

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – May 21, 2014

Selectmen James Cleary, Jeffrey Rose and Steven Osienski were present as well as Administrator Denise French. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

From 6:14 p.m. until 6:37 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3II(d). Present were Selectmen Cleary, Rose and Osienski as well as Administrator French. Also joining the meeting via conference call was special projects appraiser George Sansoucy. The group discussed 2012 tax abatements; no decisions were made.

Police Chief Steve Campbell introduced Francis Morrill, Jr. to the Board as Bennington's newest part-time Police Officer. Chairman Cleary administered the Oath of Office to Officer Morrill.

Library Trustees Victoria Burnham, Molly Eppig, Jill Wilmoth and Alternate Trustee David McKenzie met with the Board as a courtesy to discuss their intent to add one hour to a part-time employee's 2015 schedule which will trigger the need to enroll the individual in the New Hampshire Retirement System at an estimated annual cost increase of \$3,500. Discussed in conjunction with the Trustees' decision were the following:

- A year or two ago (Administrator will verify date) the part-time employee was previously working thirty-five hours and voluntarily agreed to reduce her schedule by one hour when it became known that the 35th hour mandates New Hampshire Retirement System enrollment.
- The Trustees' opinion is that there could be a safety issue to a lone staff member and the general public if only one employee were present.
- January of 2013 the Trustees notified the Selectmen of the addition of three open hours on Tuesday morning which successfully supports Pierce School programs since the elementary school's library is only staffed once every six days by a rotating school employee.
- The Selectmen stated their position of not adding an additional hour to the part-time schedule is based solely on their responsibility to control the Operating Budget in an effort to lessen the tax burden. The Board members each stated their complete support of Library employees and appreciate the quality of their work and community programs that they foster.
- The Selectmen wonder why the GEP Dodge Library is open 34 hours when the rest of the Conval towns, excepting Peterborough, are open from 19 to 32 hours each week.
- Separately, the following Library concerns were discussed:
 - The need to change cleaning arrangements to alleviate the reported problem of the Librarian providing custodial duties "after hours" and without compensation for her time.
 - The one and only bathroom which is located in the basement and is not accessible to the public.
 - The need to develop an ADA compliant plan for the building.
- The Selectmen and Library Trustees scheduled a follow-up meeting June 4th at 6:30 p.m.

Board of Selectmen Minutes – May 21, 2014

The Selectmen took action on the following matters:

- Reviewed and approved the Board's May 14, 2014 Minutes.
- Reviewed and approved the May 21, 2014 Payroll and Accounts Payable Registers.
- Heard a report from Chief Campbell of his appreciation for the extensive assistance provided to his Department by Fire Chief Mike Roina and Kristie LaPlante.
- The Administrator was asked to seek information as to whether residents could be solicited to assist Town Officials cleaning debris from the river bed when the water body is at its lowest summer level – usually when the Mill closes for two weeks.
- Noted the receipt of \$6,733.34 for the timber harvest on town-owned land at M7/L37-1.
- Clarified Free Recycle Day tire disposal criteria for passenger car/truck vehicles which permits up to five tires per family household to be accepted at the Transfer Station without disposal cost on June 7th.
- Tabled development of the Fire Department administrative wage structure until the Fire Chief is present.
- Selectmen Osienski volunteered to attend the May 22nd Conval Selectmen's Advisory Committee meeting.
- Signed an Elderly Exemption Application which was previously approved at the Selectmen's March 19th meeting.
- The Administrator reported the need to replace three computers which are currently run by Windows XP since the State of New Hampshire refuses to allow XP to interface with their programs as of June 1st. Two of the computers were previously scheduled for 2014 replacement due to their age.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Denise French
Administrator