

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – February 26, 2014

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.

The Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session from 6:30 p.m. until 6:45 p.m. under RSA 91-A:3II(c). Present were Selectmen Cleary, Rose and Osienski, Administrator French and Treasurer Melissa Clark. The Selectmen accepted the immediate resignation of Melissa Clark as Town Treasurer.

Deputy Town Clerk Linda Osienski met with the Board to determine the Selectmen's interest in expanding Town Clerk services to include dispensing hunting and fishing licenses as well as OHRV registrations to any qualified applicant, regardless of their residency, during existing Town Clerk office hours. The Selectmen unanimously agreed to the proposal; Chairman Cleary signed Fish and Game Department's Application for Appointment as a Hunting and Fishing License Agency as well as their Agency's Application for Appointment as an Off Highway Recreational Vehicle and Snowmobile Registration Agency.

The Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session from 7:02 p.m. until 7:35 p.m. under RSA 91-A:3II(c). Present were Selectmen Cleary, Rose and Osienski, Administrator French and Scott Veale. The Selectmen voted to author a Letter of Intent to abate real estate taxes contingent on all non-Town associated liens being eradicated. Pending the outcome of the property owner's plan of action, Mr. Veale agreed to apply for a Forbearance Agreement. The Selectmen tabled approval of a 2013 Tax Deferral until supporting documentation is received.

Leigh Bosse, representative of Joshi Hospitality Group, LLC, met with the Selectmen to request a "good faith abatement" of real estate taxes dating back to the time when the Town first assessed the hotels as condominium units. Mr. Bosse suggested that a reduction in property tax obligations would provide an opportunity for the property owner to obtain necessary financing to finish meeting Life Safety Code requirements at the Highland Inn. No decision was rendered.

Fire Chief Michael Roina met with the Selectmen to discuss a code enforcement concern relative to M13/L14. He will review the matter with Code Officer Dario Carrara.

Matthew Blanchard met with the Selectmen to discuss his interest in establishing a commercial solar energy enterprise. The Board unanimously expressed their support and encouraged Mr. Blanchard to meet with the Planning Board when the conceptual project moves further along.

In other matters the Selectmen took the following action:

- Reviewed and approved the Selectmen's February 12, 2014 Minutes.
- Reviewed and approved Payroll and Accounts Payable Registers for February 19 and 26, 2014.

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- Voted to appoint Deputy Treasurer Joyce Miner to fill the Treasurer vacancy at an annual salary of \$2,000; annual compensation for the Deputy Treasurer will remain at \$500.
- Reviewed Vachon Clukay & Company's February 25<sup>th</sup> letter which addressed an audit concern.
- Heard a report that the Fire Department cannot assess fees for mandated Life Safety Code inspections.
- Received a February 19, 2014 resignation from part-time Police Officer Nelson Ortega which was effective immediately.
- Signed an Intent to Cut for combined lots M6/L6 and M5/L2.
- Instructed the Administrator to deliver the Selectmen's message that they do not support town-wide water meter replacements over a short period of time, but rather the meter replacement project should be done on an as needed basis without drawing from the Water Department Capital Reserve Fund.
- Heard a report that the Hillsboro PSNH Office will cease operations as of February 28<sup>th</sup>.
- Agreed to cancel the Board's March 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Denise French  
Administrator