

**TOWN OF RUTLAND SELECTBOARD OPEN MEETING  
RUTLAND TOWN MUNICIPAL TOWN HALL  
181 BUSINESS ROUTE 4, CENTER RUTLAND, VT 05736  
NOVEMBER 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

This meeting had a virtual attendance option available for anyone to join.

- Meeting opened at 6:00 P.M. with the pledge of allegiance
- Board members present Mary Ashcroft, Joe Denardo, Sharon Russell, John Paul Faignant and Don Chioffi
- Members of the public present Andy McMillan, Mary Beth Poli, Randall Smathers, Steve Wolf, Ed Carr, Michael Sternberg, Jim Scholtz, Lydia Flynn, Fred Nicholson, Keith Whitcomb, Chris Howland
- A moment of silence was held for Jesse Billings III, a former Selectboard member, who recently passed away.
- Selectman Chioffi thanked Selectwoman Russell for the thoughtful gift of a book and spoke about the importance of Veterans Day. Selectwoman Ashcroft thanked Selectman Chioffi for his military service.

Approval of Orders

The Board approved the orders.

Approval of Selectboard Minutes for October 26<sup>th</sup>:

Selectwoman Russell moved to approve the minutes. Selectman Faignant seconded the motion.

The motion passed 5 – 0.

New Business Board to meet with Randall Smathers from the Rutland Free Library

1. Randal Smathers introduced Joe Bertelloni who is the new Town representative to the Library Board. Anita Duch retired after 6 years of service. The Library Association votes on the town representatives.

2. Mr. Smathers provided a handout which outlined the cost and use of funds for the library.
3. They estimate there are 1400 Rutland Town users of the library, but exact numbers are not available.
4. Discussed whether to treat the library request as a separate ballot item or include it in the general budget and how the library determines residency for library cards.
  - a. Mr. Smathers said residency numbers are not exact between Town and City residents.
  - b. Selectman Chioffi asked for a list of library members who they believe are Rutland Town residents so the list can be crosschecked against our voter rolls.
  - c. Mr. Smathers said state statute does not allow the release of that information.
5. Selectman Chioffi stated he intends to introduce alternatives to the library funding structure.

New Business Board to meet with representatives for the Diamond Run Mall property to discuss security

1. Ed Carr was present to discuss security efforts at the property. Michael Sternberg, the property manager, and Steve Wolf from the Spartan Arena was also present.
2. A security system is active around the facility. It was successful in detecting unauthorized entry and led to the individuals being issued no trespass orders.
3. Discussed the benefit of word getting out about the new security system.
4. Numerous no trespassing signs have been installed.
5. Chief Dumas said their private security is able to issue no trespass notices and send them to our Police Department.
6. Discussed parking lot lights around the perimeter road for people visiting the Spartan Arena. An electrician is working on this issue. Several have already been turned on and they are looking for the source for others.

7. Discussed the plan to close off the southern entrance with concrete barriers. This is still under consideration and planning.
8. The instances of trespassing have greatly decreased.
9. Discussed the graffiti on the building. Plans are to eliminate as much as possible.

Mike Rowe Rutland Town Recreation Director:

1. The Halloween party went very well. There were over 130 kids participating.
2. The zero-turn mower went in to get evaluated for a cost to repair it.
3. The December senior luncheon is at Grace Church at 1130AM on December 7<sup>th</sup>.
4. The ice-skating rink at the school is being expanded. It was very well used last year.
5. Discussed the last Rec Committee meeting
  - a. We did not get the VOREC grant we applied for.
  - b. Discussed still moving forward with some of the projects, a proposal for 2 of the most beneficial items was provided. These are mountain biking trails and the pickle ball court
  - c. Director Rowe asked for \$80,000 from the capital improvement fund be used to complete these projects.
  - d. Selectwoman Russell moved to approve allocating \$80,000 from the Capital Improvement Fund for the projects. Selectman Chioffi seconded the motion. Discussed if there is a need for Act 250 review. Director Rowe will investigate this. The bike trails will be separate from the walking trails, with as few intersections as possible. The motion passed 5 – 0.

Chris Clark Rutland Town Fire Chief:

1. There is an application for a new member, from Flory Heights. He would be a junior member for several months.
  - a. He has passed the background checks.

- b. Selectman Denardo moved to approve. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
2. The current roster is now 29, with a goal of 50.
3. A Fire Committee meeting will be scheduled soon to review the budget proposals.

Byron Hathaway Rutland Town Road Commissioner:

1. The new truck is in service. The old truck is currently having some service work done. Commissioner Hathaway said it should be ready soon to be sold. Commissioner Hathaway recommended accepting bids, starting at \$25,000.
  - a. Selectwoman Russell moved to approve the recommendation. Selectman Denardo seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
2. A draft budget will be ready soon. Selectwoman Ashcroft encouraged the Highway Committee to set a meeting soon.
3. Provided grant documents which need to be signed.
  - a. Equipment grant, to obtain a new and larger compactor. A 20% of cost or \$800 match is required. Selectman Faignant moved to approve the application and to authorize the chair to sign on behalf of the board. Selectman Denardo seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
  - b. Better Back Road and Grants in Aid applications were provided. Selectman Faignant moved to approve both applications and to authorize the chair to sign on behalf of the board. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.

Ed Dumas Rutland Town Police Chief:

1. Introduced our new Full Time Police Officer, Jimmy Plakas.
2. Recent calls for service were provided.
3. Discussed the draft letter to be sent to Vermont Department of Children and Families regarding housing the homeless at the Holiday Inn.
  - a. Selectwoman Russell moved to approve sending the letter. Selectman Chioffi seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.

4. Discussed the letters of interest for the First Constable position. A special board meeting will be warned for Tuesday November 16<sup>th</sup> at 6PM for the purpose of meeting with the candidates.
5. Discussed the pan-handling issues on the south end of town. The Police will see if they can make an impact.

Barbara Pulling Rutland Town Planning Commission Chair:

1. Mary Beth Poli, who is also a Planning Commission member, discussed with the board the possibility of getting permission to move forward with putting the question of forming a Conservation Commission on the ballot.
  - a. Discussed some of the benefits of having this group formed.
  - b. Several Town residents have expressed an interest in serving.
  - c. Reviewed the previous discussion when this was brought to the board.

Selectman Chioffi said he felt the discussion has already been had and a decision made.
  - d. Selectwoman Ashcroft spoke in favor of forming this commission.
  - e. Selectman Faignant moved to not support forming the commission.

Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. After some discussion, the motion passed 3 – 1 with Selectwoman Ashcroft voting against the motion, and Selectman Denardo abstaining.
2. The Planning Commission has adopted its own set of rules of procedures for meetings.
3. Discussed the work on creating and updating ordinances.
  - a. Under consideration is noise, discussing livestock issues, looking at building permits, public assembly, ATVs and public nuisance.
4. A phone meeting is planned with Town Attorney Kevin Brown to discuss a recent Supreme Court decision relating to Act 250 and its possible impact on the Town.

Kari Clark Rutland Town Clerk and Treasurer:

1. Work on the audit is nearly complete. The reporting should be available soon.

Bill Sweet Administrative Assistant to the Selectboard:

1. Provided a letter to be signed for a new business in town, Mountainside Mutts.
2. A water connection request was received from Rob Stubbins for his property at 1456 Post Road. The permit is complete.
  - a. Discussed the recent water and sewer committee meeting.
  - b. The committee is recommending hiring Otter Creek Engineering to develop the specs and bid documents for extending the water line on Post Road.
  - c. Selectman Faignant moved to approve this recommendation. Selectman Chioffi seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
  - d. Selectman Chioffi moved to approve the water connection request. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.

A notice from the Town of Mendon was received regarding a meeting they will be holding regarding their Energy Plan. We received this because we are an adjoining municipality.

Efficiency Vermont sent information on rebates available for LED lighting. This will be shared with department heads.

There is a grant opportunity to get a water bottle filling station and up to \$1000 for install costs. This will be shared with department heads.

Reminder to all committee members to schedule meetings soon to work on department budgets.

New Business Board to meet with Transfer Station Manager Larry Dell Veneri regarding updating Transfer Station hours

1. Transfer Station Manager Dell Veneri was present and recommended to the board modifying the hours to the Transfer Station.
2. He is recommending shifting the hours on Wednesdays from 3PM to 7PM to become 2PM to 6PM due to very low usage after 6PM.

3. Selectman Fagnant moved to approve this recommendation. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
4. The new hours will take effect December 22<sup>nd</sup> and will be a permanent change.
5. Discussed holiday hours.
  - a. The Transfer Station will not be open on Saturday December 25<sup>th</sup>. They will open on Monday December 27<sup>th</sup> from 12PM to 6PM. Selectman Fagnant moved to approve this recommendation. Selectwoman seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
  - b. There will be no change to the hours on New Years Day.

Discussed forming the committee for updating the Town Hall War Memorial. Selectwoman Ashcroft circulated a document to board members detailing committee members and goals. Selectwoman Russell moved to approve forming this committee. Selectman Chioffi seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.

Discussed the appointed position of Town Tree Warden. Commissioner Hathaway currently holds this position but will not continue after the end of this year. Fred Nicholson has agreed to take over in this role. Selectwoman Russell moved to appoint Fred Nicholson. Selectman Chioffi seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0. The appointment will stand until after Town Meeting Day.

Selectwoman Russell moved to adjourn. Selectman Chioffi seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Mr. Bill Sweet

11/9/2021

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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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Don Chioffi

Center Rutland, VT.