

**TOWN OF RUTLAND SELECT BOARD OPEN MEETING
RUTLAND TOWN MUNICIPAL TOWN HALL
181 BUSINESS ROUTE 4, CENTER RUTLAND, VT 05736
SEPTEMBER 10th, 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

Approval of Orders

The Board approved the orders.

Approval of Select Board Minutes for August 27th:

Selectman Denardo moved to approve the minutes. Selectman Getty seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.

Update from the Select Board Chair

Articles for The Circle are due by September 15th.

Board to meet with State officials from DCF to discuss the homeless housing program.

DCF Commissioner Chris Winters and Deputy Commissioner Miranda Gray were present for the discussion. Ms. Gray is in charge of the economic services.

Reviewed a previous discussion where the State was considering entering into a lease with The Cortina Inn. This plan is no longer being considered. The State is encouraging municipalities to enter into agreements, like the Town has, with facilities in their communities.

Deputy Commissioner Gray said, based on a recent visit by State officials, no new placements are being approved. This is due to the number of complaints, and the condition of the hotel. The Food and Lodging division has an abatement order in effect with clear steps, by room. The Town Health Officer was not included in this visit. A copy of the report was requested.

September 19th is when households will reach the 80-day limit in the new law. This is separate from December 1st to March 31st, when the adverse weather conditions exemptions apply.

There are 353 households in the program in Rutland. Cortina Inn specific numbers were not available.

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There are 85 households anticipated to hit the 80-day limit on the 19th.

Options for a long-term solution are being researched. An existing site which could be adapted for housing is preferred.

Selectwoman Russell discussed options for construction of tiny houses, and helping people change their situations.

The Board asked who should be called if people are found to be camping without landowners permission, and they need help. Commissioner Winters suggested contacting local service providers such as BROCC and End Homelessness Vermont.

There is an initiative to identify vacancies in mobile home parks, and using FEMA trailers for housing, provide a longer term solution.

The Commissioner was asked to return in a few months to discuss this again.

Question from the Floor / Public Comment

David Rosenblum, the Town representative to the Regional Board of Commissioners, was present. The Commission is meeting soon and requested any topics the Town would like discussed.

Marty Wasserman Town Emergency Management Director

1. Reviewed the progress on updating our Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.
2. It is important to the Town, as it affects our reimbursement level for federally declared disasters.
3. There is some public outreach to be done, and a timeline for the work.
4. We expect the plan to be submitted for approval in February of 2025.

Chris Clark Rutland Town Fire Chief:

1. Presented an application for a new member. They live in Mendon. He has passed all the preliminary processes. There is capacity for the out of town member. Selectman Denardo moved to approve the application. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
2. Discussed the gear washer and dryer which were approved at the last meeting. The washer was ordered and will be delivered soon. In the time since the dryer was originally quoted, until it was approved, the manufacturer changed the dimensions, and it will not fit. This is the only option the vendor had available. A search for a compatible dryer is underway. Discussed the process to approve the purchase. Quotes were requested.

3. Only 1 person is interested in purchasing the old pickup truck. The asking price is \$6000. Selectman Denardo moved to approve selling the 1993 Ford F350 to Chief Clark for \$6000. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.

Ed Dumas Rutland Town Police Chief:

1. Recent calls for service were provided and reviewed.
2. There have been a lot of complaints about homelessness near the Spartan Arena. The mall owner will be attending the next Board meeting. The manager of the Spartan Arena will be invited as well.
3. There have been some animal complaints at The Cortina Inn, but management has been handling the issues.
4. It does not appear the back door security monitoring and alarms are active yet.

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

1. Traffic, and speed, has increased on secondary roads since the reconfiguration in the city. Speed on 7 North is averaging 52 MPH in a 40 MPH zone. Enforcement is being done, but there is not enough manpower to monitor constantly.
2. Discussed the underground water tank at the Public Safety Building. Tanks in other buildings had developed some leaks. Discussed remedies to prevent this. It will be discussed with the contractor at their next meeting.

Barbara Pulling Rutland Town Planning Commission Chair:

1. The pocket park project may be able to move forward soon with the progress GMP has made with its relicensing. There was a question on the remaining archeological significance on site. It is likely anything remaining is small. The state may be involved again depending on circumstance.
2. Discussed the draft Subdivision ordinance which has been under review by the Town Attorney. Since its adoption several decades ago, there has been substantial legislative changes which may require a larger rewrite than what was already done.
3. Discussed establishing a village center in town. The Planning Commission was asked to discuss this.

David Sears Rutland Town Road Commissioner:

1. A reimbursement request for the Post Road sidewalk will be ready soon. We have a 50% match which will include in-kind costs. Our costs will cover this amount.
2. Reviewed several maintenance tasks completed recently.

3. The Board detailed some areas where dumping has occurred. Discussed clean up and preventative remedies.
4. Discussed correspondence from residents on Hitzel Terrace regarding the possibility of a culvert being plugged. The culvert was checked by the Highway department and was not obstructed. The resident was still concerned. At the request of the Road Commissioner, the Fire Department used hose lines to run water through the culvert. It ran very well, no obstructions were noted. The State of Vermont contacted the town asking about culvert maintenance. After these efforts, Commissioner Sears followed up with the State and they had no further concerns. While on Hitzel Terrace, the highway crew noted excavation work which ran across the road. No excavation permit was received. The resident concerned with the obstruction came outside during the time the Fire Department was there. He spoke with Bill Sweet and told him the work was done, but he was not sure by whom. He told Mr. Sweet the Fire District had permission to do this work without notifying the Town. A letter was sent to the resident requesting a copy of this agreement. Correspondence was received from the residents saying they do not have a copy of this agreement, and Mr. Sweet must have misheard and asked for further communication to go to the Fire District address directly. A letter requesting a copy of this agreement will be sent to the Fire District address.

Board Chair Ashcroft followed up on the need for our newly appointed Town Lister to run in the next election. Based on information received from the Town Clerk, the appointee has to run in the next annual meeting, which would be town meeting in March. This will need to be added to the 2025 Town meeting.

Bill Sweet Town Administrator:

1. Two letters were drafted for the Board to sign. One is a welcome letter to the new Eco Car Wash business; the other letter is congratulating one of our Road Crew members on their new baby.
2. Stantec approved the contract for work on the Route 7 North sidewalk. A new copy for the Chair to sign is available. Stantec is also adding 2 additional members to their project team. Forms approving this update are also included. Selectman Denardo moved to approve the documents and to authorize the Chair to sign on behalf of the Board. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
3. The concrete work at Town Hall has been completed.

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Selectman Denardo moved to enter executive session to discuss a personnel matter and to hear advice from Town Counsel. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0. The Board entered executive session at 7:48 PM.

Upon leaving executive session at 8:36 PM, Selectman Getty moved to, in conformance with the Personnel Policy, authorize the Police Department to extend an offer of employment to the candidate they have identified. Selectman Denardo seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.

Selectman Denardo moved to adjourn. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Bill Sweet, Town Administrator.

Mary Ashcroft, Chair

Joseph Denardo, Clerk

Sharon Russell

Kurt Hathaway

Matt Getty

Center Rutland, VT.