Town of Panton Chartered 1761

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Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 11th, 2026

In attendance: Selectboard Chair Zach Weaver, Selectboard Vice Chair Teresa Boucher, Selectboard Member Reece Jaring, Selectboard Member Kirsten De La Cruz, Selectboard Member Robert DeGraaf, Clerk/Treasurer Kyle Rowe, Panton Road Foreman Rick Cloutier, Bixby Library Director Jennifer Pearson, Richard Jackson, Janice Jackson, Kathy Kennett, Chuck Kennett, Sharon Ashcraft

Via Zoom: None

1. Zach called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. Discussion and Approval of the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant, and setting a Board of Abatement Hearing Date were added to the agenda, as items 17 and 18, respectively.
3. Public Comment;
    a. Sharon Ashcraft wanted to go on the record to say that the minutes from the previous meeting did not reflect what she said, and she would like them corrected.
    b. Chuck Kennett asked about Vergennes/Panton Boundary updates;
        i. Zach stated that they are still waiting to hear back from Vergennes.
4. The approval of the minutes from the 2/11/26 meeting were tabled till April pending corrections.
5. The Selectboard recognized Jennifer Pearson, the new Director of the Bixby Library;
    a. Jennifer introduced herself, stating she had been in the position January.
    b. She thanked Panton for their continued support of the library, and stated that so far, things have been good in her new role.
    c. Zach noted that if she needs anything, please don't hesitate to approach the SB or the Clerk.
    d. Jennifer reciprocated, and encouraged everyone in the community to reach out with questions or information.
6. The Selectboard recognized the Road Foreman;

a. Rick noted that work continues on updating the culvert inventory, and that they are planning on several replacements this year, 4 alone on Jersey Street, ideally before the paving occurs.
b. It was noted that the frost was deep this year, and the roads are showing it. Reports have come in on areas that need fixes, and the Highway Department is working on it.
c. Rick stated that he is pricing out trucks, and is working on getting the best deal for Panton to replace the 2019 Mack truck as soon as possible, given the timing of the dump bed and general ordering delays.
    i. He has worked with three vendors to develop quotes, and will find the best match, highest trade in, and best warranty for the Town.
    ii. The timing of the truck body means that we may lose money on the trade in, and new EPA standards may increase the price of future tandem trucks.
d. Rick noted that the loader is having some transmission problems and that they are performing preventative maintenance in order to ameliorate it, but will be keeping a close eye on it.
e. It was noted that the Town has enough salt to most likely handle the rest of the season, but hasn't had a delivery since December. They will try to restock in the spring.
f. They will also be re-ordering sand, as they haven't purchased sand in nearly two years.
g. The Selectboard thanks Rick and Jeff for their hard work this year, and the obvious consideration they are taking with suppliers.
h. After Rick left, the SB recapped the comments for those that couldn't hear, and added that the Mack truck has approximately 75k miles, and is 7 years old, noting that the warranty is ending on the truck.

7. The Clerk/Treasurer gave his report;
    a. The C/T provided an update on the Vergennes Fire Station committee, noting that productive conversations were happening, and they look forward to providing a recommendation to the Vergennes City Council in the next few months. They are examining the issue from all angles, and will be able to provide a more detailed analysis for the SB later in the spring.
    b. The C/T discussed the election results and turn out, and thanked everyone for participating.
    c. The C/T noted that the voted changes to the Reserve Funds have occurred, and will be reflected in the SB's budget review in March.
    d. The C/T noted that the LEMP is being updated, and will be discussed later in the agenda, and in the April meeting.
8. The Selectboard began to consider the 2nd Class Liquor License and Tabacco License for BJ's;

a. The C/T noted that the license applications had been received, and were in good standing.
b. Teresa motioned to approve the licenses, Kirsten seconded-**VOTE-4 IN FAVOR, Robert abstaining**

9. The Selectboard began considering SB Organization and the Rules of Procedure;
    a. Teresa noted that the SB had put time last year into making updates to the Rules, and that they seem to be working well. This was generally agreed upon.
    b. Teresa motioned to retain the current rules, Zach seconded the motion-VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR
    c. Zach stated he was happy to continue as Chair, and Teresa added she was happy to continue as Vice Chair. It was noted that the SB is working well together, and its nice to have a variety of opinions.
    d. Reece motioned that Zach and Teresa continue in their roles as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, Robert seconded the motion-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
10. The Selectboard began considering Committee and Position Appointments;
    a. The C/T noted that requests for volunteers had been posted multiple times on FPF and the website, and there were no responses. He added that everyone in a position has expressed interest in continuing, and that the C/T would volunteer for the Maple Broadband Committee, as that was the only unfilled position.
    b. Sharon Ashcraft quoted from a statute which in her opinion limited the Selectboard to only being able to appoint residents from the Town to Town Officer positions, and that these positions were listed on the Town website as Officers.
    c. There was limited discussion on this point.
    d. Zach stated that they would reach out to VLCT to get a legal opinion, and Teresa added that whatever positions the C/T filled could be provisional until that opinion was received.
    e. All of the following position appointments were motioned by Teresa, seconded by Reece-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
        i. ACRPC Delegate-Jamie Dayton, Logan Roth-Longe, Alternate
        ii. ACSWD Delegate-Paul Sokal
        iii. DRB/PC-Gretchen Bailey
        iv. Green Up Day Coordinators-Paula Moore and Louise Gionvanella
        v. Town Health Officer-Geoff Nelson
        vi. E911 Coordinator-Paul Sokal
    f. The following position appointments were motioned by Teresa, seconded by Reece-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR,** to be made provisionally, pending confirmation from VLCT;
        i. EMC-Kyle Rowe
        ii. TAC Delegate-Kyle Rowe

iii. Maple Broadband Delegate-Kyle Rowe

g. Teresa noted that depending on the timing of the meeting, she may be able to fill in on Maple Broadband.

11. The Selectboard began discussion of the Tier 1B Opt in;
    a. The C/T introduced the issue, and explained some background on Act 181, and the different tiering structures the state was seeking to implement. He added that these designations had already been approved by the Panton Planning Commission, and ACRPC, and that the SB approval would allow their inclusion in the ACRPC Regional Plan.
    b. He added that there was no obligation for a town to alter its zoning, or make any changes to its ordinances or bylaws, just that these designations would allow the Town to take advantage of fewer permitting requirements in the future if this land was zoned appropriately and developed.
    c. Sharon Ashcraft stated that the Town's current zoning wouldn't allow for some of these parcels to be developed in a way that benefitted from the designation.
    d. Teresa noted that it seemed like the goals of this plan were to allow for increased development in already developed areas.
    e. Kathy Kennett noted that the SB should maybe wait until the survey results from the Town Plan were in, to better gauge the feelings of the residents.
    f. General discussion was held about the timeline of this Act.
    g. Teresa motioned to table this issue, review it, and decide in April, Robert seconded the motion-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
12. The SB began discussion on the Panton Personnel Policy;
    a. The C/T stated that it seemed appropriate to review and examine the policy, and make any needed updates.
    b. There was general discussion, and the SB said that they will take the month to review, and discuss as at the April meeting.
13. The Selectboard began discussion of the Panton Purchasing Policy;
    a. The C/T stated that after the Department of Public Safety audit of the FEMA funds, several changes were recommended by DPS, among them was a change to the purchasing policy to allow for better details on allowability in utilizing Federal Funds. The changes noted in the policy were taken directly from language suggested by DPS.
    b. Reece motioned to approve the amendment to the Panton Purchasing Policy, Kirsten seconded the motion-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
14. The Selectboard began discussion on the updates to the Local Emergency Management Plan;
    a. The C/T stated that he is working with our regional partners to provide the required updates, and will have a draft available for review, discussion, and approval at the April meeting.

b. It was noted that the VPWD facility on Arnold Bay would be removed as an EOC in the plan, due to the unsuitability of the structure for emergencies.

15. The Selectboard began discussion on the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant;
    a. The C/T stated that the Town was shortlisted for this grant just this week. He had been investigating options to move the Town to a .gov domain, and this grant had presented itself. Difficulty in getting a hold of contacts had delayed information on this grant, but right now, it is a no match grant, from DHS money managed by the State of Vermont and authorized contractors to assist towns in moving to .gov, among other cybersecurity measures.
    b. When the details of the grant are provided, the Town will have a 30 day opt out if the agreement is not favorable to the Town.
    c. Reece motioned to approve the C/T to continue applying for this grant, provided it was no match, and there was a 30 day opt out period, Robert seconded the motion-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
16. The Selectboard began discussion on the Board of Abatement Hearing date;
    a. The C/T stated they had received a request for Tax Abatement, and that a hearing date needed to be set.
    b. The SB discussed, and chose the 17th and 25th of March, at 5:30. This would be scheduled with the Assessor and the JP's in order to find a time.
17. The Selectboard began to review AP/Payroll Warrants;
    a. There was general discussion during the AP/Payroll review.
    b. Reece motioned to accept the AP/Payroll Warrants as presented, Kirsten seconded the motion-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
18. Zach motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m., Teresa seconded the motion-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**