

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – December 1, 2015

Selectmen James Cleary and Jeffrey Rose were present as well as Administrator Denise French. The meeting was called to order at 5:45 p.m.

From 5:50 p.m. until 6:05 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91:A-3II(b) to discuss the Transfer Station vacancy. Present were Selectman Rose, Administrator French, Deputy Administrator Kristie LaPlante, Road Agent Gary Russell and Teresa Caisse. No decisions were made.

From 6:15 p.m. until 6:40 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91:A-3II(b) to discuss the Transfer Station vacancy. Present were Selectmen Cleary and Rose, Administrator French, Road Agent Gary Russell and William O'Connor. No decisions were made.

From 6:41 p.m. until 6:47 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91:A-3II(b) to discuss the Transfer Station vacancy. Present were Selectmen Cleary and Rose, Administrator French, Road Agent Gary Russell and David Pagnotto. No decisions were made.

From 6:48 p.m. until 6:54 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91:A-3II(b) to discuss the Transfer Station vacancy. Present were Selectmen Cleary and Rose, Administrator French and Road Agent Gary Russell. The Selectmen discussed the candidates interviewed and voted to offer the Transfer Station position to William O'Connor, upon receipt of his satisfactory background check, at a beginning wage of \$14.00 an hour with a \$0.50 hour increase upon satisfactory completion of probation and Solid Waste Facility Operator Certification.

From 8:02 p.m. until 8:25 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91:A-3II(b) to discuss the impending Deputy Town Clerk vacancy. Present were Selectmen Cleary and Rose as well as Town Clerk Debra Belcher. The Selectmen voted, and the Town Clerk agreed, to hire Debra Whitney as Deputy Town Clerk, upon receipt of her satisfactory background check, at a beginning wage of \$10.00 an hour. Whitney will be responsible for working Tuesdays and Thursdays, Assistant Town Clerk Karen Belcher will continue to work the Saturday hours.

State Representative Jon Manley met with the Selectmen and discussed the following:

- NHDOT returned to patch the School Street bridge.
- Railroad trestle
 - The State has used public funds to replace the decking as well as to purchase and install gates at each end of the trestle which effectively bars use of the trestle trail for anyone except snowmobilers when the State unlocks the gates exclusively for the winter season.
 - Shelley Winters, Bureau of Rail & Transit Administrator, has agreed to a meeting with Representative Jon Manley along with the Commissioner and possibly Peter Leischman at a date to be determined. Selectman Cleary expressed his intent to also participate in the upcoming meeting.

Board of Selectmen Minutes – December 1, 2015

- Neighbors along the railroad track have reported that the vernal pools have been silenced after the State sprayed defoliates along the railroad track.
- Representative Manley has introduced legislation that would eliminate the requirement for every part-time Transfer Station employee working under supervision to be required to achieve management certification.
- Presented a draft Notice that could be posted along the roadways encouraging vehicles to secure their loose trash or they may be subject to littering fines. No decision was made.

In other matters the Selectmen took the following action:

- Reviewed and approved the Selectmen's November 17, 2015 Minutes. They also reviewed the October 29th Conval Selectmen's Advisory Committee Minutes, the Conval School Board's Budget & Property Minutes for November 10th as well as the November 10, 2015 Capital Reserve Funding Committee Minutes.
- Reviewed and approved the November 24th and December 1, 2015 Payroll Registers.
- Heard a report from the Road Agent that the entry gate at 198/200 North Bennington Road was rammed causing damage to the opener. It was agreed that a security camera should be relocated to enhance visibility of the entrance gate.
- Heard a report from the Road Agent that at least one vehicle is parked 3' from the edge of the North Bennington pavement amongst multiple unregistered vehicles at M17/L30. In response to the Selectmen receiving a written complaint of these unregistered vehicles the matter will be turned over to the Code Enforcement Officer.
- The Administrator reported on her visit with the Water/Sewer Commissioners at their November 21st meeting when she cautioned the Commissioners about probable sewer associated costs for removal of phosphorus from the waste water as well as the cost for the disposal of bagged sludge that was recently removed and has been set aside for draining. Chairman Wilson indicated he wasn't concerned about the anticipated costs since Bennington has access to its Contingency Fund through Antrim's Sewer Department. The Commissioners indicated they still plan to obtain voter approval to close out the Sewer CRF and transfer all monies into the Water CRF.
- The Administrator reported on her November 24th conversation with Assistant Water/Sewer Superintendent Matt Miller when they discussed the wisdom on Bennington closing its Sewer Lagoon CRF with an estimated \$92,000 balance. Miller recommends not closing the Sewer CRF since it is unknown until July 2016, when the five year renewal permit is finalized by the State, what additional obligations the Sewer Department will have to meet. Should multiple mandates for removal of material from waste water be included in the permit it could create the need for Antrim Sewer to build a larger treatment plant at an unknown cost. The matter will be discussed at the December 15th internal budget review meeting with Selectmen and Departments/Committees.
- Confirmed their approval of the Deputy Administrator's November 23rd letter to the Conval School Board stating the Town's disapproval of false information put forth at a recent Budget and Property Committee meeting. The Town's letter confirms that Bennington does not plan to approach the School Board to close Pierce School; the Town does not support the closing of Pierce School; and the Selectmen will not undertake any initiative without receiving town-wide input from Bennington residents.

Board of Selectmen Minutes – December 1, 2015

- With regard to the 2000 expired Alteration of Terrain Permit that was just discovered among “historic” files which were filed amongst Post-Closure documents, the Administrator has communicated the deficiency with Ridgely Mauck, P.E. of NHDES Alteration of Terrain Bureau. Because of its classification, Mr. Mauck reported that the November 7, 2002 expiration date should never have been issued for the Tri-Town Excavation Permit. He suggests that the Town’s existing 2000 Permit be used as the basis for the current five year review as called for in RSA 485-A:17. Stantec is working of an estimate of cost for them to update the Permit information.
- Upon review of Planning Board member Sam Cohen’s November 25th Memo to the Bennington Select Board, Ex-officio member Jeff Rose reported that there was no Planning Board vote taken about supporting the Conservation Commission’s request to incorporate a proposed Natural Resources Inventory into the Town’s Master Plan. Conservation Commission representatives Joe MacGregor and Valerie Germain reported that the Natural Resources Inventory project would cost \$6,800 and would be paid for with taxpayer money. Ideas and opinions were conceptually expressed by some Planning Board members. No recommendation has been put forth to the Board of Selectmen; the matter is tabled until a Town Board puts forth their request for funding.
- Received a bid to wash, scrape, spot prime and paint one coat on the front side of Town Hall and a separate bid price to do the Acre Street side of the building facing the river. Additional bids will be sought before any decision is made. The Board would like to undertake the project in 2016 since it appears that deferred maintenance dates back to the early 2000s.
- As requested by John Jordan, SAC Committee member, the Board of Selectmen confirmed their support of the Conval District’s local schools.
- Effective January 1, 2016 the Board of Selectmen will hold a Public Hearing before spending funds from the Town Buildings Expendable Trust Fund.
- Authorized the Fire Chief to undertake background checks on two Fire Department applicants.
- The Selectmen voted a change to the hiring process. As of December 1, 2015 all potential new hires will be subject to a Motor Vehicle Records Check as well as a Criminal Background Check.
- Accepted with appreciation a \$450 donation from the Benevolent Lodge Trust Funds. The Board allocated some funds to be spent in support of a local family who is struggling with the unexpected loss of their loved one.
- Authorized Erin Lyons to utilize the Town Hall gym for an exercise class at no cost to the participants.
- Reviewed, approved and signed:
 - Comcast Building Permit
 - Building Permit – M16/L9
 - Abatements: M7/L22, M11/L12 and M11/L16
 - Monadnock Disposal Service, Inc. Transfer Station Waste Disposal Agreement for the period January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2018

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Denise French, Administrator

Page 3 of 3