Town of Panton Chartered 1761

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Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 10th, 2025

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

Via Zoom: Daniels, Lorraine Keyser

1. Zach called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m
2. The Road Foreman's Report was added into the Agenda, before Item 4.
3. Public Comment
    a. Sharon Ashcraft stated that the boundary issue hadn't been discussed in open meeting, and has been described as a dispute. It's been known about for 30 years, with letters sent from the Ferrisburgh Selectboard to the Panton Selectboard. Those letters had no response, which to her indicated acquiescence and that the tax map line should be the valid line, and that the previous law should be respected.
    b. Debbie Brace stated that different Selectboards make different choices, and that lots of other towns are involved. She stated that she is seeing a lot more positive discussion on the issue than negative, and that Mel Hawley swept this issue under the rug in years past, and if the previous SB wasn't ready to act, this current SB is.
4. Road Foreman's Report
    a. Rick stated that the prework was completed on the culverts for the structures grant, and that we were ready to go. Panton Road will be closed from Whispering Pines to the Town Line from September 23rd to 25th.
    b. He will be meeting with the state to determine where Panton is at with regard to the Grant in Aid projects.
    c. Most of the Town roadside mowing has been finished

    d. He won't be purchasing a lot of sand this winter, he should have enough to get by this year.
    e. He hopes to get back to ditching soon, and has a list of places and residents who want ditch dirt.
    f. He stated that West Rd is ready to be upgraded to a Class 3 from a Class 4 and hopes the SB makes that decision later in the meeting.
5. Selectboard Rules of Procedure
    a. Teresa wanted to reaffirm the SB's commitment to operating the SB meetings in accordance with the rules of procedure the SB had agreed too.
    b. General discussion ensued, and it was agreed that the members of the SB would try to stay on the rules, with public comment being entertained after each item, and the public would be called upon by the SB Chair.
    c. Kathy Kennett added she thought that cell phone use should also be banned during meetings.
6. Approval of Minutes from SB Meeting 8/13/25 and hearings
    a. Reece motioned to approve the minutes, Robert seconded-**VOTE-All in Favor**
7. Clerk/Treasurer Updates
    a. The C/T stated that the tree plantings related to the ash tree removal was scheduled for October 18th, and volunteers are welcome. The Tree Warden will be posting in FPF.
    b. The Culvert project is scheduled, signs will be in place soon, all concerned parties have been notified, and detours discussed.
    c. Audit Prep for FY25 has started, going well, should be significantly easier than FY24
    d. Working with ACRPC and the Panton PC to resubmit and updated application for the Municipal Planning Grant, more updates to follow
    e. The first FEMA money has arrived, approximately $50k
    f. Tax Bills have been printed and mailed, we are monitoring for revisions. There was an error in calculating the tax rate, which will reduce our tax revenue by $121. We hope to make it up in other categories.
8. Town of Panton Payment Policy
    a. The C/T stated that the Payment Policy has been updated to reflect the language of the types of payments accepted, as well as the insufficient funds charge, and is requesting approval of this policy from the SB.
    b. Teresa motioned to approve the Town of Panton Payment Policy, with an edit to correct the website name, Reece seconded-**VOTE-All in Favor**
9. Appointment to the Vergennes/Panton Boundary Ad Hoc Committee
    a. The C/T stated that Vergennes has chosen their two members, and Panton should select two to directly interface with Vergennes.

b. General discussion ensued, where it was noted that this Ad Hoc Committee would not be deciding anything, and would bring back discussion and information for consideration by the full SB. It was further noted that no option has been selected, and the SB could go with Options A, B, C, or D, E, F. This is just the beginning of this process, and nothing has been decided.
c. Reece discussed the need to have a floating, third member who could participate if the other members weren't available.
d. Robert nominated Zach and Reece to serve as members, with Teresa as the floating member, Teresa seconded-**VOTE-All In Favor**

10. Delinquent Tax Collector Policy
    a. The C/T has noted some old information in the Panton Delinquent Tax Collector Policy, including tax collection dates, and the need to include recent changes to state law regarding reasons for abatement. The policy has been updated and submitted to the SB for approval
    b. Debbie Brace asked why delinquent taxes were in the Town Report, and how long until a parcel goes up for tax sale.
    c. It was generally noted that Barb Fleming, the current DTC, is doing a great job, and continues to chip away at delinquent parcels.
    d. Jeanne Jackson asked if changing tax due dates would help alleviate some of the financial pressures, and reduce our need for a TAN.
        i. The C/T said he has been investigating it, and will provide some information to the SB at the next meeting.
        ii. Teresa motioned to approve the updated Delinquent Tax Collection Policy, Reece seconded-**VOTE-All in Favor**
11. Letter to Vermont Judicial Department for Admin Officer
    a. The C/T presented the SB with a letter to submit to the Vermont Judicial Bureau to request a ticket book and document that the Panton Zoning Administrator has the ability to issue civil fines. As this issue was approved at the previous meeting/hearing, all that was needed was the SB to sign this letter to submit.
    b. Teresa motioned to approving the letter and sign it, Kirsten seconded-**VOTE-All in Favor**
12. AARP Grant
    a. The C/T described a grant available from AARP to improve public spaces for people over 50 accessible year round/especially in the winter. The C/T had the idea to write the grant for acoustic, sound dampening panels to be hung on the walls of the town hall, and to work with the community and the Panton Art Group to paint those panels with Panton and Vermont motifs with a series of public events. This was a no match grant of $4k
    b. Zach made a motion to allow for the grant application, Robert seconded-**VOTE-All in Favor**

13. West Road Re-classification
    a. The C/T reiterated what the Road Foreman had stated; West Road is maintained like a Class 3, but the town doesn't receive any funding for it. Many of the improvements to bring it up to its current condition have been done using grant funds, and the road is passable all year round by a passenger car, which is the definition of a Class 3 Road. The upgrade would provide the town with an additional $2k in road funding. The process would be approval by the SB, a public hearing held within 30 days, notification to all abutting land owners, and a survey. Seth Kittridge, who has done survey work for the town, has estimated $4-6k to complete the survey, as much of the work was done when South Road Trail was surveyed.
    b. It was noted that West Road can be a busy road, and that this upgrade was warranted. Questions were also raised as to the funding to pay for the survey, and the C/T will be trying to find sources of funding to help offset the cost.
    c. Teresa motioned to reclassify West Road from a Class 4 to a Class 3 road, Reece seconded-**VOTE-All in Favor**
14. Budget Meeting scheduling
    a. The C/T asked the SB to schedule at least the first budget meetings for FY27. It was noted that December is hard, and a general discussion on timing was had.
    b. It was generally noted that there was a lot of resident expertise that should be listened too, and healthcare and other issues should be discussed.
    c. It was decided to schedule two meeting, October 23rd and October 30th, both at 5:30 p.m. at the Panton Town Hall, to begin to discuss the FY27 budget.
    d. Teresa motioned to approve those dates, Reece seconded-**VOTE-All in Favor**
15. FY26 Budget to Actual
    a. The C/T began to update the SB on the FY26 budget to actual
        i. The Tax revenue was in place, as the bills had been generated, but the education liability had not yet been journaled. They will see that on their next budget.
        ii. Overall, expenses were tracking appropriately, no major areas of concern. Taxes are already coming in for FY26, and other revenue is proceeding accordingly.
        iii. The C/T noted that several categories had been broken out to get better detail on expenditures-Paper and Ink, and some of the highway shop supplies.
        iv. It was noted that the Addison Couty Court Dues would be higher this year, as they use the prior years GL, which now is catching the reappraisal.
        v. Reserve Fund interest Income allocations have been made monthly, reflecting the true accounting of those funds.

vi. Significant discussion was held on a number of line items on the budget, with again the general tenor being that the town is in good shape for the moment.

16. AP/Payroll
    a. The SB reviewed and signed the AP and Payroll Warrants
    b. Zach motioned to approve the AP/Payroll Warrants, Teresa seconded-**VOTE-All in Favor**
17. Teresa motioned to adjourn at 7:27 p.m., Reece seconded-**VOTE-All in Favor**