

**TOWN OF RUTLAND SELECT BOARD OPEN MEETING
RUTLAND TOWN MUNICIPAL TOWN HALL
181 BUSINESS ROUTE 4, CENTER RUTLAND, VT 05736
JANUARY 30th, 2024**

- The meeting opened at 6:00 P.M. with the pledge of allegiance.
- Board members present Mary Ashcroft, Joe Denardo, Sharon Russell, Kurt Hathaway, and Matt Getty
- Members of the public participating Joe Anthony, Michael Sternberg, Sydney Thompson, Lyle Jepson and Marty Wasserman

Approval of Orders

The Board approved the orders.

Approval of Select Board Minutes for January 16th:

Selectman Getty moved to approve the minutes. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 4 – 0. Selectman Hathaway abstained.

Update from the Select Board Chair

1. The total solar eclipse in April is not expected to have a large impact on visitors or traffic in Rutland County.
2. State Representative Paul Clifford reached out regarding our contract with The Cortina. A copy was provided to him.
3. Our Bond Counsel has sent an invoice for services. The Town was approved for the bond. A packet of information will be coming.
4. Former Town employee Joe Zingale was seriously injured in an accident. The board sends their best wishes.

Board to meet with Joe Anthony, Diamond Run Mall property owner.

1. At the invitation of the Board, Mr. Anthony is present to discuss the plans for the former Diamond Run Mall property.
2. There is a retailer who is interested in developing the property but due to confidentiality, Mr. Anthony was not able to share any details. He expects to be able to in the next month.
3. In addition to a large retailer, a hotel and a housing developer are also looking at the site.
4. Discussed security issues at the property. A private security company has been hired to monitor the property by camera.

5. Discussed any possible issues Act 250 would need to address. Mr. Anthony said they expect to file for some amendments.
6. The Board invited Mr. Anthony to come back any time to give the Board an update.

Question from the Floor / Public Comment

Lyle Jepson, from the Chamber of Economic Development for the Rutland Region was present to give an update on the housing initiatives being put forth in the region. February 9th at 830AM at their office on Merchants Row is a meeting with VHFA to present options for low interest financing for development projects.

David Sears Rutland Town Road Commissioner:

1. Reported on recent storms and clean up efforts.
2. 1236 tons of salt has been purchased this year. There is \$4300 left in the budget. Contractors have been called out 23 times this season.

Board Chairs Ashcroft asked Department heads to review their budget status sheets when they meet with their committees.

Marcia Chioffi Rutland Town Head Lister

1. The 2023 as billed list has been finalized and locked.
2. Discussed the draft contract for business personal property valuation services. This will be discussed in executive session at the end of the meeting.

Kari Clark Rutland Town Clerk and Treasurer:

1. Ballots for the primary election will be available soon. Absentee ballot requests must include the party the voter wishes to have a ballot for.
2. Provided liquor licenses for approval.
 - a. The Maple Angus, 1st class restaurant and bar license.
 - b. Jolley Associates, Tobacco substitute, tobacco license, and 2nd class liquor license.
 - c. The Police Chief had no issues with these.
 - d. Selectman Getty moved to approve the licenses. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
3. This time of year brings a lot of requests for copies of property tax bills for residents filing their taxes. The tax bills are available on the Town website. All the information needed to file taxes is included.
4. The ability to have property taxes paid by direct debit is now available. All the information needed is available on the Town Treasurer page on the town website.

5. The Town Clerks office will be closed Friday, February 9th.
6. Select Board Chair Ashcroft thanked Kari for her work on the successful bond application for the Public Safety Building bond funds.
7. The warning was signed pending any new appropriation requests coming in. None have so the signed warning was the final one.

Mike Delehanty Town 1st Constable

1. Provided pictures of the building at 118 US Route 4 East. It appears it was recently struck and is structurally unsafe.
2. The property is owned by John Ruggerio.
3. Constable Delehanty will reach out to him about the building.

Ed Dumas Rutland Town Police Chief:

1. Recent calls for service were provided and discussed.
2. Calls on the South end of Town are increasing again.
3. The speed signs for the school zone are in and should be up soon.

John Paul Faignant Town Health Officer / 2nd Constable / Public Safety Building Clerk

1. Building construction is moving along on schedule.
2. Requested the purchase of a new bullet proof vest be approved with funds to come from the Cortina Inn funds. He participates in patrols related to The Cortina Inn. After discussion, Selectman Denardo moved to approve the request. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.

Barbara Pulling Rutland Town Planning Commission Chair:

1. The Post Road solar project application is working through its process. They are working on a MOU with the state regarding archeologically sensitive areas.
2. The Regional Planning Commission is working on updating the regional plan. A survey has been created to help gather feedback. Flyers are available at Town Hall, and the survey link is online.

Mike Rowe Rutland Town Recreation Director:

1. The skating rink at the school has not worked out so far this winter. It has yet to freeze completely.
2. Basketball is close to being over.
3. Camps for February break are being put together.

Bill Sweet Town Administrator:

1. Provided a draft Fraud Prevention Policy based on the recommendation of our auditor. VLCT had a model policy, which was updated to reflect our Towns information. Two points of contact need to be added. After discussion, Selectman Denardo moved to adopt the policy and have the Select Board Chair, and the Town Grand Juror be the points of contact.
Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
2. Provided proposals from Rob Stubbins Electric for upgrade work and EV Charging station installations at Town Hall, the cost of which would largely be covered by a grant.
 - a. The grant award covers the expenses in 2 categories. They provide up to \$20,000 for upgrades, and 95% of the cost of the charger installation.
 - b. Selectman Denardo recommends accepting the proposal for the upgrades regardless, as it is needed to do the work downstairs.
 - c. Several vendors were contacted but this was the only one who was able to give us a complete cost for the project.
 - d. Selectman Denardo moved to approve the electrical upgrade proposal for \$38959.43. The funds would come from building maintenance or capital improvements. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
 - e. Selectman Denardo moved to accept the EV Charging station proposal for \$47,281.65 for the purpose of applying for grant funds. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
3. Marty Wasserman was present and discussed plans to maintain various Town flower beds. The Board discussed including funding for these projects next time we plan budgets.
4. Discussed the use of Town Hall as a shelter location. There is a misconception about the use of the buildings. There are no intentions or plans to use them for homeless housing. The intention is for a temporary warming shelter for Town residents. Overnight accommodation would be coordinated with the Red Cross at one of their designated locations.
5. The generators around town have all had their fuel tanks refilled. They all ran at one point or another during some of the recent storms. Discussed moving the cost of installing the generator at the Highway garage from the generator maintenance line to the highway garage maintenance line. The Board was in favor of this.
6. A municipal project manager for the Route 7 North sidewalk needs to be selected. The State has different options. If we use a Town employee, their costs would be submitted as part of our in-kind match.
7. There have been some layout and function upgrades to the website.
8. The VLCT Safety grant program is available again.

9. The Town report has been sent to the printer and is ready to be mailed once the check for postage is received. After it was sent to the printer, it was realized a page was not sent to them. The page with the total town budget was left out. The page will be included in the digital copy which will be available online. The missing page will be printed and available at Town Hall. The copies mailed home will not have it. A message will be put out online notifying residents and the page will be made available.
10. The Town of Clarendon has reached out again regarding Quarterline Road maintenance. They are asking for the rate the Town would be willing to pay if they did the maintenance on that section of Quarterline Road. The Highway Committee will see if a meeting can be scheduled early next week to discuss this.

Board to hold deliberative session on Dyer Road.

1. Selectman Denardo moved to throw up the Dyer Road property. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion.
2. Reviewed reasons for giving up the road.
 - a. It serves no residences or buildings.
 - b. The road cannot be gated which could help stop illegal dumping activities.
 - c. The Town could incur considerable costs for removal of illegally dumped materials.
 - d. It is a Class 4 road so there is maintenance obligation which only has a benefit to the 1 landowner.
 - e. The property would not lose access as there is a frontage to the South on Middle Road.
 - f. The road would not provide good truck traffic access due to the turning radius requirement.
3. Reviewed the survey map provided to Selectman Denardo by an agent of the property owner. It was done by Roberts and Franzoni Surveying and is dated May 13th, 2005.
 - a. The property line runs along the outside edge of the current roadway. Abutting property owners were notified of the Boards intention to throw up this road.
 - b. The road is inside the property line of the surveyed property.
4. The motion carried 5 – 0. Dyer Road will be removed from our Town Highway list.

Board to review bids received for lawn care services and discuss awarding the contract.

1. Bids received were from Intrinsic Property Services, Nicholas Kapusta, Haven Hill Property Management, Central Vermont Property Management, Gallipo Landscaping, and Clarks Seasonal Impact.
2. The bids were not received in one consistent format so a detailed review will need to be done. This will be provided to the Board for the next meeting.

Committee meeting updates:

1. Reviewed the recent personnel committee meeting. Information should be available for the full Board to review at a meeting soon.

Received a letter from Josh Terenzini, former State Representative and Select Board Chair, asking the Board to see if there was anything the Board could do to help the Evergreen Cemetery who is facing a budget crisis. Board members discussed past efforts to help without directly providing funds. Some Board members will reach out to the Cemetery Board.

Selectman Denardo moved to enter executive session to discuss a proposed contract. Town Lister Marcia Chioffi and Town Lister Marie Fagnant will attend. Selectman Getty seconded the motion. The Board entered executive session at 8:44 PM.

Upon leaving executive session, with no action being taken, Selectman Getty moved to adjourn. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Bill Sweet, Town Administrator.

Mary Ashcroft, Chair

Joseph Denardo, Clerk

Sharon Russell

Kurt Hathaway

Matt Getty

Center Rutland, VT.