

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – November 6, 2013

Selectmen James Cleary, Jeffrey Rose and Steven Osienski were present as well as Administrator Denise French. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

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

- Earlier in the day the Department of Environmental Services undertook a “surprise” inspection of the Transfer Station for which there were no significant deficiencies identified.
- Agreed that a Tri-Town Landfill meeting needs to be scheduled to address stumpage, reclamation and quantities of gravel removed by Antrim, Bennington and Francestown.
- A sidewalk snow removal proposal will be sought from the existing contractor; consideration of advertising for a new storm cleanup contractor will be dependent on the proposed cost presented.
- Roadside brush piles have all been removed.

From 6:22 p.m. until 6:35 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3II(a). Present were Selectmen Cleary, Rose and Osienski as well as Road Agent Gary Russell who was present for his annual Employee Performance Review. No decisions were made.

Fire Chief Michael Roina met with the Selectmen to informally discuss proposed 2014 Capital Reserve Funds; the discussion was tabled until the Capital Reserve Funding Committee convenes. Chief Roina advised the Selectmen that he intends to submit two 2014 Warrant Articles – 1) creation of a Fire Department Equipment CRF with an associated appropriation of \$10,000 and 2) creation of an ISO (Insurance Services Office) Improvement Program which could improve property insurance rates within the community via the installation of dry hydrants, water supply ponds, alarm systems and code enforcement. A suggested amount of appropriation was not included in the presentation. It has yet to be decided if the Selectmen will endorse the proposed 2014 Warrant Articles or if the Chief will need to submit the Warrant Articles by Petition.

From 7:45 p.m. until 8:05 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3II(a). Present were Selectmen Cleary, Rose and Osienski as well as Deputy Administrator/Tax Collector Kristie LaPlante who was present for her annual Employee Performance Review. No decisions were made.

In other matters the Selectmen took the following action:

- Reviewed and approved the Selectmen’s October 30, 2013 Minutes.
- Reviewed and approved the November 6, 2013 Payroll and Accounts Payable Registers; the Board also reviewed year-to-date Expenditures.
- Accepted Town Counsel’s recommendation that the Town not re-assess M9/L21 prior to the 2014 revaluation cycle.
- Approved a draft letter to the owners of M3/L33 which states that until Fish & Game has made a determination on the public access road to Whittemore Lake the property owner will be responsible for 2013/2014 winter plowing.

Board of Selectmen Minutes – November 6, 2013

- The preliminary tax rate has been set at \$25.36. The Administrator will speak with DRA about the need to establish an overlay dollar value for inclusion in the tax rate as mandated by State Statute.
- Authorized Administrative employees to work Veterans Day to process tax bills with the understanding the employees will take the eight-hour holiday allotment by year's end.
- Received the first draft 2014 Budget, exclusive of wages and benefits, which represents a 4% increase. The Selectmen and Budget Committee will jointly discuss the first draft Budget November 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Voted a 2.25% across the board wage increase for all employees under their jurisdiction.
- Requested that the Administrator adjust the 2014 Operating Budget to reflect employee benefits within the Department budgets for those employees whose positions are not controlled by the Board but rather NH Statutes. These positions include the Town Clerk and Library personnel.
- Reviewed October Police Statistics.
- Voted a \$50 donation to the Fire Department and a \$50 donation to the Library in honor of retired Library Trustee Eunice Blanchard who recently passed away.
- Heard a report that saw cutting of the bridge pavement was approximately 5'-7" away from the intended locations directly over the expansion joints between the bridge deck and the approach slab. Due to the weather, pending pavement plant closures and paving contractor schedules the repairs will be deferred to the spring of 2014. The Administrator will inquire who will be responsible for the payment of accruing RAN interest charges until the repairs are completed in the spring.
- The bridge opening to traffic puts the project in the category of Substantial Completion which necessitates a "walk through" of the bridge construction project which is scheduled for November 13<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. The Administrator was asked to inquire about the intrusive guard rail that curves into the Chicoine driveway.
- Request that the Road Agent look at Sawyer Park for liability issues and to remove the dilapidated swings from the swing-set frame.
- Voted not to meet November 13<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Denise French  
Administrator