

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – January 7, 2020

Selectmen James Cleary, David Hardwick, Sr., and Mark Mackesy were in attendance as well as Town Administrator Kristie LaPlante. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

Road Agent Hazen Fisk met with the Selectmen to discuss the following:

- The Selectmen have received a complaint about the backhoe left running during snow plowing/sanding operations when the Highway Crew is not at the garage. Moving forward, the Selectmen have requested the equipment not be left running when the temperature is at/about freezing; if the temperature is below freezing then the operator should exercise proper judgment with leaving the equipment running.
- The 2007 International is still at Sizemore for the engine replacement. Once the truck is back in service, Hazen intends to obtain a quote to refurbish the truck to extend the life of the frame, chassis, wiring, etc.
- The snow from the roof of the Congregational Church recently dumped on to the sidewalk and in to the roadway on Route 47. The Highway Department will block off the sidewalk area for the remainder of the winter and the Selectmen will evaluate future sidewalk options for winter access.

Jim Creighton, Candidate for Legislator in District 38, met with the Selectmen to introduce himself and hear what issues the Bennington Selectmen feel are pressing and/or in need of change. The Selectmen thanked Jim for stopping in to discuss his interest and to learn what local communities are facing.

Town Clerk Debra Belcher met with the Selectmen to continue her January 2nd discussion of the affect the Selectmen's reduction in wages will have on her Department. Deb reported that there is increased work required for each registration (inputting the check #, credit card verification number, documenting which form of ID was used by the Clerk) and there were 200 more registrations in 2019 compared to 2018. Deb also reported that her Department is behind due to the Deputy Town Clerk's resignation in April 2019. While Deb was in the office, the Selectmen signed a new Deposit Policy and asked if Deb had any questions about the Policy; no comments or questions were stated.

The Selectmen later continued discussion of the Town Clerk's statements that her office is behind due to one less staff in the office. The Selectmen reflected on their April 30th meeting with Town Clerk Staff where the Town Clerk stated her intent was to eliminate the third position in the office. The Selectmen discussed their desire to improve efficiency and backlog within the Town Clerk's Office and to provide staffing when the Town Clerk is unable to work on Tuesdays. The Selectmen and Town Administrator discussed Office staffing and unanimously voted to appoint Debra Davidson to the position of Assistant Town Clerk to supplement Town Clerk staffing on Tuesdays.

The Selectmen reviewed Non-Profit funding requests for 2020 and took the following action:

- Voted to place the Contoocook Housing Trust appropriation request of \$300 on the 2020 Warrant.
- Voted to place the Community Volunteer Transportation request of \$500 on the 2020 Warrant.

- Voted to place The Grapevine request of \$6,000 on the 2020 Warrant.
- Voted to place the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) request of \$1,000 on the 2020 Warrant.
- Voted to place the Child Advocacy Center appropriation request of \$1,100 on the 2020 Warrant.
- Voted to place a Warrant Article request in the amount of \$1,000 for End 68 Hours of Hunger on the 2020 Warrant.
- Voted to place the American Red Cross appropriation request of \$700 on the 2020 Warrant.
- Voted to place the Hundred Nights Shelter appropriation request of \$100 on the 2020 Warrant.
- Voted to place a Warrant Article in the amount of \$45,000 to Address Deferred Road Maintenance on the 2020 Warrant.
Reviewed a request for \$5,000 funding from Family Promises of Southern New Hampshire and voted not to place the request on the 2020 Warrant.
- Reviewed a request for \$660 funding from MCVP Crisis and Prevention Center and voted not to place the request on the 2020 Warrant.

In addition, the Selectmen reviewed or acted on the following:

- Reviewed and approved the Minutes of the Board's December 3, 2019, December 10, 2019, and January 2, 2020 meetings.
- Reviewed and signed an abatement for Map 03, Lot 33.
- Signed the Hardwick Reclamation Bond for Map 3/Lot 1 and Map 11/Lot 16.

There being no other issues before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristie LaPlante
Town Administrator