

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – January 5, 2015

Selectmen James Cleary, Steven Osienski and Jeff Rose were present as well as Administrator Denise French.

By invitation, Mike Roina met with the Selectmen to discuss his proposed 2015 Fire Department Budget and the need to reduce the amount of hours he works for his combined positions with the Highway Department and the Fire Department. Various options were discussed. Mike agreed to contemplate the proposals put forth and report his decision to the Administrator by day's end January 6, 2015.

Police Study Committee members Larry Dustin, Rick Reed, Keith Nason, Mike Beausoleil, Debra Whitney, Kristie LaPlante, Mike Roina, Debra Ash, Jane Butler and Philip Germain presented the results of their Committee's work to evaluate the Police Department structure and project the community's needs for the future. Police Chief Steve Campbell also attended this portion of the meeting. The Police Study Committee supports the following:

- Keeping 24 hour police coverage.
- Implementation of a part-time administrative assistant.
- Implementation of a third full-time officer.
- Reduction of part-time hours.
- "Exempt" salary status for the Police Chief.
- Relinquish duties of the Emergency Management Director to another qualified individual.

Chairman Germain and the Committee were wholeheartedly thanked by each of the Selectmen for their time, energy and efforts in undertaking this important task.

In other matters the Selectmen took the following action:

- Continued their review of the proposed 2015 Operating Budget but did not find an opportunity to reduce expenses without affecting services. The Board will await the Fire Chief's decision before finalizing the Operating Budget at their January 7th meeting.
- Reviewed two additional letters from Joshi Hospitality Group, LLC - 1) addressed to the Fire Chief and challenges the Fire Marshal's determination that the vacant condominiums need to meet the 2009 Building and Life Safety Codes, 2) addressed to the Selectmen and requests that the Board revert the tax classification of the premises from condominium apartment to condominium hotel, retroactively to 2010 with reimbursement to Mr. Joshi. The Selectmen took no action on either opinion letter.
- Authorized Fire Chief Mike Roina to employ Jason Powers whose background check has been completed.
- Due to the lateness of the day, the Selectmen tabled action on the following matters:
 - ❖ Invasive Species along Antrim Road
 - ❖ Police Statistics – December, 4th Quarter and 2014 Calendar Year
 - ❖ Hazardous Waste Collections
 - ❖ Avitar Software Purchase Agreements
 - ❖ Abatements

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Denise French
Administrator