

**TOWN OF RUTLAND SELECT BOARD OPEN MEETING  
HELD VIA PUBLICALLY ACCESSABLE CONFERENCE CALL LINE  
JANUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>, 2021**

Out of an abundance of caution around the covid-19 virus, this meeting was held via a conference call line which was made publicly available for anyone to call into.

- Meeting opened at 6:00 P.M.
- Board members present Mary Ashcroft, Sharon Russell, Joe Denardo, John Paul Faignant and Aaron Jones
- Members of the public present Ed Skwira, Chris Howland, Larry Dellveneri, Lydia Flynn, Andrew Simonds, Jim Scholtz, Marty Wasserman, and Senator-elect Joshua Terenzini.

Senator-elect Joshua Terenzini was present and read an award from the Governor of Vermont bestowed upon Select Board member Sharon Russell.

New Business Board to meet with the Town Auditor to discuss the audit

Andrew Simonds from AM Peisch was present to discuss results from the recent external audit of the town records. AM Peisch is independent of the town and not part of the town internal control structure. Reminded the board to review policies and procedures regularly. Draft copies of the audit were provided to board members. The format and wording were consistent with last year's report. There will be a reporting change for next year for the education property taxes. The report is dated December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and covers the period from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The town received an unqualified or clean opinion, which is the same as last year. Reviewed the fund basis financial statements. The town has maintained its cash to open fund balance. Discussed the restricted funds balances set aside for specific purposes including to pay the fire station bond payments. There is enough to cover FY 21 and FY 22 bond payments. The subsequent years budgets will need to include the debt payment amounts in the property tax calculations. Reviewed the budget to actual comparison. Overall, no issues were noted. Mr. Simonds stressed the importance of reviewing the budget to actual numbers monthly. Additional reports will be provided to board members in the near future.

Mr. Simonds thanked Kari and Susan for helping make the audit process go smoothly.

Ms. Russell moved to accept the report. Mr. Denardo seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0 and the audit report was adopted.

Approval of Orders

The Board will approve the order when they come into the office.

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Approval of Select Board Minutes for December 22<sup>nd</sup>:

- Mr. Fagnant moved to approve the minutes; Mr. Denardo seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

Bill Sweet Administrative Assistant to the Select Board:

1. Provided an updated meeting schedule and committee agenda items. Based on recommendations from the auditors, a review of the policies for the Clerk's office was added.
2. The town tax rate equalization report was received and provided to the board. We are at 100.02% which is near perfect for appraisals.

Kari Clark Rutland Town Clerk/Treasurer:

1. Congratulated Ms. Russell on her award.
2. Thanked Andrew for helping her through her first audit process.
3. Dog licensing is open now and it is time to register or renew. The deadline is in April. Paperwork can be mailed or left in the drop box at the front door.
4. The 2<sup>nd</sup> tax installment is due Monday January 11<sup>th</sup> by close of business. Anything after that will be late. About half of the tax payments have been received. Payments can be made online, in the mail or left in the drop box. Approximately half of the payments have been received so far.
5. Candidates for the March ballot have a deadline of January 25<sup>th</sup>. No signatures are required. Anyone needing a new article need a petition and those are due January 14<sup>th</sup>.
6. The language for the transfer station depreciation account has not been received back from the town attorney yet. We will need a draft of it for the next meeting. Kari has some wording and will provide it for review at the next meeting. It will be added to the next agenda.

Barbara Noyes-Pulling Rutland Town Planning Commission Chair:

1. Congratulated Ms. Russell on her recognition.
2. The Planning Commission did not meet over the holiday, their next meeting is this Thursday.
3. Discussed the agreement between the Select Board and the Regional Planning Commission. This was a \$13,500 grant with a 10% local match requirement of \$1,500 for a total of \$15,000.
  - a. The RRPC will provide services covered by this grant.
  - b. Ms. Russell moved to approve the agreement and authorize Ms. Ashcroft to sign on behalf of the board. Mr. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0.

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4. Some information on microgrants were provided to board members. They are designed to help with small transportation and recreation projects. This information will be provided to the School Board.

Mike Rowe Rutland Town Recreation Director:

1. Congratulated Ms. Russell on her award.
2. Basketball skills and drills for K to 6th grades should be starting in the next couple of weeks if no new restrictions are put into place.
3. Thanked GE for the donation of a shed and thanked the Highway department for helping him go and get it.

Byron Hathaway Rutland Town Road Commissioner:

1. Congratulated Ms. Russell on her award.
2. Winter maintenance has been going well.
3. Discussed the replacement of the small truck. If the process were started now, it would likely be September or October before a truck was delivered. The current truck has no warranty left as it is over 5 years old. Ms. Ashcroft asked if it was in the 5-years plan. Mr. Hathaway said they are typically rotated after 5 years to keep them in warranty. Ms. Russell was in favor of it. Ms. Ashcroft asked Mr. Hathaway to provide specs for a new truck.
4. Mr. Denardo asked if there was supposed to be a stop sign at Annette Terrace and Post Road. Mr. Hathaway said it was not required but will check the ordinance to see if it is listed and if it is needed, he will install one.
5. The Welcome to Rutland Town sign on Route 7 North was reset and secured.
6. The large arrow signs for Post Road / Post Road Extension have been received and will be installed soon.

Chris Clark Rutland Town Fire Chief:

1. No meetings are being held. A few calls have been handled.
2. The new truck is ready to be built and when a build date is communicated, it will be passed along.
3. Mr. Hathaway commented he had noticed there was a valve left on the hydrant behind the gym. Chief Clark said it is all set.

Ed Dumas Rutland Town Police Chief:

1. Congratulated Ms. Russell on her award.
2. Provided calls for service for all of 2020 to the board members. There has been an increase in theft calls in the Green Mountain Plaza and complaints at the Holiday Inn.

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3. Recently visited the Bridge Housing Project on Route 4 East. He tried to locate a site person. There was no one there but a phone number was posted. He called it and was only able to leave a message.
4. Asked the status of the use of force indemnity agreement. Ms. Ashcroft said language was received and will be circulated to all board members.

John Paul Fagnant Town Health Officer

1. Congratulated Ms. Russell on her award.
2. Asked everyone to stay vigilant with COVID-19 prevention.

Mr. Denardo asked if a dedication for the town report. Ms. Ashcroft said there are some ideas that have been suggested. It will be finalized in the next couple of weeks.

Ms. Ashcroft said preliminary scholarship information was given to herself and Ms. Russell for review. It will be finalized soon and posted for students to be able to complete.

Ms. Ashcroft asked if Casella's had a truck that was supposed to be washing the recycling containers out after they empty them. Transfer station manager Larry Dellveneri commented that they do have a truck, but they do not use it in the winter due to freezing issues.

Ms. Ashcroft commented on the information sent out by the Rutland Historical society and their recent publication which has a history tour of the area.

Ms. Ashcroft encouraged everyone who received information on the new broadband initiative to go online and comment on broadband availability in your area.

The new issue of the circle is out and should be in homes soon. There were several people involved in getting the latest issue out and Ms. Ashcroft thanked everyone involved.

Mr. Jones and Mr. Denardo congratulated Ms. Russell on her award.

Mr. Denardo asked for a highway committee meeting soon to discuss information on the proposed service road project which was ended.

Ms. Russell moved to adjourn. Mr. Denardo seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0 and the meeting adjourned at 6:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Mr. Bill Sweet

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Mary Ashcroft, Chair

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Joseph Denardo, Clerk

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John Paul Fignant

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Sharon Russell

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Aaron Jones

Center Rutland, VT.