Town of Panton Chartered 1761

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Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 10th, 2025

In attendance: Selectboard Chairperson Zach Weaver**,** Selectboard Vice Chair Teresa Boucher, Selectboard Member Robert T. DeGraaf, Selectboard Member Kirsten De La Cruz, Selectboard Member Reece Jaring, Town Clerk/Treasurer Kyle Rowe, Highway Crew Member Jeff Stone, Chuck Kennett, Kathy Kennett,

Via Zoom: Sharon Ashcraft

1. Zach called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.
2. Approval for the minutes of the budget meeting from 12/9/25 were added to the minutes approval agenda item, and the "contracts" discussion point for executive session was deleted.
3. Public Comment;
    a. Kathy Kennett asked for an update on the Vergennes/Panton boundary;
        i. Zach stated they are still in negotiations with Vergennes, and have had several good meetings. Waiting to hear back from Vergennes on details. Progress is being made. There might not be anything to report by Town Meeting, but that has yet to be seen.
    b. Sharon Ashcraft noted that the agendas for the SB Meetings and the DRB meeting haven't been posted on the website.
        i. The C/T stated he will take better care, the SB agendas were posted, but the dates were wrong. The DRB agenda hadn't been correctly posted, and they will make sure it is.
4. Jeff Stone gave the Highway Department Report;
    a. The Highway Department has been busy plowing and maintaining vehicles.
    b. Still waiting on a resident to provide a recently hit mailbox so the Town can assist with repairs.
    c. The SB thanked Rick and Jeff for their work during these last storms.
5. Approval of Minutes from 11/12/25 Meeting and 12/9/25 Budget Meeting;

a. It was noted that the date was incorrect on the 12/9/25 minutes, and that Reece should be noted as having abstained on the vote for the change to the health insurance policy for the Town employees.
b. Teresa motioned to accept the minutes from the 11/12/25 meeting, Zach seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
c. Reece motioned to approve the minutes from the 12/9/25 Budget meeting with corrections, Teresa seconded**-VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**

6. Clerk/Treasurer Report
    a. The last invoice for the Structures Grant has been paid, and the C/T is preparing to submit for reimbursement. The total is approximately $80,000.
    b. The last of the FEMA grant has been signed off by the State, and the Town is in the queue for reimbursement.
    c. There is a significant project going on indexing surveys, and updating Town records, which was discussed at the 12/9 budget meeting. It is a significant project, and nearing completion.
    d. The Grand Lists from 1842 to 1869 are in the hands of a local book binder for restoration and preservation, and new bindings. The goal is to rebind the Grand Lists from 1842-2000.
    e. The Town Office's will be closed Thursday afternoon while the C/T attends training in Castleton.
    f. The Reserve and Special Revenue Money Market account has been set up, and is fully capitalized, earning 2.78% currently.
    g. Election preparations are underway, and there are a few posts on the Town website for timelines and deadlines.
7. Reserve Fund Definitions for the ballot at Town Meeting
    a. The C/T noted that the SB wanted to edit some of the proposed definitions for inclusion on the ballot. He noted that the Emergency Fund definition, the Highway Capital Project Fund definition, and a couple of ancillary questions need input before inclusion.
    b. It was noted that the ballot will be approximately 16 items this year, and that a long ballot tires people out, but hopefully the language is clear and the questions will be easy to vote on.
    c. A general discussion was held on the Emergency Fund definition, and it was noted that 10% seemed low. Additionally, a funding mechanism to get to whatever amount was approved would be necessary. The C/T noted that that policy already exists, and the SB can develop a plan to get to that amount.
    d. The Highway Capital Project fund definition was noted as too restructure, and that reducing its funding to $100 didn't seem appropriate.

e. Reece stated that it seemed punitive based on the actions of the SB earlier this year, and Kirsten noted that if Rick wasn't supportive of it, it would be difficult to support it herself.
f. The Emergency Fund definition was amended to read "The Emergency Reserve Fund shall be used to offset expenses from non-recuring, unanticipated catastrophic events and issues outside the control of the Town. This fund is not intended to cover normal budgetary expenditures, overruns or unanticipated revenue shortfalls. The target shall be 15% of the Total Operating Budget to be raised by taxes (excluding appropriations to community organizations, special revenue and reserve funds) for the year the proposed budget is presented."
g. The Highway Capital Project Fund was approved and shall appear as "The Highway Capital Project Fund shall be used for the planning, design, construction, and major rehabilitation of long-term highway infrastructure, including road expansions, bridges, and safety enhancements. The purpose of this fund is for planned projects and does not include Paving or Re-pavement."
h. Teresa motioned to approve the definitions for the Highway Capital Project and Emergency Funds, Robert seconded-**VOTE-4 In Favor, 1 Opposed**
i. The ballot shall include an additional question to read "Shall the voters approve the use of all but $50,000 from the Highway Capital Project Fund to pay down the loans on the 2024 International Tandem Dump Truck, with any remaining funds thereafter to be transferred to the Highway Capital Equipment Fund?"
j. Reece motioned to update the language of the ballot question, Robert seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**

8. Town of Panton Investment Policy
    a. The C/T presented a draft investment policy, which would outline the investments the Town could make. He stated this came from VLCT, and the changes made by the C/T were vetted by one of their finance specialists. He noted that the major difference was that this policy would allow for the C/T to invest in CD's and US Treasuries without prior SB approval, informing the SB at the next opportunity.
    b. The SB appreciated the proposal, but it was generally noted that they would like to have input prior to any investments. They asked the C/T to rework the policy and present at the next SB meeting.
9. AP/Payroll Warrants
    a. The SB began reviewing AP/Payroll Warrants.
    b. Reece made a motioned to approve all the AP/Payroll Warrants, Teresa seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
10. Teresa made a motion to go into Executive Session at 6:53 p.m. to discuss privileged communications with the Town Attorney, Zach seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
11. Teresa made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 7:29 p.m., Zach seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**

a. No action was taken in Executive Session.

12. Teresa made a motion to adjourn at 7:29 p.m., Reece seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**