Town of Panton Chartered 1761

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Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 15th, 2025

In attendance: Selectboard Chairperson Zach Weaver, Selectboard Vice Chairperson Teresa Boucher, Selectboard Member Reece Jaring, Town Clerk/Treasurer Kyle Rowe, Kathy Kennett, Charles Kennett, Janic Moulton, Jeanne Jackson, Richard Jackson, Debbie Brace, Sharon Ashcraft, Town Moderator Martha DeGraaf, Robert DeGraaf, Kirsten De La Cruz

Via Zoom: Louise Giovanella, Robin Herbick, Lorraine Keyser

1. Zach called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. There were no additions or deletions, but it was noted there would be additional discussion on Item 5, appointments.
3. Teresa motioned to approve the minutes from 4/23/25, Reece seconded-**VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**.
4. The C/T began to give Clerk/Treasurer Updates;
    a. Special Town Meeting was staffed and ready, no election concerns.
    b. Unusually high tax delinquency rate for 2nd payment this Spring, but C/T and DTC are working to bring it down.
    c. Education tax will be paid in Mid May, and is less than originally expected.
    d. The Town did not receive the Municipal Planning Grant, there were several applicants of a similar nature that did not get funded. Also the Town did not receive the Rural Roadside grant to augment the Ash Tree removal grant.
    e. The C/T noted that the Town's new Tree Warden has hit the ground running, but that due to concerns about nesting songbirds, the ash tree removal originally scheduled for May 19th will be postponed into June. The date will be announced when it is settled on.
    f. The C/T is working on the Local Emergency Management Plan, and is in process on it.
    g. The C/T's Office is prepping for the end of the Fiscal Year, and is hoping to make it a smooth go with more training and organization.

h. The Grand List Abstract is nearly ready to be lodged, just waiting on a few more inspections.
i. The DRB/PC's upcoming meeting will have at least 1 hearing for the proposed ordinances, and perhaps more depending on other factors.

5. The Selectboard began discussion on DRB appointments and other vacancies;
    a. Jamie Dayton volunteered to serve on the DRB. The Selectboard thanked him for volunteering. Teresa motioned to approve Jamie Dayton as a DRB member, Reece seconded-**VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed.**
    b. The C/T noted the Town is still seeking 1 more person, as there was another resignation. It will continue to be posted and publicized until we do.
    c. ACRPC is looking for Panton's Transportation Advisory Committee Rep. The C/T volunteered to serve in the interim, the SB asked for more requests from the public, but will consider that option should the need arise.
    d. The C/T noted that ACRPC is also looking to renew agreements with member towns in a number of areas;
        i. The Mutal Aid Agreement-Teresa motioned to continue the Town's participation in that agreement, Reece seconded-**VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**
        ii. The REMC-the Regional Emergency Management Committee. The C/T noted Bob Groff had been unable to find a local representative from an EMS service for Panton, but volunteered as acting EMC to participate in this REMC. Teresa noted that we should expand our search to other EMS organizations. The C/T agreed and will look into that. Zach motioned for the C/T to act as the Interim REMC member, Teresa seconded-**VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**
6. The Selectboard began discussion on the Turkey Lane E911 Issue;
    a. The C/T informed the SB that Dr. Viskup is not interested in participating in this process in any way. The T/C noted that the internal discrepancies in the Grand List and Lister Cards will be handled at the same time as the road establishment, and E911 address. It was generally agreed by the SB to solicit more names from residents for the new road, and handle this issue at the May 28th SB meeting.
7. The Selectboard began discussion on the Panton/Waltham MOU
    a. The C/T noted that Waltham has indicated they are ready to sign this agreement, and that one last correction which was missed in a previous draft has been corrected.
    b. Teresa made a motion to approve this MOU between Panton and Waltham, Reece seconded-**VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**
    c. Zach noted there were questions, but reiterated the SB is trying to adhere to the SB Rules of Procedure with the expectation they will be updated and re-adopted

by the incoming SB. This means Public Comments are held to the end of the meeting.

d. Debbie Brace noted that she thought that this issue was going to be handled by the full 5 member board.

8. The Selectboard began discussion on the Town's Legal Counsel;
    a. The C/T noted that Putnam and Menard can't continue to represent the town, they have more work than they can handle. They made several recommendations, the C/T investigated them, and found two to bring to the SB. One was Carroll, Boe & Kite in Middlebury, and the other was LCA, (Leslie Cadwell) whom the Town is currently utilizing in regard to the solar project. She indicated that she would be interested in handling all the town's legal affairs.
    b. Both firms provided fee structures, which were mostly equivalent, based on the way they billed their work.
    c. Both firms have advantages, which were discussed generally. It was further noted that Putnam and Menard was done effect immediately, and that there were several issues that need immediate assistance. The SB asked for a pros and cons assessment, which the C/T will provide. The C/T asked to continue working with LCA on a few issues that are extremely time sensitive.
9. The Selectboard began discussion of the VTRANS Grant in Aid
    a. The C/T explained the program briefly, and informed the SB that the town is ahead on its work on hydrologically connected segments. The Grant In Aid application being present is only authorizing the Town to pursue future applications, and is not an application in and of itself.
    b. Teresa made a motion to re-authorize Panton's Participation in the Grant in Aid program to be able to apply when necessary, Reece seconded-**VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**
10. The Selectboard began discussion on a pending liquor license;
    a. The C/T noted that Agricola Farm is continuing to hold tasting events and dinners, and has a vendor come in and ask for a temporary permit for a liquor license. It would be a one time permit.
    b. Zach motioned to approve the liquor license, Reece seconded-**VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**
11. There was no Other Business
12. The Selectboard proceeded into Public Comment;
    a. Debbie Brace quoted from minutes from 2017 to discuss Waltham's use of our equipment, and asked when that was authorized. In October 2019, it was noted in the building wasn't safe, and no one should be allowed in that building.
    b. She further noted that the building should be torn down, and they should pay the town for storing materials. She added that the Town is getting nothing for this deal.

c. Zach noted that the riders in the MOU protect the Town and will have contractors sign off on the safety of the building.
d. The C/T noted that the Town made almost $8000 from the relationship with Waltham.
e. Debbie stated that the usage rate doesn't cover cost of the vehicle usage.
f. Kathy Kennett stated she wasn't in favor of the Town using Leslie Cadwell for legal services.
g. Kathy Kennett further noted that there is no town Advisor, she added that the SB is rushing through matters right now.
h. Teresa noted that the SB is there to conduct Town business with the Town Clerk/Treasurer, and that Public Comment needs to wait to the appropriate sections
i. Kathy Kennett said that Public Comment should come at the end of every item. The was agreed upon by Sharon Ashcraft, who said that the rules should be established and stuck to. Sharon added that these are Public Meetings, and they include in the Public.
j. Zach noted that the SB needs to make efficient use of time, for everyone.
k. Teresa added that it's difficult to research and have answers to every question that are asked, and that comments are heard, but the SB is trying hard to be effective and efficient to conduct Town business.
l. Debbie Brace again asked why the SB was rushing on the MOU?
    i. Zach stated that there was no rush, this issue has been discussed for weeks, reviewed by lawyers and both selectboards. The riders provide opportunities for control by Panton if needed.
    ii. Debbie added that Waltham should be looking at other options for the buildings.
    iii. Zach noted that drawing out this process isn't always an efficient use of time.
m. Jeanne Jackson wanted to recognize the hard work by Jeff Stone in grading and maintaining Jackson Rd, and thank him for his efforts, the road looks great.

13. The Selectboard began to review the AP/Payroll Warrants
    a. During the SB review, comments continued,
        i. The guardrail on Panton Rd near the Town Hall was hit by some racing cars, and will need repair.
        ii. The Town should invest in game cameras to try and catch racers, the C/T noted the Addison County Sherriff.
        iii. Debbie Brace asked the C/T to look into another guardrail.
        iv. Speeding Ticket compensation is down, and the Sherriff hasn't been writing many tickets it appears.

b. Zach motioned to approve the AP/Payroll Warrants, Teresa seconded the motion- **VOTE-3 In Favor, 0 Opposed**

14. The meeting was adjourned at 6:32 p.m.