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 8th, 2026

In attendance: 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, Richard Jackson, Chuck Kennett, Sharon Ashcraft, Dan St. Cyr

Via Zoom: None

1. Teresa called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.
2. A Liquor Event Permit Application was added to the agenda, as item 6.5
3. Public Comment;
    a. Sharon Ashcraft stated that many people are concerned about the potential impacts of Act 181, and some are even calling for its full repeal. She added that many Selectboard are writing letters of support for that reason, and would the Panton SB consider such a letter.
        i. The C/T stated that item would be considered under Agenda Item 9.
4. The SB began consideration of the minutes from 2-11-26 and 3-11-26.
    a. The C/T stated that corrections had been made to the 2-11 minutes, and have been provided to the SB.
    b. Reece motioned to the approve both sets of minutes as presented, Kirsten seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
5. Road Foreman's Report
    a. Rick stated that they have been grading, painting the plows, and buying salt to restock the Salt Shed.
    b. Several roads need to be evaluated; it was a difficult winter for both paved and dirt roads.
    c. Kirsten asked if there had been any recent issues buying salt?

i. Rick stated that the Governor of New York had made it difficult to import salt from oversees to sell in New York but had relented to some degree, and there was salt available.

d. He stated that plow blades have nearly tripled in price, and he is waiting to see if they go down some before purchasing for next winter.
e. Rick added that the Sales Representative from Western Star was present to discuss EPA regulations for new dump trucks, and that he had been working on getting 3 quotes for a truck chassis, the body having already been agreed too late last year.
    i. Dan St. Cyr discussed the new emission standards for diesel vehicles, stating that starting in January of 2027, manufacturers were going to including new systems to treat emissions. These systems are estimated to cost anywhere between 15k-40k per engine. Western Star hasn't been giving quotes for 2027 vehicles because of this.
    ii. Additionally, brand new systems like what are being installed will often cause backlogs, as issues are worked out.
    iii. He added that many towns and municipal agencies were buying trucks ahead of this, even if the dump body wasn't ready yet.
    iv. He stated that if the town bought a chassis from Western Star, the chassis would be stored by Western Star until the dump body was ready in mid-2027, and that the 7-year warranty would be reset upon final installation of the dump body.
    v. He provided quote/estimates for cost purposes, as well as trade in on the current truck.
    vi. The SB thanked both Rick and Dan for their work on this.

6. The SB began discussion on the possible Highway Capital Equipment Reserve Expenditure;
    a. The C/T stated that this item was added to the agenda considering the previous discussion and presentation.
    b. The cost of the Western Star truck was approximately $187k. The Highway Capital Equipment fund stood at $218K, with $10K budgeted to enter in FY 27.
    c. The dump body is estimated at $127k
    d. The trade in on the 2019 Mack truck would be between $40k-60K.
    e. This would put the total cost of the truck at $315k. Potential trade in or sale would reduce the Town's obligation to $264k. After the use of the Highway Equipment Reserves, the amount the Town would need to finance would be approximately $44k.
    f. This financing would occur in FY27, and the Town will be a relatively low-debt position at that time. Financing would most likely be through Community Bank, with an estimated interest rate of between 5 and 6%.

g. The Selectboard discussed the issue briefly, and ultimately decided to wait till the full board met in May to better discuss the issue. **TABLED UNTIL MAY**

7. The SB began consideration of the Permit Application;
    a. The C/T stated this was another in a series of monthly events held at Agricola Farm, and that the permit was for the same distillery to allow for alcohol.
    b. Teresa motioned to issue the permit to Ghost House, Reece seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
8. The C/T gave his report;
    a. -PC "Pizza for Panton Planning"-April 11th, 12-3pm, Town Survey Results released as part of that.
    b. -PACIF Insurance Walkthrough of Town buildings revealed only a few minor issues and they are being handled.
    c. -Two Parking Tickets at Arnold Bay, both people have paid.
    d. -Arnold Bay Grant proceeding-met with LCMM and finalizing quotes. Quarterly Reporting Done.
    e. -Audited all the invoices in the current FY as part of scanning project, discovered a few issues, being fixed.
    f. -Charter Amendment Testimony was done at the invitation of the House Government Operation Committee, they are continuing to consider the amendment.
    g. -Municipal Ethics Training-Need to get 1 more SB members.
    h. -Vergennes Fire Committee proceeding and more info coming.
9. The SB began consideration of the 2026 Appointments;
    a. The C/T confirmed that there are no residency requirements for any of the positions that the SB had appointed him to provincially. He added that he used this opportunity to rework the "Officers" section of the website to make it clearer what defines different levels of positions in the Town.
    b. Teresa motioned to confirm the C/T, Kyle Rowe, to the TAC, Maple Broadband, and as the EMC for Panton-Robert seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
10. The SB began to discuss Tier 1B Opt In;
    a. The C/T stated that the SB wanted to give more time in the consideration of this, and that's why its included. He again presented Tier 1B, the Road Rule, and Tiers 2 and 3.
    b. He added that the SB could opt in to Teir 1B, and still write a letter to their legislators and the appropriate committees expressing displeasure at the issues involved with the Road Rule and Tier 3 designation.
    c. There was a thorough discussion of the issue.
    d. Sharon Ashcraft was recognized, and stated that many SB's have decided to opt out completely. She added that the bill may be repealed, making the whole issue

moot. She continued that there were issues with the parcels in the Tier 1B areas in Panton that would make development difficult.

e. After more discussion, Teresa made a motion to table the issue until the May meeting, Robert seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**

11. The SB began discussion of the Personnel Policy;
    a. The C/T stated that much of the work had already been done, and that he has reviewed it with the other employees, who are generally ok with it.
    b. It was noted that the C/T was unable to find a specific job description for the Road Foreman position, but will draft one to present at the next SB meeting.
    c. The SB agreed that the work on the personnel policy surrounding PTO had taken care of most of the issues.
12. The SB began considering the 2026 LEMP
    a. The C/T stated that has only made a few changes to the LEMP, mostly updating contact information, and contract information.
    b. The largest change was the removal of the Vergennes/Panton Water District Plant from the list of EOC's. The Town Hall continues to serve as the primary location, but there was concern over using such a tight and cramped space.
    c. The SB suggested that the Town Garage be the alternative EOC, not a shelter. The C/T said he will work with the Road Foreman to make sure that was feasible, and if so, implement it.
    d. Teresa motioned to approve the LEMP as amended, including the change to the Town Garage as the EOC alternate location, Reece seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
13. The SB began discussion on the Addison County Cooperative Agreement'
    a. The C/T stated that he and several other town administrative personnel had been meeting to find ways to improve collaboration between the towns in Addison County. The Road Foremen are a great example of a group that works well together, and there are many opportunities for better group efforts.
    b. The presented resolution was non-binding, and stated, in summary, that where the opportunity to work together existed, the municipalities would try to do so.
    c. The SB thought this was a good resolution, and liked the idea.
    d. Teresa motioned to approve the resolution, Reece seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
14. The SB began consideration of the FY27 Paving Grant;
    a. The C/T stated that he had prepared a submission for the FY27 Paving Grant. Panton would be requesting the full $200k, in an 80-20 match. The Town's paving budget amount of $125k would easily cover the match portion. We are low on the grant list, so the odds aren't great, but we want to submit as soon as possible.
    b. Teresa made a motion to approve the grant application, Reece seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**

15. The SB began consideration of the FY27 Grants In Aid Letter of Intent;
    a. The C/T stated that this was just a LOI, indicating our interest in possible projects and grant funding. We submitted a similar letter last year, but didn't end up submitting a grant. We would need to submit the LOI to even be able to apply for funding.
    b. Teresa made a motion to approve the LOI for Grants in AID, Reece seconded-VOTE-**ALL IN FAVOR**
16. The SB began the FY26 Balance Sheet and Budget Review;
    a. The C/T reviewed the balance sheet, discussing the position the town was in. The TAN has been paid off, approximately $1300 in interest will be owed by June 30th. The other assets and liabilities were all reconciled and accurate.
    b. The C/T began to review the Budget to Actual, noting several small areas where mistakes were caught, and improvements made. Overall, the budget is approximately 65%, which is nearly where we want to be at this point in the fiscal year.
17. The SB began consideration of the FY27 TAN Application;
    a. The C/T stated that this was well ahead of necessary, but that it would make things easier at the end of the fiscal year to have the approval in place.
    b. It was noted that the FY26 TAN was approximately $363k, of which the town used approximately $120k.
    c. The Town would again utilize National Bank of Middlebury, and the TAN would again be a line of credit.
    d. Teresa made a motion to approve the TAN application for FY27, Robert seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
18. The SB began reviewing AP/Payroll Warrants;
    a. General discussion was held throughout the review.
    b. Specific invoices were questioned, and answered by the C/T
    c. Reece made a motion to approve the AP/Payroll Warrants as presented, Robert seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
19. Teresa made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss contracts with neighboring municipalities and ongoing litigation at 7:16 p.m., inviting the C/T, Robert seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
20. Teresa made a motion to come out of Executive session at 7:44 p.m., Reece seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
    a. **No action was taken in Executive Session or afterwards.**
21. Teresa made a motion to adjourn at 7:45 p.m., Robert seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**