree removal was submitted and a reply should be forthcoming in February.
 - B. Planning Commission's Report: No report at this meeting.
 - C. Road Foreman's Report: No report at this meeting.
 - a. The Highway Safety Improvement Grant close-out process will take place soon.
 - b. Tom Covino shared he has been patrolling in West Pawlet, and reminded the Board of missing speed limit signs.
 - D. Assessor Report: No report at this meeting.
 - E. Town Clerk's Memo:
 - Deb Hawkins addressed the Board:
 - Article petitions are due by January 16, 2024.
 - Nominating petitions are due by the 27th of January.

- The Town Report is coming together.
- Deb requested that Mike Beecher sign a facilities use agreement document for the use of the space for pre-Town Meeting, as well as a Town Highway Mileage Certificate.
 - Mr. Beecher signed the Facilities Use Agreement and all Board members present signed the Highway Mileage Certificate.

F. Town Treasurer's Memo:

- Town Treasurer, Julie Mach, shared a memo with the Board, including: an overview of payroll, accounts payable, monies from the General Fund, Highway, Wastewater.
- In December, The Town received the School St. Bridge Grant Reimbursement of \$200,000.00, as well as another gift of securities to be put towards a new Town Garage in the amount of \$98,157.00.
- The Town has other investments that have matured or are about to mature in the next two weeks (about \$500,000.00) that will need to be reinvested. Ms. Mach shared anticipated market trends with the Board so they can be prepared to make future investments.
- Ms. Mach requested that the Board solidify the numbers for appropriations to be included in the Town Meeting Report. The Board will gather numbers and be prepared to decide at the next meeting
- Motion made to approve Accounts Payable Warrant #25041 for \$10,353.99, Accounts Payable Warrant #25042 for \$32,495.30.

Mover: Jessica Van Oort

2nd: Tom Collard

Discussion: None

Result: Approved.

G. Emergency Management Director's Report:

- Robert Morlino electronically provided a report to the Board:
 - Adirondack 2-Way Radio has reprogrammed the Town repeater with the new frequency as well as all fire apparatus and portables in Town (including Highway Dept. radios and Town EOC). Batteries for the repeater were replaced.

H. Health Officer's Report:

- Jennifer Sullivan submitted a digital report to the Board:
 - Two animal bites were reported in West Pawlet
- I. Waste Water Treatment Facility (WWTF):
 - Mr. Beecher shared that all is working well at the Waste Water Treatment Facility.
- J. Facilities Report: No report at this meeting.
- K. Mettawee School Board (MSB) Report:
 - Julie Mach shared a report from the Mettawee School Board:
 - The School Board approved the FY26 budget at the January 2025 meeting, along with warning language and tuition rate.
 - Planned a community engagement event and survey, scheduled for the spring of 2025.
- 8. Old or unfinished business:
 - Special Officer Request:
 - Mr. Beecher shared that he communicated with the Town's lawyer, who could not see any issues with appointing a Special Officer.
 - Some conversation occurred between the Board, Body and Constable Covino.
 - Motion made to approve the appointment of Special Officer Bill Humphries.
 - Mover: Bob Jones
 - 2nd: Tom Collard
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved
 - Municipal Project Management Manager Termination Letter:
 - Jessica Van Oort shared a letter she drafted with the Board clarifying the termination of Steffanie Bourque as project manager for the pedestrian accessibility project as of the end of December 2024.
 - Mike Beecher signed this letter.
- 9. New Business:
 - Julie Mach suggested using the ARPA funds, originally intended for the pedestrian accessibility project, to survey all Town-owned property to avoid future confusion.
 - Library Board Vacancy:

- Lauren Herbert read a statement summarizing the current state of the Library Board, offering support of Sue LaPorte filling the vacant role on the Board.
 - Mr. Beecher inquired as to whether the entire Library Board had a recommendation. At this time they do not.
 - Motion made to appoint Sue LaPorte to fill the vacant position on the Library Board, finishing the remaining term ending March 2025.
 - Mover: Tom Collard
 - 2nd: Jessica Van Oort
 - Discussion: Annie Nash, one of the individuals who expressed interest in filling the vacancy, introduced herself, sharing her experience and interest to join the Library Board.
 - Lauren Herbert, Joni Lee, Deb Hawkins, Martha Schoenemann and Grace Larson spoke to the motion on the table.
 - Result: Tom Collard & Jessica Van Oort in favor, Bob Jones abstain, Mike Beecher in favor – approved.
 - Municipal Ethics Liaison:
 - The Board reviewed the new state-wide requirement to appoint a Municipal Ethics Liaison.
 - Following discussions, this topic will be added to the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.
 - Mike Beecher acknowledged a document compiled by Julie Mach, requesting it be sent electronically to all Board members.
10. Public comment:
- Frank Nelson inquired about the weather monitoring cameras and spoke to investigations made regarding the free WiFi that has been promised. Also acknowledged that there is an alternate position open for the D&H Rail Trail Committee.
11. Motion made to adjourn at 8:13pm
- Mover: Bob Jones
 - 2nd: Tom Collard
 - Discussion: None
 - Result: Approved