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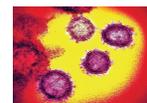
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Dorset Selectboard member Jack Stannard dies

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By Greg Sukiennik, Manchester Journal

DORSET — John P. "Jack" Stannard, who served Dorset for decades as a selectboard member, died on Dec. 21 from a heart ailment, according to Dorset Town Manager Rob Gaioti. He was 74.

Stannard, a plumber by trade, was widely known for his love of the outdoors. He was among the regulars who gathered for coffee each morning at H.N. Williams Store in Dorset, and a constant presence at town meetings.

Born and raised in Dorset, Stannard took over his family plumbing business and ran it for many years, and served as a caretaker for a number of residences.

Stannard served on both the Dorset School Board and Dorset Selectboard for many years, as well as the Dorset Fire District Prudential Committee. He also served as the Bennington County representative to the State Fish & Wildlife Board, and was an active outdoorsman, hunting, fishing, trapping, and supporting land conservation over the years, Gaioti said.

Gaioti said Stannard was responsible for helping to conserve the mill pond property on Church Street, working with The Nature Conservancy in doing so.

Selectboard members said Stannard was a vocal advocate for his positions, and for his support of the outdoors and conservation causes.

"Having served a few years with Jack on the Dorset Selectboard I knew him as a passionate advocate for the values of Dorset, such as Dorset's respect for the great outdoors and wildlife, its charm and historic architecture, and its peaceful, cultured, easy-going lifestyle," board member Henry Chandler said.

"I was always so impressed with his real desire to get all of us on the right side of an issue," added fellow select board member Liz Ruffa. "He wanted make sure there was a very comprehensive look into things. He had a point of view and he always wanted to make sure it was brought into the conversation."

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He also served as the town's institutional memory.

"Jack would sometimes refer to something back in 1968 or 1987," Chandler said. "He'd say 'Henry, don't you remember that?'"

"He had such a deep, clear history of being involved in either running the town or being somebody growing up in the town," Ruffa said.

Stannard's most recent run for office was as an incumbent, in a contested race for his selectboard seat against Jim Salsgiver in March. When Salsgiver won, Stannard said he planned to run for the board again in 2020.

He also ran for state representative in 2016, losing to Democrat Linda Joy Sullivan. The two quickly struck up a friendship following the election.

"Jack was passionate about Vermont, our natural resources and especially his hometown of Dorset," Sullivan said, "Although he was my political opponent in my first election, we ended up becoming good friends and he would bring me homemade bacon and have coffee with me often at my home, offering his sometimes curmudgeonly insights. He should be remembered for the many ways in which he served our community. I will miss him."

Stannard is survived by his wife, Claudia Stannard, and a son, Morgan Stannard of Arlington.

Funeral arrangements were not available at press time Tuesday afternoon.

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