

**TOWN OF RUTLAND SELECT BOARD OPEN MEETING
RUTLAND TOWN MUNICIPAL TOWN HALL
181 BUSINESS ROUTE 4, CENTER RUTLAND, VT 05736
SEPTEMBER 24th, 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 September 10th:

Selectwoman Russell moved to approve the minutes. Selectman Getty seconded the motion. Added the new Fire Dept member's name, Keegan Anderson, to the minutes. The motion passed 5 – 0.

Update from the Select Board Chair

There are a few department heads which have not sent in an article for The Circle. The publication is being held for these.

Board to meet with Diamond Run Mall owner, Joe Anthony

1. Joe Anthony and Attorney David Grayck made a presentation to the Board about the redevelopment of the Diamond Run Mall site. Also present with Mr. Anthony is Beau Sizemore, the Rutland Walmart manger. Andy Rodriguez from MSK engineering, the lead project engineer. Representatives from Walmart were also present to support the presentation.
2. A full development of the former Diamond Run Mall site was announcement. A 170,000 square foot super Walmart center will be built on the site.
3. Reviewed the history of the property and what led to todays announcement.
4. Discussed any possible impacts to Downtown. Mr. Anthony has spoken with the Mayor about this, and it will help them with their long term plans.
5. There are plans to develop the rest of the site, but nothing has been signed yet.
6. The town will have input with the Act 250 permit amendment process.
7. Discussed security concerns, based on past experience.
8. As the project moves forward, Mr. Anthony said he will return to talk with the Board.

Board to meet with Megan Novak and Chris Louras, Rutland's homeless response coordinators

1. Discussed their goals and plans, focused on helping the homeless in the area.
2. They are both part of a statewide task force, working on a report for the state.
3. Reviewed homeless population rate over the last 4 years from around the state, and highlighted the disproportionate numbers in Rutland county.
4. Discussed options and plans for the future, but nothing is final yet.

David Rosenblum, Town representative to the Regional Board of Commissioners.

1. Reported on a recent meeting where the dues we pay to the RRPC is going up. The new cost is going to be \$4000, up from \$1000. The current budget does not support this.
2. Discussed the reasoning behind this change, aligning to a \$1 per resident fee structure.
3. This will be included in the budgeting process, and the Board hopes it is not taking effect until July 2025.

Marcia Chioffi Rutland Town Head Lister

1. The new Lister, Cathy Kapitanski, is working out very well. She is a welcome member to the office.
2. Presented an errors and omissions statement for the Board to approve, for 195 Wynnridge Drive.
3. Selectman Denardo moved to approve signing it as presented. Selectman Hathaway seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
4. Selectman Getty asked about the process for an RFP for reappraisal services. A mandate from the State is still pending, which is not expected until next year.

Chris Clark Rutland Town Fire Chief:

1. The annual pump testing was done recently. No major issues.

Kari Clark Rutland Town Clerk and Treasurer:

1. 97% of the first installment of taxes was collected on time.
2. There have been a lot of questions about ballots for the November election. The State is mailing ballots to all voters who were registered prior to September 2nd, when the State pulled our list. Some ballots are available at the office if someone didn't receive one.
3. The first installment to the school is included in the orders.
4. There is a good chance we will have to pay the State this year.

5. The finance committee will be meeting tomorrow to discuss capital account balances and plans for future spending.

Ed Dumas Rutland Town Police Chief:

1. Discussed issues with campers in the parking lot at the Home Depot Plaza. The leasing company that owns the plaza is making arrangements to remove them if they do not leave on their own.
2. Discussed the change to the retirement benefit through the VT Municipal Employee Retirement System. Selectman Hathaway moved to offer the higher VMERS Group D plan to the sworn officers of the Rutland Town Police, including the Police Chief and Deputy Police Chief, effective July 1, 2025. Current eligible employees will have the option to change to Group D effective 7/1/2025. Any eligible employee hired after the date of this vote will automatically be in group D as of 7/1/2025. Selectman Denardo seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
3. Chief Dumas assisted in the rescue of some kittens that fell into a storm drain. The plaza representatives and maintenance people were very helpful in the effort.
4. Discussed the plans for the new super Walmart store, and potential issues. As the project moves forward we will work with them to be proactive.

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

1. Discussed the purchase of server racks for the public safety building. They are needed to allow a project to move forward. Each rack is approximately \$900, and 2 are needed. After discussion, Selectman Denardo moved to approve approximately \$1800 for the 2 racks. Selectwoman Russell seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
2. A report of a vicious dog was received. The ordinance requires notice be given to the dog owner, and to schedule a hearing giving notice to the complainant and the dog owner. Reviewed the written complaint. The hearing will be scheduled giving enough notice to each party.
3. Chief Clark asked about EV chargers at the new building. They should not be included. Mr. Faignant will follow up on this.
4. Chief Clark brought up the antenna installations. Our vendor, Central Vermont Communications, will be contacted to ensure everything is lined up.

Barbara Pulling Rutland Town Planning Commission Chair:

1. Reported on recent topics from their meeting. Act 181, River corridors, the subdivision ordinance review, a subdivision application and the village center designation.

2. The Commission would like to know what the Board expects, regarding the Act. How far does the Board want them to go in terms of meeting the requirements, and a timeline. Zoning is a part of the higher tiers in the legislation. Discussed the history are zoning and preferences in the Town. The Board asked for a cost benefit analysis but did not specify a timeline.
3. There is a meeting with GMP soon to discuss options for acquiring the property for the pocket park.

Mike Rowe Rutland Town Recreation Director:

1. The recent Senior luncheon went very well.
2. The new fencing at Dewey is going up soon.
3. The Dewey infield will be replaced soon.
4. Soccer has started and is going well.
5. A Rec committee is needed soon. After discussion it will be October 8th at 5PM.
6. The trick or treat on the trail will be 430PM on October 25th at the school.

David Sears Rutland Town Road Commissioner:

1. Reported on some cleanup efforts around town.
2. Grants in aid work was done recently.
3. Reported on some culvert work being done. There were several which are failing and are being replaced.
4. The crew attended an OSHA training recently.
5. Received the MS4 inspection report. There are tasks for a variety of areas and addressing the concerns will not take much time.
6. Selectman Denardo discussed the possibility of throwing up the end of Park Street, in the town. Discussed options for what can be done. The ownership of the road needs to be determined. This will be referred to the Highway Committee.
7. The salt price this year would cost an additional \$1100 over last year if the orders were the same. The current budget should cover this cost.

Bill Sweet Town Administrator:

1. Provided the current list of needed town appointments.
2. Stantec has sent us their annual agreement for monitoring our closed landfill.
 - a. Their not to exceed number is \$9300. Our current budget is \$8000.
 - b. Due to change in personnel in their offices, a bill for last years services was not received until recently. This was recently paid out of the current fiscal budget, leaving no available funds for this year. The contract will be paid, putting the line into a deficit.

- c. Selectman Hathaway moved to approve the services and to authorize the Chair to sign on behalf of the board. Selectman Denardo seconded the motion. The motion passed 5 – 0.
3. The Regional Planning Commission has completed the traffic flow study at the Green Mountain Plaza. A full report is pending.
4. A grant application for energy efficiency upgrades at the highway garage and town hall was recently submitted. The total is a little over \$460,000.
5. Town hall was power washed recently and looks much better.
6. Reviewed some comments received regarding panhandling in Town. After discussion, Mr. Sweet will follow up with the person who submitted the comments.

Randall Smathers has reached out to ask an opinion from the Board regarding any increase to their appropriation request. After discussion, no recommendation will be given.

Discussed if there was a way for the town to be able to help Fire Districts review their systems and make plans for the future. This will be discussed in a Water / Sewer committee meeting.

Reviewed minutes from the Public Safety Building committee. Discussed the intent of the vote to cover a police budget deficit earlier this year. This will be brought up at the finance committee to review and clarify.

Selectman Hathaway moved to enter executive session to hear advice from town counsel. Selectman Denardo seconded the motion. The Board entered executive session at 9:38PM.

Upon leaving executive session, with no action being taken, Selectman Hathaway moved to adjourn. Selectman Denardo seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:46 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Bill Sweet, Town Administrator.

Mary Ashcroft, Chair

Joseph Denardo, Clerk

Sharon Russell

Kurt Hathaway

Matt Getty