

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – April 13, 2016

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.

Road Agent Gary Russell met with the Selectmen and discussed the following:

- TEP2 Construction Progress
 - Construction was delayed when a TDS trunk line was in jeopardy due to Dig Safe marking the utility 3' beyond its actual location.
 - The Historical Society's water main was found in the vicinity of the drainage line.
 - Groundwater at the old garage site on the corner of Main Street/Eaton Avenue was full of wood debris which caused headaches for the contractor's pumps which were continuously clogged with the debris.
 - A cistern was exposed near the Sunnyside Cemetery entrance gate.
 - Even though the project was reviewed and approved by the State Historic Preservation and the Department of Transportation, the Cemetery Trustees informed the Selectmen that provisions of RSA 289:III were not adhered to; namely joint approval by the Selectmen in concurrence with the Cemetery Trustees. The Board will send their regrets to the Cemetery Trustees that the situation occurred; the Board is also appreciative of the Cemetery Trustees' position to approve the project within the 25' cemetery boundary rather than the Town risk a construction delay in the long anticipated project at hand.
 - NHDOT will allow the Antrim Water/Sewer Department to install three new curb stops on Francestown Road; replacement of these inoperable curb stops is not an eligible TEP2 expense and will be considered non-participating work.
- Switzer Road turnaround
 - Gary has met with the M20/L10 abutter who is agreeable to the Town doubling the length of the existing culvert.
 - Concern that the April 4th accident closed down Switzer Road without an alternate means for accessing neighboring homes.
 - The Selectmen plan to meet with their Deering counterparts to discuss needed improvements to the shared turn-around, emergency services as well as future growth in the Switzer Road/Codman Hill neighborhood that is accessed exclusively from Bennington's Class VI Switzer Road.
- As of today's date, excepting Old Greenfield Road and Gillis Hill Road, all spring weight restrictions have been lifted from the Town's roads.

By invitation, Town Clerk Debra Belcher and Deputy Town Clerk Debra Whitney met with the Selectmen to discuss Town Clerk operations:

- The Town Clerk reported the Deputy Town Clerk has achieved all mandated certifications.
- The Deputy Town Clerk feels confident to take over operations during the Town Clerk's planned vacation absence.
- Discussion of Thursday evening schedule. The Deputy was hired to work all Tuesday and Thursday shifts; the Assistant Town Clerk is designated to work all Saturday shifts. The Town Clerk has made the determination that Thursday evening hours should be split equally between the Deputy and Assistant Town Clerk; she also reported that the Assistant had to provide child care two Saturdays every month and without Thursday evening hours she would likely resign her position. The Board confirmed that the Deputy Town Clerk will work every Tuesday and Thursday shift. The Selectmen eventually

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- authorized the Assistant Town Clerk to work the first and last Thursday of each month from 4:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., thereby creating a staff of three Town Clerk employees on these designated weeks.

From 7:30 p.m. until 7:45 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3II(a). Present were Selectmen Cleary, Rose and Osienski as well as Town Clerk Belcher. The group discussed a March citizen's complaint the Board received and the result of their investigation of the allegation. The Town Clerk is charged with discussing the complaint with an employee of her Office and delivery of a written reprimand capturing the discipline to the Board of Selectmen.

In other matters the Selectmen took the following action:

- Reviewed the Planning Board's March 28, 2016 Minutes and the Energy Committee's April 6, 2016 Minutes.
- Reviewed and approved the April 13, 2016 Payroll and Accounts Payable Registers.
- Heard a report that the M18/L2 family's representative authorized the logger to remove already cut timber from the landing as well as their equipment from the property. The property owner will not sign an Intent to Cut for April 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017 which results in the closure of the timber harvesting operation.
- Confirmed the Board's April 27th availability to meet with the Water/Sewer Commissioners for discussion of mutual management concerns.
- Heard a report that the Town's new financial software will include a component for the Treasurer's Office which can only be accessed from the Town's server. The Selectmen designated the part-time administrative computer as shared space with the Treasurer.
- Agreed with the Administrator that the April 4, 2016 towing invoice received from Kent's Towing, in the amount of \$8,750 for towing the Highway truck back on to Switzer Road, was excessive; the Selectmen declined the insurance company's offer to pay the invoice as billed.
- Authorized the Administrator to secure a \$500,000 Tax Anticipation Note which will provide cash flow for budgetary obligations as well as payment of the TEP2 project while awaiting 80% reimbursement of costs from the NH Department of Transportation.
- Unanimously agreed to reappoint David McKenzie a Library Trustee Alternate for one year.
- Agreed that the Library Trustees, with Eversource approval, could hang decorative flags ahead of their Rhubarb Festival.
- Heard a report that two Antrim School Board representatives and Bennington's School Board representative are investigating optional School District's that might accept students if the Town of Peterborough withdraws from the Conval School District. Bennington representative Linda Quintanilha reported meeting with Hopkinton school officials "in case the press prints anything about their visit". The Administrator will send a letter on behalf of the Selectmen that the Bennington Conval School Board representative is not to insinuate in any way that she represents the Town of Bennington.
- Reviewed the list of unpaid 2013 tax liens which accounts for 45 impending Tax Deeds (33 are condominium units belonging to a single owner).
- Reviewed and approved an Abatement for M24/L10; and Intent to Cut for M14/L1; a Forbearance of Deed Agreement for M24/L15-1 and the 2016 Report of Town Officials as prepared by the Town Clerk's Office.

The meeting adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Denise French
Administrator