Town of Panton Chartered 1761

3176 Jersey Street • Panton, VT 05491-9331
Ph: 802.475.2333 • Fax: 802.475.2785

www.pantonvt.us

Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 9th, 2025

In attendance: Selectboard Member Reece Jaring, Selectboard Chairperson Zach Weaver, Selectboard Vice Chair Teresa Boucher, Clerk/Treasurer Kyle Rowe, Panton Road Foreman Rick Cloutier, Waltham Contracted Road Commission Chris LaPete, Kathy Kennett, Debbie Brace, Janice Moulton, Robert Moulton, Charles Kennett, Sharon Ashcraft, Richard Jackson, Jeanne Jackson, Nick Jackson, David Rheaume, Waltham Selectboard Chairperson Rhonda Williams, Waltham Selectboard Member Dan Morris, Waltham Selectboard Member Anthony Duprey

Via Zoom: Paulette Bogan

1. Zach called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.
2. Several additions were made to the agenda;
    a. PACIF Grant Application Approval
    b. It was also agreed to allow the possibility of agenda changes during the meeting to accommodate the scheduling of a participant for appointment.
3. The Selectboard reviewed AP/Payroll Warrants;
    a. Zach motioned to approve AP/Payroll Warrants, Teresa seconded-**VOTE 3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**
4. The Selectboard reviewed the minutes from the 3/26/25;
    a. Zach motioned to approve the minutes from the 3/26/25 Selectboard Meeting, Teresa seconded-**VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**
5. The Selectboard welcomed the Waltham Selectboard to discuss the MOU between Panton and Waltham for the use of the Salt Shed
    a. Rhonda Williams, Dan Morrie, and Anthony Duprey introduced themselves, and thanked the Town of Panton for their use of the salt shed at the Paton Garage Facility, and their willingness to sit down for discussing this agreement.
    b. Rhonda also introduced Chris LaPete, the Waltham Highway Department service contractor
    c. Rhonda described the start of the process;

i. Chris LaPete discussed this issue with the Waltham Selectboard, then spoke to the Panton T/C.
ii. The Panton T/C then wrote a MOU as a starting place for discussion with the two towns.
iii. The Waltham Selectboard reviewed it, and generated a list of areas they would like to discuss possible changes.

d. The T/C stated that the document given to the two selectboards at this meeting had been reviewed by the Town of Panton's attorney, and discussed/reviewed with the Town's insurance adjustor.
e. Rhonda began to discuss the specific sections for changes
    i. Item 3-Materials could be edited to remove specific mention of shared purchasing, as the materials used are different, and it wouldn't feel so binding. A separate agreement could be generated at a future time where shared purchases of materials makes sense.
    ii. Rick Cloutier restated that there is no shared purchasing at the moment, and there doesn't need to be necessarily.
    iii. Chris LaPete added that the meat of the agreement is really about loader usage and storage.
    iv. It was generally agreed by both Selectboards to delete this section.
    v. Under Terms and Agreements, the Waltham Selectboard generally agrees with the plan laid out to have the building assessed for structural integrity, and re-side the building to match the Panton Town Garage. One of the issues the Waltham Selectboard wanted to bring up was that they had a quote to do work, approximately $13,000. It would be better to act on this sooner rather than later as prices are increasing. The Waltham Selectboard would also plan to repair any structural damage, which was part of the quote.
    vi. Chris LaPete asked what would be considered assessment for structural integrity;
        1. Teresa mentioned that the structure needs to be well maintained to prevent salt leakage. Additionally, Panton wouldn't want a damaged building on Panton property.
        2. Kathy Kennett noted that it should be safe for anyone working in it.
        3. Debbie Brace agreed with that sentiment.
    vii. Dan Morris asked Chris LaPete if the quote from the contractor included an assessment of the buildings soundness. Chris replied that it did. Dan then asked if the contractors assessment would be acceptable for the assessment of safety and sturdiness.
        1. Teresa replied that would be fine, that safety was the top concern.

2. Anthony Duprey added that Waltham wouldn't want to invest money into a structure that was damaged, so that would be part of the plan.

viii. Robert Moulton asked to make sure the town had a copy of any assessments done to the building. He then asked if the structure could be used for road materials, including salt now.
    1. Rick replied that it was fine for the volume of salt that Waltham was storing in the shed.

ix. Chris LaPete clarified that there was not a hole in the roof, it was to address a rafter issue, and side the building.

x. Item 4 was discussed;
    1. Waltham asked for changing the statement regarding maintenance and repair to just include repair.
    2. Rick agreed, and said that Panton will conduct any necessary maintenance of the loader.
    3. Chris LaPete agreed, and said repairs are fine, but its an older machine, maintenance may be not a necessary component.
    4. Dan asked for the inclusion of the specific word "Waltham" into the usage sentence.

xi. Debbie Brace asked why Waltham couldn't have their own salt shed built;
    1. Rhonda noted that Waltham doesn't have the land capacity to build a garage facility

xii. Robert Moulton asked how the loader rate was set;
    1. Rick said he got three separate market rates, and is charging fair market value for the use of the machine.

xiii. Rhonda said the Length of Agreement section was fine, but needed some clarity, specifically to include that the agreement needing updating if the Panton Road Foreman changes, as well as the other terms included.

xiv. Rhonda appreciated the time period, but discussed that there might be limited options for a small town to be able to take that road material, and that 90 days would be more feasible than 30 to find that space. Dan mentioned that it would be nice if it didn't happen during plowing/winter season.

xv. Reece stated that the agreement looks like it's a 120 days total, 30 days for notice of termination, and 90 days to vacate.

xvi. It was noted that Panton has been using some of Waltham's sand, and Waltham would eventually be using some of Panton's sand.

xvii. Rhonda asked if this was something to be reviewed yearly?
    1. Teresa stated that it should be yearly for the first 3 years, then after things were worked out, could be extended to a longer term.

xviii. Anthony noted that one concern on the investment issue, namely that if the agreement was terminated prematurely, Waltham would have invested money into the shed, and would need to be compensated for their investment.
    1. Teresa agreed that would be completely reasonable
    2. The T/C agreed to find a way to include that language into the MOU.
xix. Debbie Brace asked why we couldn't lease the building?
    1. Teresa said they will take it under advisement.

6. The Selectboard moved to interview Ric Plaisance for the Tree Warden position;
    a. Ric introduced himself, and described some of his background, he is new to Panton, but he and his wife are going to selling their house in New York and will be moving to Panton fulltime. He stated that he was answering the call for volunteers. He has done a lot of tree work, planting and maintenance in suburban towns in New York. He is also comfortable with assisting the T/C with grant management. He asked if the expectation of shade tree management was under his purview?
        i. Zach replied that it would be, and would be part of the job for sure.
    b. Zach said he appreciated Ric putting his name out there. Zach nominated Ric Plaisance for Tree Warden, Teresa seconded-**VOTE 3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**
7. The T/C began to provide his updates;
    a. Special Town Meeting planning is going well, will need volunteers for the election.
    b. The first charter amendment hearing is tonight, and will be conducted by coming out of regular session.
    c. The nomination period has ended for Selectboard Candidates, there are 3 people on the ballot-Robert DeGraaf for the 1 year Term, Kirsten De La Cruz for the 2 year term, and Debbie Brace running for both terms. The Selectboard agreed that there would be a candidates night at the next Selectboard Meeting.
    d. The Traffic Signal MOU was signed by the Addison Selectboard, and is lodged in the Town Clerk's Office.
    e. The T/C stated that the driver of the vehicle who destroyed the guardrail on Hopkins Rd was un-insured, and the T/C is trying to reach out to figure out compensation. The T/C is also working with the State's Attorney's Office to assist with this.
    f. The Town's in person audit is going well, and has 1 more in person day
    g. There is a zoning permit request for Vermont Auto Glass to allow for an expansion of his home business. The T/C mentioned it because Panton is technically an abutter. The Zoning Admin, Road Foreman, and T/C all agree the impact would be minimal and there isn't an issue for the town.

h. In answer to a previous question, the wood from the ash tree removal will be offered the landowners along the Town ROW upon which the trees were cut. If they don't want it, the wood will be removed to the Town Garage, and the Road Foreman is open to suggestions on how to distribute it, provided there is no insurance liability for the town. The chips will be put in a pile at the Town Garage, and are free for the taking for Town Residents.
i. Debbie Brace asked if the quote was put out for bid?
    i. The T/C responded that the quote was for less than $15,000, and per the town purchasing policy, the town only needs to get 3 quotes, not bids, to complete the work. Rick got three quotes, and Vallencourt came in cheapest.

8. The Selectboard began discussion on the AoT Paving and Structures Grants
    a. The T/C stated that we are submitting 2 structures grants, one for approximately $63,000, and one for approximately $50,000, as well as 1 paving grant for approximately $200,000. We are in a good position to get both structures grants, most likely will not get the paving grant this year.
    b. Teresa motioned to approve the AoT Structure and Paving Grant Applications, Zach seconded-**VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**
    c. The C/T also updated the SB on the status of the FEMA compensation;
        i. Awaiting 1 hydraulic study, last piece of documentation needed by FEMA. The AoT will hopefully complete the study in May, and then we will be ready to submit.
        ii. Robert Moulton asked what the chances we get the money?
            1. The T/C said it's still possible, but obviously political situations in Washington make knowing difficult.
9. The Selectboard began discussion on the Town Grant Policy
    a. The T/C provided the updated version, including language confirming the SB's ability to rescind any grant applied for by the T/C, and removing the T/C's ability to apply for future grants.
    b. **The Selectboard signed this policy changing unanimously.**
10. The Selectboard began discussion of the PACIF Grant
    a. The T/C explained that the PACIF Grant would provide 50% of the funding for an item or items that would correct a noted insurance action item. The Town is seeking to receiving funding for a drill press guard for the Town Garage, approximately $275, of which the town would be liable for half.
    b. Teresa motioned to approve the PACIF Grant application, Zach seconded-**VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**
11. The Selectboard began to discuss Appointments
    a. The T/C detailed to the SB that the following people are willing to stay in their positions, and asked that the SB consider re-nominating them;

b. Paul Sokol, E911 Coordinator
c. Paul Sokol-Addison County Solid Waste District Rep
d. Jaime Dayton-Addison County Regional Planning Commission Rep
e. Paula Moore and Lousia Gionvanella-Green Up Day Chair and Co-chair
f. Teresa motioned to re-appoint all the candidates mentioned, Reece seconded- **VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**
g. Zach asked if Sharon Ashcraft was still interested in EMC
    i. The C/T mentioned there was free training available for that position
    ii. Teresa motioned to make Sharon Ashcraft Panton EMC, Reece seconded- **VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 opposed.**
h. The T/C mentioned that the DRB needs two members appointed, and the SB agreed that the T/C will make a special posting for those positions, and try to find some people by the next SB meeting.

12. Zach motioned to recess the Selectboard Meeting, and enter into the Hearing on the Town Charter Amendment.
    a. Sharon Ashcraft wanted to note that the charter change amendment under consideration is not what the original petitioners brought to the Town Clerk. She noted that there was a timing change that she didn't think needed to be spelled out, and that the votes to remove to an elected member needing to be greater than the votes that elected them is not needed. Many towns have recall amendments without that language.
    b. Teresa noted that this isn't the original petition, and this is the Selectboard proposal as a compromise because the original petition had timing issue and missed deadlines.
    c. Zach stated the SB proposed this amendment as a compromise to bridge the gap, and try to provide something. Zach said to make sure to post that relevant information on Front Porch Forum, and if you disagree with it, then all are welcome to not vote for it. The SB wanted to make sure there was more due process in recalling.
    d. Kathy Kennett asked how many votes it would take to recall an elected official?
        i. The T/C and Zach both noted it would be at least 1 more than the number that elected them in the first place.
        ii. She added she would like to see the language return to something closer to the original petition.
        iii. Teresa added that just having a majority at a poorly attended election shouldn't be the only qualification for recalling. Zach added that it should be a big deal to remove someone, and that more due process was involved.
    e. Sharon restated that people are free to vote no on this, and that another petition could be submitted that handled this issue.

f. Debbie Brace added that it should be simpler, and that the majority who show up should rule.
g. Sharon Ashcraft added that those who show up to vote are the only ones that care about the issue anyways.
h. There were no other comments. The Selectboard unanimously agreed to move back into regular session.

13. The Selectboard motioned to enter into Executive session at 6:55 p.m. to discuss HR/employee matters, and invited the T/C into executive session-Teresa motioned, Reece seconded-**VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**
14. Teresa motioned to move out of Executive Session, Reece seconded-**VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed.**
    a. There were no decisions made during the Executive Session
15. Teresa made a motion to adjourn at 7:10 pm., Reece seconded-**VOTE 3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**