*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**
**September 23, 2024**

In attendance: Selectboard Chair Howard Hall, Selectboard Member Zach Weaver, Emergency Management Coordinator Bob Groff, Town Clerk & Treasurer Maggie McCormick, Kevin Cooke, Sharon Ashcraft, Cindy Cooke, Chuck Kennett, John Viskup, Mary Rudd, Jamie Dayton, Richard Jackson, Wendy Knight, Ben Chamberlain

Via Zoom: M'Lissa Dayton, Dave Hazel, Roger Kayser

1. Howard called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

2. Additions/deletions to the agenda: None.

3. Approval of the minutes of the August 26, 2024 and September 9, 2024 Selectboard meetings

Zach moved to accept the minutes of the August 26, 2024 meeting. Howard seconded. All in favor; the motion passed.

Approval of the September 9, 2024 minutes was tabled because Zach did not attend.

Mary Rudd requested that the presentation she gave at this meeting and Kevin Cooke's be added to the minutes. Maggie requested both send their presentations in electronic file and Howard stated the board would review and determine whether to include them.

4. Emergency Management Coordinator's report
    a. Bob attended the annual Vermont Emergency Management Conference
        i. Panton's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) was highlighted as an example of good planning.
        ii. Regional Planning Commissions will no longer develop LHMPs. Responsibility shifting to State.
    b. Bob completed an Emergency Capacity Survey that was aimed at towns with Emergency Response budgets of $10M.
    c. FEMA on-the-ground presence is Panton ended on September 19.
    d. FEMA has temporary offices in Hinesburg and Bristol

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5. Vergennes-Panton Water District Representative Vacancy
    a. Selectboard acknowledged receipt of Kathy Kennett's resume and asked the clerk to post the vacancy to Front Porch Forum again.

6. Conservation easement for Vorsteveld Farm at Pease and Arnold Bay
    a. Vorsteveld Farm needs an entity to hold a conservation easement for wetlands restoration on about 10 acres of their property at the corner of Pease Road and Arnold Bay Road.
    b. No large organizations (Sierra Club, Nature Conservancy, Vermont Land Trust, Middlebury Land Trust) are willing to hold the easement.
    c. Howard will call the Vorsteveld's attorney for more information.

7. Paying July Flood Bills—Emergency Fund, Project Fund
    a. Maggie read the article which established the "rainy day"/emergency fund voted at the 2015 Town Meeting as well as 24 VSA $2804. Neither calls for a vote from residents or the selectboard to expend money in the fund unless it is to be used for a purpose other than defined when the fund was set up.
    b. Maggie stated the Town must determine how to pay for the flood expenses.
        i. $63, 872 in flood-related expenses have been paid thus far.
        ii. The town currently has cash account balance of $261,501, which shows a deficit in Reserve Funds which total approximately $355,000.
        iii. Maggie completed cash flow worksheet in June and determined the Town would have enough cash for regular operations until the November 1 tax payments were received. Cash flow was unexpectedly reduced by the flood expenditures.
        iv. Maggie is investigating a Tax Anticipation Note and a Current Expense Note to ensure cash flow until November tax payments come in.

8. Replacing contracted lister
    a. Howard has opened a discussion with Will Benton of Benton Appraisers. Will is interested and will contact the clerk to discuss.

9. Vermont Public Records Act policy
    a. Howard continues to work on a policy with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns and expects to have draft for the next selectboard meeting.

10. Reschedule 10/14 Selectboard meeting (Indigenous Peoples' Day)
    a. The next Selectboard meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 16, 20204 at 5:30 at Panton Town Hall second floor and via Zoom as usual.

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11. Communications
    a. Maggie directed the board members to a list of the offerings at VLCT's Town Fair.
    b. Howard said the 5-Town group continues to work with VARS to create a viable ambulance service with seven full-time staff members.
        i. One Town will manage the finances.
        ii. Towns will pay according to population (per capita) with Panton's share to be about $50,000/year. The amount per Panton household would be approximately $125/year.
        iii. VARS would have an operational coordinator that would present VARS needs to the 5-Town board
        iv. Kathy Kennett asked if $50,000 is spent on fire and if this was an additional $50,000.
        v. John Viskup stated the Town is already over budget and asked if "we" could afford everything we wanted.
        vi. Howard asked if it was worth saving $20 on your tax bill if your loved one is on the ground.
        vii. Maggie stated that the ambulance service is paid for FY25, and the public would get to vote on the FY26 budget.

Decorum was lost and Howard departed at approximately 5:56 p.m. without adjourning the meeting. With the absence of a quorum, no further business was conducted.

Respectfully submitted,
Maggie McCormick
Town Clerk & Treasurer

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