

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – November 13, 2018

Selectmen James Cleary, David Hardwick, Sr. and Mark Mackesy were present as well as Deputy Town Administrator Kristie LaPlante. The meeting was called to order at 6:08 p.m.

In the Road Agent's absence, Highway Department representative Chris Davies met with the Selectmen to discuss the following:

- In 2017 the Town received \$37,913 from a dedicated grant fund for Highway Block Grant Aid in accordance with SB38. The grant allows the funds to be expended for highway construction, reconstruction, or maintenance purposes. In October guardrails were installed along a portion of North Bennington Road at a cost of \$25,075, leaving an unspent balance of \$12,838.
- As requested by the Selectmen on November 6th, Chris solicited costs for a surface compactor to be purchased for road projects as outlined in SB 38 monies. Based on this research, a 3,080 lb compactor will cost \$1626. Chris also suggested the Town purchase a ditch pump to aid with water removal associated with some digging projects. The Selectmen authorized Chris to purchase the compactor, ditch pump, and 3" stone for upcoming drainage projects.
- Chris reported that the catch basin on Gillis Hill Road has been dug out and 3" riprap has been laid out on the slopes. The project should be completed later this week.
- There had been some miscommunication between two residents and the Highway Department about which culvert on Bible Hill Road has become backed up with the recent rain, causing significant ponding on the roadway. Chris spoke with the residents and the culvert has been fixed.

At 6:33 p.m. a motion was made by Jim Cleary to enter into Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3-II(a) and seconded by Mark Mackesy; all voted in favor of entering Nonpublic Session. Also present during the Nonpublic Session with Town Administrator Kristie LaPlante. The Selectmen reviewed and discussed a verbal complaint received from a prior resident and reviewed a document the complainant provided the Board that contains statements made by a Town Employee. No decisions were made. Selectmen Cleary made a motion to reconvene the public session; seconded by Selectman Mackesy; all voted to reconvene the public meeting at 7:04 p.m.

Cemetery Trustees Karen Belcher and Joshua Segal and Cemetery Trustees Recording Secretary Deb Belcher met with the Board to discuss the one bid received for mowing the Town's cemeteries in 2019. The Selectmen shared with the Trustees their research of surrounding towns and noted that about half of the communities contract out the service and half of the communities complete the maintenance themselves. The group discussed ways for the Town to undertake maintenance and cleanup on their own, discussing the concepts of a volunteer organization (Boy Scouts of America) assisting with spring and fall clean up, adding staff and using a town employee to complete the tasks, or putting the project back out to bid as a whole or in part by removing the spring and fall clean up components. No decisions were made. The Selectmen agreed to revisit the topic in 2019.

The Selectmen discussed the Trustees' ongoing concerns that trees at Evergreen Cemetery are unhealthy and need to be removed. Jim Cleary reported he has looked at the trees twice now and discussed alternatives to tree removal, including limbing some trees and using cables to make the trees

stronger. The Town Administrator will contact three local tree companies and ask them to visit the site to provide quotes for remedying the trees.

At 7:29 p.m. a motion was made by Jim Cleary to enter into Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3-II(a) and seconded by Mark Mackesy; all voted in favor of entering Nonpublic Session. Also present during the Nonpublic Session was Town Administrator Kristie LaPlante and Assistant Town Clerk Karen Belcher. The Selectmen reviewed and discussed with Karen a verbal complaint received from a prior resident regarding statements made by a Town Employee. No decisions were made. Selectmen Cleary made a motion to reconvene the public session; seconded by Selectman Mackesy; all voted to reconvene the public meeting at 7:46 p.m.

In other action on their agenda:

- The Selectmen authorized Mike Young to address holes in the foundation at Town Hall that may be allowing mice to enter the building.
- Reviewed a letter from Conval School District Superintendent Kimberly Rizzo Saunders that outlined the School District's response to a threat made on November 7, 2018 that dictated the closure of the School District to ensure student safety. The Selectmen discussed their knowledge of the event, as well as Ms. Rizzo Saunders' correspondence, and praised law enforcement and the School District for acting swiftly to address the safety of the students.
- Signed a second pole license for Eversource.

There being no other business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristie LaPlante
Town Administrator