

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – August 30, 2017

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

State Representative Jon Manley and the Board of Selectmen discussed the following:

- The Town's frustration that the NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT) is not taking its responsibility to paint four State road crosswalks due to manpower issues. DOT has also discontinued painting "SCHOOL" stencils on the State roadway, which they report is an optional marking according to their standards, also due to lack of manpower. For the community's safety the Selectmen felt obligated to take on the State's abandoned expenses this year.
- Throughout three seasons the State continues to lock each end of the railroad trestle on Antrim Road; during the winter the trestle is always open and accessible for snowmobiles. The Selectmen agreed to send another letter to NHDOT to petition keeping the trestle accessible year-round for use by pedestrians, bicyclist, etc. The Board will also request NHDOT to provide an estimate of costs to rehabilitate the trestle in the hopes that State funding can be accessed.
- HB101 is being studied in committee. The proposed bill seeks to alter the annual DES requirement that all Solid Waster Operators renew their licenses annually. Solid Waster Operator Certification is the only State application with an annual renewal. Jon reported that funds derived from the annual application fees are not applied towards ongoing training; the funds are used to compensate pamphlet costs.
- Representative Manley will likely sponsor a new bill that will connect two current election statutes and provide local authority for postponement of Town Meeting under certain circumstances.
- SB3 is law. Passage of this bill now gives the Town Clerk authority to visit homes to verify residency. A lawsuit has been filed to stop the bill. The Selectmen were not comfortable with the position this law puts its elected official in.
- The Route 47 passing zone is on a crest of the road heading towards Francestown with the other end of the passing zone placed in the vicinity of reduced speed upon approach to a four-way intersection. From time to time the Selectmen hear of "close calls" on this stretch of road. The Board will petition the State to remove the Route 47 passing zone.

The Selectmen took action on the following matters:

- Reviewed and approved the Selectmen's August 16<sup>th</sup> Minutes.
- Reviewed and approved Payroll Registers for August 24 and August 31 as well as the Accounts Payable Register for August 24, 2017.
- Reviewed and unanimously approved a Professional Services Agreement with Catlin & Petrovick Architects, PC. The \$8,500 contract is for a Feasibility Study of the Town Hall and the VFW, with a goal of identifying additional space and conceptual reconfiguration for existing staff as well as satisfying legal requirements for various Departments. Meetings will be scheduled with staff who use the building daily, the Selectmen, and a public forum with the community's residents.
- Finalized the Board's plan for updating streetlights; #12 will not be discontinued, both #40 and #42 will remain, and if possible #9 and #45 will incorporate motion detectors. The LED upgrades will likely have to be postponed until calendar year 2018 since Eversource's current light incentive offer expires October 1, 2017.
- Schedules permitting, Selectmen Mackesy and Cleary plan to attend the Selectmen's Advisory Committee's September 28<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- As requested by Peter Martel, Selectmen Cleary and Rose voted to allow Peter access to the Town's energy bills as well as permission to communicate with Eversource and Rymes in his quest to document a baseline and monitor any changes that could result from energy improvements. This favorable decision by

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Selectmen Cleary and Rose does not grant Martel any decision making authority. Selectman Mackesy voted not to endorse Peter Martel's request.

- In response to receiving a written inquiry about newly constructed poultry housing being situated without setback from the side property line, the Administrator will send a letter to the owner of M17/L21 notifying them of this violation to Article VII, N of the Zoning Ordinance.
- Voted to add a \$5 disposal fee for vanity/bureau as well as a \$3 disposal fee for game consoles.
- Heard a report that the Town received a \$5,027 invoice for twenty-three hours of metered usage of a "roller ride on single drum"; the invoice period encompassed thirty-nine days. The matter will be reviewed with the Road Agent.
- Agreed that Sawyer Park Road should be the name of the road that accesses Sawyer Memorial Park, off Route 202.
- At the recommendation of the Road Agent, the Board authorized the owner of M5/L1 to maintain the Class VI Mountain Road section that accesses their property.
- Heard a report that "No Trucks Antrim Road" and "Trucks – Route 202" signage has been ordered for installation in the center of Town as another attempt to reroute tractor trailer traffic away from the railroad trestle on Antrim Road. Staff has also accessed the federal GPS website and provided updated written information for Antrim Road, Mount Crotched Drive, Acre Street, Pine Street, Inverness Way and Pinehurst Drive. [www.gps.gov](http://www.gps.gov) warns that updates could take weeks to months.
- Assuming support from the Conservation Commission, the Selectmen agreed that the vacant land between the Catholic Cemetery and Evergreen Cemetery should be selectively cut. The Administrator will communicate with the Commission.
- Discussed the wisdom of incorporating into the Driveway Permit Regulations the need for the applicant to submit a sketch or plot plan with the Driveway Permit Application to illustrate placement of the proposed construction as well as its location to abutting property lines. Driveway Permits are currently approved by the Road Agent based on a verbal conversation and a site visit; there is nothing on paper to document the authorized location. Planning Board ex-officio Jeff Rose will discuss the concept with the Planning Board since they were the creator of the Regulations which were then accepted by the Board of Selectmen.
- Reviewed and approved the Summary Inventory of Valuation (MS-1). The 2017 assessed value increased \$765,016 from 2016.
- In addition to combined additional revenues of \$130,725 from the closed Sewer Capital Reserve Fund and additional Highway Block Grant funds, it is projected that the Town will receive another \$28,000 in funds beyond what was included as revenue in the 2017 Budget.
- A Building Permit for M7/L57 was reviewed and approved.
- The Selectmen and Budget Committee are scheduled to kick off the 2018 budget season with a joint meeting September 13<sup>th</sup> at 6:15 p.m.
- A Public Hearing to renew the Comcast Cable Franchise Agreement is planned for September 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Denise French  
Administrator