

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – July 10, 2013

Selectmen James Cleary, Jeffrey Rose and Steven Osienski were present as well as Administrator Denise French. The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

Road Agent Gary Russell met with the Selectmen and discussed the following:

- Full staffing at the Highway Department and the Transfer Station has returned. As previously discussed, the Selectmen confirmed the appointment of Howard Clow to fill the vacant position created by the retirement of veteran employee Michael Tacy.
- Mutually agreed that the Town should cut through a downed tree on Class VI Rogers Road.
- A lightning strike has disabled the Town's well; water is being supplied to the community by the Town of Antrim's well.
- As of January 1, 2014 only certified lead-free brass materials can be installed underground. It is likely that the Highway Department will work at the direction of Superintendent James Cruthers to install a replacement hydrant and valves that are currently in the Town's inventory of equipment.
- Quotes to shim indicated roads are as follows: Birch Glenn Drive \$22,000 and Pierce Hill Road \$44,000.
- A "No Through Street" sign (or similar) will be erected on Old Coach Road.
- Prior to the 2014 Free Recycle Day the Town needs to address the free disposal of up to five tires per household. Last year, and again this year, at least one property owner disposed of the maximum amount of tires allowed for each property that they own. This action clouds the disposal of tires from any tenant who might be renting the property. Also to be reviewed is the acceptable tire width.
- Removal of the Highway Department's roadside brush piles continues. Hiring a logging firm has expedited the removal time.

Chris and Shelagh Clough and Stephanie Mackesy met with the Selectmen to discuss their following concerns relative to Whittemore Lake:

- Inquired why the Recreation Committee was no longer in charge of the beach and its staff.
- It appears that out of town residents are over-crowding the beach.
- The Selectmen's budgetary decision not to staff lifeguards on the weekend.
- Their opinion that lifeguards should be scheduled 11:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. rather than 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- What is the Town's long term plan to preserve Whittemore Lake?
- The request that the "kids' raft" be put out.

A generalized discussion followed regarding the Recreation Committee with regard to the need for Committee members to be appointed by the Selectmen, the need for meeting Minutes as well as the need to advertise events beyond Facebook.

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From 7:27 p.m. until 7:32 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3II(c). Present were Selectmen Cleary, Rose and Osienski, Administrator French and Fire Chief Michael Roina. Based upon recommendation from the Fire Chief, the Selectmen voted not to re-employ a former member of the Fire Department.

From 7:35 p.m. until 7:50 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3II(a). Present were Selectmen Cleary, Rose and Osienski, Administrator French and Fire Chief Michael Roina. No decisions were made.

Chief Roina reported on the July 3rd electrical fire at Monadnock Paper Mills. Although the majority of the electrical system was destroyed, the building is sound, there were no injuries to employees or firefighters and the fire mutual aid system worked well. The Selectmen reported hearing positive reflections of the fire operation and instructed the Administrator to draft an appreciation letter to each responding Bennington firefighter.

Building Committee member Peter Martel inquired of the Fire Chief what Life Safety Codes could be affected by the likely rehabilitation of the VFW building. Mr. Martel received support from the Selectmen for the Building Committee to expend approximately \$2,500 for an architectural preservation assessment for a conceptual VFW rehabilitation proposal. This information will be a basic requirement when Grant applications are submitted.

The Selectmen acted on the following matters:

- Reviewed and approved the Selectmen's June 26, 2013 Minutes. The Board also reviewed the Building Committee's June 25th Minutes, the Planning Board's June 24th Minutes and the Conservation Commission's June 20th Minutes.
- Reviewed and approved the July 2 and 10, 2013 Payroll Registers, the June 2, 2013 Accounts Payable Registers as well as Expenditures for the first six months of 2013.
- Heard a report that the Selectmen will have to approve 2013 funding of the Trustees of Trust Funds' recent decision to hire a Financial Advisor at a cost of \$925 per quarter. The Selectmen will discuss the matter with the Trustees at their July 17th Board meeting.
- Heard a report that an employee of the Library has volunteered to reduce their work schedule by one hour each week to avoid mandatory enrollment in the Retirement System. The matter will be reviewed when crafting the 2014 Operating Budget.
- The Selectmen established an annual stipend of \$750 for updating the Town's websites.
- Received updated information from Town Counsel and the Health Officer (who recently spoke with a representative of NH DES Air Quality Division) about a lingering allegation that the Town is not taking adequate action to protect the health of an Acre Street family. Town Counsel and DES both confirmed that the Town of Bennington has no enforcement regulation that could provide relief to the aggrieved family.
- Tabled discussion of a Code Enforcement concern associated with M2/L3-10 pending receipt of further information.
- Accepted, with regret, the resignation of Transfer Station employee Michael Tacy.

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- Heard a report of damage to the Town's well pump electronics as a result of a June 30th lightning strike to a nearby utility pole; the preliminary estimate of damage is \$5,000.
- Informally discussed an inquiry about establishing a Noise Ordinance which could address hours of nuisance – not decibels of noise. Sample Noise Ordinances will be sought although the Board is hesitant to initiate any new regulations.
- Reviewed the July 8th Beach Safety Inspection report as undertaken by LGC Health and Safety Advisor Ron O'Keefe. The Beach Manager will be requested to provide buoy lines to delineate the outer boundaries thereby warning boaters of nearby swimmers.
- Reviewed June Police Statistics.
- Agreed to discuss Conval's theoretical intent to use an anticipated refund of \$750,000 in health insurance reserves towards repaving the high school parking lot rather than returning the funds to the taxpayers.
- Requested the Administrator to gather information by July 31st regarding impending maintenance needs for all Town buildings that should be undertaken by year's end and likely paid for from the Town Buildings Expendable Trust Fund.
- Signed a Yield Tax Warrant for M6/L2 and signed Building Permits for M3/L8-1 and M7/L102.

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Denise French
Administrator