

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – July 15, 2015

Selectmen Steven Osienski and James Cleary were present at 5:15 p.m. when the meeting was called to order. Administrator Denise French was also present.

By invitation, Transfer Station employees Howard Clow and Wayne Frye met with the Board to discuss operations at the facility. Also attending this portion of the meeting was Supervisor Gary Russell. The following topics were discussed:

- A decline in the general appearance of the Transfer Station.
- The need to be more engaged with the customers to ensure that mandatory recycling is taking place and disposal fees are being collected.
- The need to check existing signage to be sure the customers are aware of the regulations.
- A draft Task List was approved and distributed to Howard and Wayne for immediate implementation.
- Approval was granted for former Transfer Station Manager Ben Billings to work with the employees on a limited basis.
- Gary will schedule a Solid Waste Committee meeting to review and update the Transfer Station/ Recycling Facility Ordinance.
- The group will reconvene in 30 days to evaluate operations.

Selectman Jeff Rose was present for the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Fire Chief Michael Roina met with the Selectmen and discussed the following:

- Revamping the Fire Department payroll process is still under review; office staff will be meeting with Milford Fire Department staff for a review of their payroll practices using Firehouse Software.
- Reviewed pros and cons of Mike's split summer time with Highway being 75% and the Fire Department being 25% of his designated full-time work week. The Chief reports he is getting caught up from the winter months. The Selectmen suggested it might be more efficient if the Fire Department Administration utilized part-time support to manage some administrative obligations thereby freeing up some of the Chief's time.
- The Selectmen encouraged the Chief to review Fire Department membership to see if there could be a candidate that would be able to step up and assume additional administrative responsibilities in a timely manner.
- As of July 1, 2015 the NH Department of Safety, Fire Standards and Training & Emergency Medical Services has implemented the need for medical clearance for any student enrolled in identified programs prior to the start of the program. Students not able to provide medical clearance prior to the start of the program will not be able to attend the class. The regulation will affect all programs authorized by the Division regardless of funding. The Chief will contact multiple sources to determine the most cost effective price for the required physical. He will also draft a policy for consideration by the Selectmen.

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- Antrim and Bennington Fire Chiefs are discussing conceptual shared daytime staffing between the hours of 5:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Tax Collector Kristie LaPlante met with the Selectmen and discussed the following:

- The need for an abatement of 2014 tax for M24/L10 to reflect the 2013 removal of a building that was not picked up during the Revaluation.
- The need for an abatement of interest for M7/L83 to reflect a Taxpayer Agreement, dated February 26, 2015 (in lieu of bankruptcy).
- Motion was made, seconded and unanimously voted to acquire ownership of M12/L1C18 via Tax Deed for unpaid 2012 real estate taxes. The Selectmen voted to sell the condominium as soon as possible rather than leaving the property in the Town's inventory of real estate.

Emergency Management Director Keith Nason, Deputy Emergency Management Director Kristie Laplante, and Fire Chief/Highway Department representative Michael Roina met with the Selectmen to discuss the following:

- Keith has taken advantage of various training and conference opportunities.
- Upcoming radiological training with the Fire Department, Police Department and Emergency Management personnel.
- Identified a plan-of-action for moving forward:
  - Improve town-wide Departments communications
  - Common radio frequency
  - Update of existing Emergency Operations Plan
  - Follow-up meeting in three months to evaluate interest

In other matters the Selectmen took the following action:

- Reviewed and approved the Board's July 1, 2015 Minutes.
- Reviewed and approved Payroll and Accounts Payable Registers for July 8 and July 15, 2015.
- Heard a report that the ZBA approved a Use Variance for M5/L1. Based upon this finding and also the fact that the owner will provide written documentation that the dwelling will be for three-season use, as opposed to year-round residency, as well as the fact that an Agreement and Release will be signed exonerating the Town from any liability, the Selectmen approved the Building Permit.
- Heard a report that the owner of M1/L2 appears to be ignoring the Town's issued Notice of Violation. The Selectmen discussed various ways that the Town can prove that the business continues to operate in violation of the Zoning Ordinance and Site Plan Review Regulations.
- Heard a report that the Board of Tax & Land Appeals ruled in favor of the Town's 2012 assessment of PSNH/Eversource, therefore denying the 2012 Abatement.
- Heard a report that results of Frankestown's community survey regarding Police Department coverage in their community clearly indicates that there is little interest for regionalization of police services.
- Reviewed options for free-standing signs to advertise Town events and agreed to purchase two message boards at an approximate cost of \$200 each.

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- Selectman Osienski volunteered to follow-up a commitment made by a former occupant of the Town Hall gym area to remove all of his equipment and supplies.
- Agreed that existing personal schedules precluded a requested change in meeting date from July 29.
- Received, with appreciation, a letter from Crotched Mountain Foundation expounding the efforts of Police Officer Lester Milton in finding a student who wandered off their campus.
- Upon recommendation of the Energy Committee the Selectmen voted to appoint Michael Munhall as a member of that committee.
- Received a mandate from the Director of Motor Vehicles that the State has implemented September to be the new month of inspections of municipal fleet vehicles. All vehicles currently registered and inspected through March 31, 2016 must be re-inspected by September 30, 2015. (All Town of Bennington vehicles were just inspected four months ago!)
- Heard a report that the sole bid for the downtown construction project (TEP2) was \$140,990 more than the allotted amount of FHWA construction funds. The Administrator is awaiting receipt of requested information from NHDOT as to what options the Town might have to address the shortage of funds needed to carry out the project.
- Signed the Report of Appropriations Actually Voted.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Denise French  
Administrator