

**TOWN OF RUTLAND SELECTBOARD OPEN MEETING
RUTLAND TOWN MUNICIPAL TOWN HALL
181 BUSINESS ROUTE 4, CENTER RUTLAND, VT 05736
MARCH 29th, 2022**

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 Don Chioffi, Mary Ashcroft, Joe Denardo, Sharon Russell, and Kurt Hathaway
- Members of the public present Jim Scholtz, Keith Whitcomb, Matt Voity, Marcia Chioffi, Robyn Sweet, Howard Burgess, Michael Robichaud, Andres Torizzo and Shelley Dumas
- Chairman Chioffi asked for a moment of silence for Mary Ann Justin who passed away recently.
- Selectwoman Russell asked that former Road Commissioner Byron Hathaway be kept in prayers while he is recovering at a hospital in Burlington.
- Selectwoman Ashcroft congratulated Town resident Tristan Stute who recently earned the rank of Eagle Scout. Tristan has helped with several projects around Town in working towards this achievement.

Approval of Orders

The Board approved the orders.

Approval of Selectboard Minutes for March 15th:

Selectman Denardo moved to approve the minutes. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. There was one clerical change to the minutes. The motion passed 4 – 0.

Questions from the Floor / Public Comment

1. Michael Robichaud asked about the status of the Post Road water line extension project. This project has plans to be able to bring a municipal water connection to his house.
 - a. Mr. Robichaud has been reaching out to get status updates, but a committee meeting has not been held recently.
 - b. Selectman Hathaway, who is a member of the Water and Sewer Committee, plans to meet with Mr. Robichaud one on one soon.
 - c. A meeting of the full committee will be scheduled as soon as additional information about the project is available.
 - d. Selectman Denardo said this was discussed at a recent Highway/Rec meeting. The project is going out to bid.

2. Marty Wasserman, Town Emergency Management Director reviewed the draft copy of the Local Emergency Management Plan.
 - a. We need to have the plan approved and signed at the April 12th meeting so it can be submitted on time.
 - b. This will be added to the next agenda.
3. Andres Torizzo, from Watershed Consulting, reviewed the reports submitted to the board regarding the annual MS4 report, due at the end of this week.
 - a. This represents the required work that is being done for the town.
 - b. Selectwoman Russell moved to approve signing off on the annual report and to authorize Chairman Chioffi to sign on behalf of the board. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion.
 - c. The motion passed 4 – 0.
 - d. Selectwoman Ashcroft asked what percentage of the targets set for the Town has been met. Mr. Torizzo said he will compile a report, showing the various requirements and the progress made, and make it available to the Board for a future meeting.

New Business Board to review Town Officials list and discuss filling any positions needed by appointment

1. Jim Hall, who has served in a variety of capacities for the Town, has been our Transportation Council Alternate member, and is interested in the Regional Board of Commissioners as well, but felt he could not do both. Selectwoman Russell moved to appoint Mr. Hall to the Regional Board of Commissioners. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 – 0.
2. The Road Commissioner position will be updated to reflect Walter Tripp as the Acting Road Commissioner.
3. Planning Commission Chair Barbara Pulling was asked to poll the Planning Commission members to see if any of them would be interested in filling the Alternate Role for the Regional Board of Commissioners.
4. Discussed the Transportation Advisory Council appointment. Jim Hall has served as the alternate for some time, but the regular position is vacant.
 - a. The position has traditionally been held by the Road Commissioner.
 - b. Selectman Denardo said he would fill the position until a new Road Commissioner is appointed, and then they can take over. Selectwoman Russell moved to appoint Selectman Denardo to the position. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion. The motion passed 3 – 0 with Selectman Denardo abstaining.
5. Discussed the balance of the appointments needed.
 - a. The Solid Waste Alliance Community representative is Larry Dell Veneri
 - b. The Solid Waste Alliance Community Alternate representative is Bill Bauer
 - c. The Regional Transportation Council Alternate rep is Jim Hall
 - d. The Weigher of Coal is Israel Mac
 - e. The Tree Warden is Fred Nicholson

- f. The Pound Keeper is Paul Williams
 - g. The Inspector of Wood is Byron Hathaway
 - h. The Fence Viewers are Steve Russell, Charles Hemenway and Howard Burgess
 - i. Selectman Denardo moved to reappoint all these individuals. Selectwoman Ashcroft seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 – 0.
6. Chairman Chioffi discussed a discrepancy in the stipends paid for various positions. The Regional Ambulance Service Representative is the only position not approved for a stipend currently. Representatives are reimbursed at \$39.44 per meeting.
 - a. Selectwoman Russell moved to approve a stipend for the Regional Ambulance Service Representative. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 – 0.
7. Chairman Chioffi recommended providing an additional stipend amount for the Board Clerk, since he will be asked to assist with additional items, as well as running the meeting in the absence of the Chair.
 - a. Chairman Chioffi said he would like to add an additional \$500 to the Clerks stipend.
 - b. Selectwoman Russell moved to approve the request. Selectwoman Ashcroft seconded the motion. Chairman Chioffi anticipates some savings in Selectboard reimbursement since he has assigned only 1 Board member to several of the committee assignments, instead of the traditional 2.
 - c. Board members are still allowed to attend any committee meeting they like. The Chair of each committee is responsible for running their committee.
 - d. Discussed some of the additional responsibilities of the Board Clerk, up to and including running the meeting in the absence of the Board Chair.
 - e. The motion passed 4 – 0.

Chairman Chioffi reviewed the list of Committee Assignments he has set for this coming year. Selectwoman Russell will replace Chairman Chioffi on the Scholarship committee. There were no other changes made. Selectwoman Ashcroft expressed concern about only 1 Board member assigned to certain committees and felt 2 members helps the discussion process be more efficient during Committee and subsequent Board meetings.

Discussed Board member participation during Committee meetings they are not assigned to. They would be considered a member of the public. Chairman Chioffi stated their participation in those meeting would be treated just like public participation at Board meetings. They would be able to add something at the start of the meeting but would not be able to participate during the meeting. Selectman Chioffi added it would be up to the Chair of the Committee to allow any public participation beyond the beginning of the meeting. Chairman Chioffi said if this format and structure does not work, he would look into changing it.

New Business Board to Review for Approval the VLCT Safety Grant application from the Town Police

1. The Police are submitting a grant to acquire mobile scanners and printers for all our police officers for use on traffic stops. This will make traffic stops shorter and more efficient.
2. The grant is in the amount of \$5474.64 and is 100% reimbursable.
3. Selectwoman Russell moved to approve the grant and to authorize Chairman Chioffi to sign on behalf of the Board. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 – 0.

New Business Board to review for readoption, the Town Purchasing Policy

1. Selectman Denardo moved to readopt the Purchasing Policy. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion.
2. Reviewed the spending limits, as they have not been adjusted in several years.
3. Discussed adding language to the policy to eliminate the need for recurring adoption.
4. A sentence stating “this policy will remain in effect until amended or modified by a subsequent Selectboard” will be added to the policy.
5. The motion passed 4 – 0.

Chairman Chioffi asks that people participating in the meeting limit their phone use during meetings to emergencies only to allow everyone to focus on the meeting.

Kari Clark Rutland Town Clerk and Treasurer:

1. Reminder that dog license applications are due by Friday April 1st.
2. New tabulator ballot boxes have arrived, the new tabulators will be coming soon.
 - a. There is training scheduled on May 5th. The office will need to be closed by 11AM so the Clerk and Assistant Clerk will be able to attend.
3. Discussed the approved reimbursement toward town officials wireless phone bills. Treasurer Clark asked for anyone who qualifies for the reimbursement, and would like to receive it, to provide a copy of their wireless bill showing the pay for their own service.
 - a. The reimbursement will be paid in 2 installments, once every 6 months.
4. Corrections have been made to our accounts with the money from the settlement, the left-over bond money and the Sutton account.
5. The process to move the funds for the Rutland Town Seniors over to TD Bank is being discussed.
6. A reporting deadline for the ARPA funds is coming up soon. We will be able to designate all the funds we were granted as lost revenue, per the guidance. Discussed a requirement coming up for us to report the funds as lost revenue during the month of April. Some information from VLCT just came out regarding this and will be reviewed at a future meeting.

Barbara Pulling Rutland Town Planning Commission Chair:

1. Provided a design map of the proposed Pocket Park.
 - a. Shared a PowerPoint presentation regarding the park and included the 16 suggestions from the meetings that have been held so far.
 - b. There are some VTrans rights of way that cover a significant portion project area. A meeting is planned tomorrow morning at the local VTrans office to discuss these rights of way, if they are an obstacle, and what permits will be needed.
 - c. Town Lister Howard Burgess will plan to attend the VTrans meeting as well.
2. The energy survey, developed by the Planning Commission, will be shared with the new Selectboard Energy Committee. Selectwoman Ashcroft plans to attend the upcoming Planning Commission meeting on Thursday evening to discuss.

Ed Dumas Rutland Town Police Chief:

1. Recent calls for service were provided and reviewed.
2. Based on a recent meeting regarding planned regional dispatch centers, a letter of support was drafted and presented to the Board for their signatures. The Board read the letter and made some clerical changes.
 - a. Chief Dumas will forward this to other Selectboards around the county in the hopes they draft their own copies to send to our county representatives.
 - b. Selectman Denardo moved to approve the letter as corrected and to send it out. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 – 0.
3. The Child First Advocacy Center has asked permission to put a pinwheel garden out front of Town Hall in recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month, which is April.
 - a. Selectwoman Ashcroft moved to approve the request and to authorize a \$100 donation from the Town to CFAC. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 – 0.
4. Discussed the status of the Cortina Inn.
 - a. Chief Dumas reported there are discussions going on about designating the facility a homeless shelter.
 - b. With the help of our Town Health Officer, the backdoor has been fixed.
 - c. Rutland Mental Health reported to Chief Dumas their service is at their maximum capacity.
 - d. Discussed the implications of designating the facility as a wet shelter.
 - This would likely need Act 250 review as a change of its permitted use.
 - There is a loss of rooms and meals tax.
 - There is a loss of free hotel rooms for tourism.
 - The Cortina Inn has 150 rooms, of which 136 are occupied
 - There is an additional cost to the school system.
 - So far there has been no requests for input from the Town
 - Discussed the need for impact fees, to help hire more police officers

- Selectwoman Ashcroft suggested having our Town School and Town Department Heads put together data related to this proposed change and how it would affect the town so, if an Act 250 hearing is held, the data would be ready to be presented.
 - Selectwoman Russell discussed her strong objections to the plans for this facility. It could become dangerous in the area due to the type of people staying there.
 - The Act 250 process could be different depending on if this change is deemed a minor or a major change.
 - Discussed establishing a special committee of the whole to be able to meet on this specific topic.
- e. Selectman Denardo moved to authorize the Board Chair to contact our Town Attorney and discuss this issue with him. Following that meeting, a special meeting could be scheduled. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 – 0.

The board recessed the meeting from 8:23 PM to 8:28 PM.

Chris Clark Rutland Town Fire Chief and Larry Dell Veneri Rutland Town Assistant Fire Chief

1. There have been 2 calls for service recently.
2. The radios have been ordered that are being funded by the grant we were awarded. The funds will come from depreciation in order to pay for them and when we are reimbursed, the account will be credited back.
3. The inspection of our new truck is coming up soon. Two members are traveling to see the truck,

Walter Tripp Acting Town Road Commissioner and Jason Bathalon Acting Town Sewer Commissioner

1. The chipper damaged in a recent accident is being repaired at Earles Truck Repair. The timeline to complete the repair is not known.
2. Two signs alerting traffic of horses with riders in the road have been installed on Cold River Road.
3. A flagger recertification course is occurring April 5th in West Rutland they will be attending.
4. A letter was sent to the residents on Connor Drive that own a tree that is partially blocking line of sight. They have not responded to it.
5. Meter readings for Flory Heights will be taken soon. There is one house where the reader is covered by another utilities box, and the reader is inaccessible. After some discussion, a letter will be sent to them asking for assistance in relocating it.

Mike Rowe Rutland Town Recreation Director:

1. The Act 250 amendment application for Northwood Park should be ready for review at the next meeting.
2. Work on the pickle ball courts is nearly complete.
3. New nets for the tennis courts are ready to be installed once the weather is good.

4. Baseball signups are ongoing for grades K – 6.
5. The water bottle filling station awarded to us in a grant has come in, installation is pending.
6. Discussed the schedule of locking the main gate at night. First Constable Faignant said the gate is locked at night from April 1st through November 1st.

John Paul Faignant Town Health Officer

1. Reported on the Cortina Inn back door issue. A follow up inspection is planned, but he has been informed the back door has been secured.

Bill Sweet Administrative Assistant to the Selectboard:

1. The deadline for a petition to be filed opposing the repeal of the Driving While Operating a Handheld Electronic Device has passed. The ordinance will be officially repealed on April 2nd.
2. The updated job posting for the Road Commissioners position has been published. The application is available on our website.
3. Provided a copy of the full list of committee agenda items.
4. Provided an additional safety grant application, to supplement the one for the Police Department. This would be for a surveillance system for the Town Highway Garage.
 - a. Selectman Denardo moved to approve the application. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 – 0.
5. Quotes were received from 2 vendors for the electrical work at Town Hall. The quotes and a comparison between the 2 vendors were provided. This will be referred to the building committee.
6. The contract we had for lawnmowing has expired. A draft RFP was provided. Discussed asking the vendor who has done it previously about continuing. They will be contacted to see if they would like to renew the contract.
7. The Dufresne Group updated us on their work on the Route 7 North Sidewalk scoping study.
 - a. They are getting closer to the public meeting date.
 - b. They will provide us with a draft report when they are ready to send the project information to VTrans. VTrans needs to review it and issue comments. This can take several weeks. Once the comments are received, the Dufresne Group will need to respond.
 - c. Once that is done, they should be ready for the public hearing soon after that, likely early May.
8. Discussed a driveway access permit, filed for a residence on Grover Drive. The application was submitted after the home was occupied. This should have been filed before construction. After some discussion the permit will be approved.
9. Wulnick Properties has submitted their supplemental application for sewer discharge capacity. This is to bring their allocation up to the actual usage. Selectman Denardo moved to approve the request. Selectwoman Russell seconded the request. After a brief discussion, the motion passed 4 – 0.

10. We recently became aware of a grant opportunity through the office of Peter Welch. It would be funding which could offset costs of the new Public Safety Building. There will be additional information at the next meeting.

Committee meeting updates:

1. Selectman Denardo reported on the recent Highway / Rec Committee meeting.
 - a. The Shared Use Path was most of the discussion. It will be planned to be put out to bid, with the approval of the board.
 - b. Robert Clark, from Otter Creek Engineering told the committee it should not cost more than \$3000 for the bid work.
 - c. Selectman Denardo moved to approve Otter Creek Engineering put the project out to bid, for a fee not to exceed \$3000. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 – 0.

Selectwoman Russell moved to enter executive session for a personnel matter. Selectman Hathaway seconded motion. The motion passed unanimously. The board entered executive session at 9:03 PM.

Upon leaving executive session, Selectwoman Russell moved to enter a letter of reprimand into the file of the Town Administrator. Selectman Denardo seconded the motion. The motion passed with Board Chairman Chioffi, Selectwoman Russell and Selectman Denardo voting for the motion. Selectwoman Ashcroft voted against the motion. Selectman Hathaway abstained.

A liquor license was presented for approval from Sandri Sunoco on US Route 7 South. The Police Chief had no problem with it. Selectwoman Russell moved to approve the application. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 – 0.

Selectwoman Russell moved to adjourn. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Mr. Bill Sweet

Don Chioffi, Chair

Joseph Denardo, Clerk

Mary Ashcroft

Sharon Russell

Kurt Hathaway

Center Rutland, VT.