Town of Panton Chartered 1761

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Selectboard Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 13th, 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, , Kathy Kennett, Chuck Kennett, Sharon Ashcraft, Armando Martinez

Via Zoom: None

1. Zach called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. Agenda Item 12 was deleted from the Agenda.
3. Public Comment;
    a. Armando Martinez raised multiple issues that he had covered in previous SB meetings. He asked the SB what their decision was in this matter.
        i. Zach stated that Agenda Item 9 was going to be discussed to help alleviate some of these issues.
        ii. He added that the SB wants to let the legal case proceed.
        iii. The issue was discussed generally, and Armando continued to raise discussion points he felt concerning.
    b. Armando asked the SB if a settlement was possible?
        i. Zach responded that his lawyer should contact the Town's attorney to begin those discussions.
4. The SB began consideration of the minutes from the 4/8/26 meeting;
    a. Reece motioned to approve the minutes from the 4/8/26 Meeting, Robert seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
5. The Road Foreman gave his report;
    a. There was a culvert replacement on Jersey St that went well. There are 3 more culverts to be replaced on Jersey, and 2 on Lake Rd. He is coordinating with local farms before they do the work.
    b. Ditching is proceeding along Allen Rd, and roadside mowing has started.

c. He has been working with the C/T on keeping on top of the budget, and everything is under control as of now. Inflation increases are making it challenging.
d. He asked the SB to weigh in on adding another mowing to the Panton Community Park/Overlook. It was generally agreed to mow three times. Dave Miner would be mowing it.
e. Kathy Kennett asked if the salt and sand being purchased was from the FY26 or FY276 budget.
    i. Rick and the C/T answered FY26
f. Chuck Kennett mentioned that there was a culvert that looked torn up, and potentially damaging to tires on West Rd.
    i. Rick said he would investigate it.

6. The SB began considering the Highway Capital Equipment Fund Expenditure;
    a. The C/T noted that this had been tabled at the prior meeting, and they had all received the quote information. The purchase of the new tandem truck would prevent cost increases from new EPA requirements, and Western Star would hold the truck for the Town for a year till the dump body was ready, and reset the warranty upon delivery. They had the best price out of the three quotes sought.
    b. It was noted that it was rare that the Town had the funds to make such a significant equipment purchase outright, with minimal debt.
        i. The C/T noted that after the trade in or sale of the 2019 Mack Tandem, the amount to finance should be approximately $50k. The Town will have retired a significant amount of debt service by that time.
        ii. It was also noted that the next piece of equipment to replace would be the loader.
    c. Teresa made a motion to utilize the Highway Capital Equipment Fund for the purchase of the 2026 Western Star with the given conditions, Reece seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
7. The SB began consideration of the updated 2026 Road and Bridge Standards;
    a. The C/T noted that the AoT had come out with some small updates to the Road and Bridge standards, and that those updated practices were already being practiced by Panton.
    b. Chuck Kennett asked about the bridge over Dead Creek
        i. Teresa responded that the bridge is in reasonable shape, but that a full upgrade to that bridge would be a significant funding challenge. The C/T added that it would most likely need a bond to accomplish it.
    c. Zach made a motion to approve the 2026 Road and Bridge Standards, Teresa seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
8. The SB began to consider a request from a resident for a guard rail;

a. The C/T stated that Claudia Allen had asked for this agenda item to be considered by the SB, and for the SB to consider putting a guardrail along Panton Rd in front of the old schoolhouse.
b. Rick stated that it would be an expensive piece of guardrail due to the length and location, and that it would have to be set back from the Right of Way for plowing purposes. He added that he had suggested stone blocks, set towards the back of the Right of Way, and that he would be happy to issue a permit for such an installation.
c. There was general discussion, and the SB took no action, suggesting that Rick's suggestion be given to the resident.

9. The SB began consideration of an Assistant Administrative Officer;
    a. The C/T stated that the Planning Commission had held a special meeting on 5/12, and had nominated the C/T to serve as the Assistant Administrative Officer. The C/T added that this would be helpful in cases of conflicts of interest, absences, and workload management. It was noted that the Ferrisburgh Clerk was also the Assistant Administrative Officer.
    b. It was noted that this was an area of consideration that the SB had discussed as a result of some of the pending litigation the Town was concerned with.
    c. It was noted that future special meetings should be better warned.
    d. Armando Martiniz noted that the appointment of the C/T didn't seem like a fix for this situation, as the C/T came from the perspective of municipal authority.
    e. Reece stated that this made him feel as though the allegations of conflict of interest weren't being taken seriously.
    f. Teresa added that it was difficult to find people for ZA/AO positions, and that may be an appropriate temporary fix.
    g. Continued discussion was held, and the SB generally agreed not to rush this, and asked the C/T to convey to the PC that additional names should be sought for this position.
10. The C/T gave his report;
    a. The Town Plan Pizza Party had moderate attendance, but lots of good discussions.
    b. The Arnold Bay Project is proceeding, and Panoramic Landscaping had been selected as the best fit contractor.
    c. The C/T had provided testimony to the Join House and Senate Transportation Committee at the Legislature, requesting additional municipal highway funds. It hopefully worked, as several pieces of legislation are under consideration that would do that. Additionally, the C/T provided testimony to the Senate Government Operations Committee on the Panton Charter Amendment. It passed the House, and was under further consideration in the Senate.
11. The SB began discussing the 2026 Panton Survey;
    a. The C/T discussed the results of the Panton Townwide survey.

b. Areas of interest covered included the support for road and highway maintenance, the reasonable amount of support for the 22A bypass, the support for reasonable changes to Town zoning, and the support of residential non-ground mounted solar, as well as ground mounted commercial solar between 0 and 25 acres.
c. There was general discussion on the survey.

12. The SB began consideration of the Town Building Maintenance Fund Expenditure- Purchase of Solar Panels;
    a. The C/T stated that the SB had already agreed to the buyout of the solar panels on the Highway Department Equipment shed. The cost of that buyout was $2500, which the Town hadn't budgeted. It was proposed that the new definition of the Town Building Maintenance Fund covered the purchase of these panels.
    b. It was noted that the Town would then own these panels out right, and replacements would be a cost to the Town, though potential warranties may apply.
    c. Teresa made a motion to allocate $2500 from the Town Building Maintenance Reserve Fund to purchase these panels, Robert seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
13. The SB began consideration of the Tier 1B Opt In;
    a. The C/T stated that the SB had asked for this item to be included on the agenda to finalize the conversation. The C/T had a chance to speak to the Lt. Governor about Act 181, and S. 325, the legislation that proposed the repeal of the Road Rule and Tier 3 designation, and other changes, and that the Lt. Governor had expressed support for the Tier 1A and 1B designations, as they reduced regulation for municipalities.
    b. It was also noted that the Land Use Review Board and Addison County Regional Planning removed the previous Tier 1B area, along Panton Rd, so the only area under consideration was the "Village Center", surrounding the Town Hall.
    c. A general discussion ensued on the applicability of Tier 1B to the selected parcels, and it was further noted that S. 325 gave municipalities the opportunity to opt in at later dates.
    d. The SB decided to take no action to opt in at this time, and wait for further development and review by the LURB and ACRPC.
14. The SB began consideration of the Fireworks Policy;
    a. The C/T stated that in 2023, the SB had almost approved a policy, and that Dave DiBiase, the Vergennes Fire Chief had been fielding calls regarding fireworks. It was noted that this policy would allow the Town to keep better track of fireworks, and ideally provide that those that were permitted were conducted by qualified operators, with notice given to neighbors.
    b. Reece asked if this was covered by the noise ordinance in the Zoning Regulations?

i. The C/T stated maybe, but it would require significant work on the part of the ZA/AO to handle those complaints.
ii. It was noted that while there were no penalties, it provided a level of accountability, and could be helpful, without being hurtful.
iii. Teresa made a motion to approve the Panton Fireworks Policy, and post notices several times prior to the 4th of July, Robert seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**

15. The SB began discussion of the Town Constable Policy;
    a. The C/T stated that this policy would just put in one place all the areas that the Town Constable has authority, and affirm that they are also able to perform other statutory, non-law enforcement duties. The Constable can already enforce all the ordinances listed, this is a policy in affirmation, and confirmation that the authority extends to the boundaries of Panton.
    b. It was noted that while Third Bridge is under the control of the State, and patrolled by Game Wardens and F+W personnel, the Town Constables could enforce the appropriate ordinances.
    c. Reece motioned to approve the Town Constable Policy, Teresa seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
16. The SB began discussing the Special Event Permit Request from Ghosthouse;
    a. The C/T noted that this is a permit approval for Ghosthouse and Agricola Farm, the same as previous permit applications. The C/T added that the SB could authorize a singular member to approve these permits, to prevent issues of timely application.
    b. There was genera discussion on how to accomplish this.
    c. Reece made a motion to approve this permit, Teresa seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
    d. Zach made a motion to allow a single member of the Selectboard to approve a permit for a reoccurring event provided there were no changes, and present it to the full SB at the next meeting, Reece seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
17. The SB began a review of the Budget to Actual and Balance Sheet;
    a. The C/T review the education tax liability, and the increase to tax revenue by the overestimation of the cost after “true up”. Specific budget lines were discussed, where it was generally noted that the Town is still is great financial shape, and the expenses are accruing normally. The C/T stated that hopefully the Town ends the Fiscal Year with a significant fund balance.
18. Armando Martinez again offered comments on the legal issues and the complaints he has made against the ZA/AO, and again asked the SB to provide information on those concerns.
19. The SB began to review AP/Payroll Warrants;

    a. General discussion regarding upcoming changes to education were discussed, as well as specific questions on invoices.
    b. Reece made a motion to approve the Payroll and AP warrants, Zach seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
20. Teresa made a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss ongoing litigation and contracts with neighboring municipalities at 8:04 p.m., Reece seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
21. Teresa made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 8:45 p.m., Reece seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**
    a. No decisions were taken in Executive Session
22. Reece made a motion to adjourn at 8:45 p.m., Teresa seconded-**VOTE-ALL IN FAVOR**