

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – May 12, 2020

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

The Selectmen discussed the continued abuse of the Town Transfer Station by non-Bennington residents and non-Bennington property owners. The Selectmen voted to implement the use of Transfer Station Facility Use stickers as soon as possible.

The Town of Bennington has received a request to Abandon an Order for Removal the Town placed on property located at Map 7, Lot 31 in March 2019 to bring a hazardous building in to compliance. Improvements were made to remedy the hazard and the property owner is in the process of selling the property. The Selectmen signed the Abandonment Order.

The State of NH has made available an optional First Responder COVID-19 Stipend Program for eligible first responders for the time period of May 4, 2020 through June 30, 2020. For Bennington, the Program will pay \$50/week to firefighters, \$150/week to firefighter/EMTs, \$150/week to EMTs, \$150/week to part-time Police Officers, and \$300/week for full-time Police officers. Per Program guidance, the Town of Bennington fronts the cost of the Stipends which will be reimbursed by the State of NH. The Town of Bennington is responsible for paying employer taxes. After discussion of the program and minimal financial impact to the Budget, the Selectmen voted to participate in the Stipend Program and pay qualifying employees.

In his capacity of Fire Chief, David Foster presented the Selectmen with an April 27, 2020 letter from Michael Hoiriis regarding his affiliation with Bennington Rescue as a medical provider. The Selectmen, Fire Chief, and Town Administrator briefly discussed the National Registry and State of NH requirements for licensure and the approval process. Chief Foster was directed to consult with the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician's for further direction. No decisions were made.

The Selectmen briefly discussed the impact COVID-19 may have on taxpayers and their abilities to pay taxes this year. Town Administrator Kristie LaPlante reported on conversations amongst Municipal Managers that seems to indicate the Federal Government might include additional Municipal Relief for municipalities to address lost revenues. If the Town cannot recoup revenues, significant cuts to the Budget will need to be considered.

The Selectmen acted on the following matters:

- Reviewed and approved the Minutes of the Board's April 28, 2020 meeting.
- Reviewed and approved the Accounts Payable Register for May 7, 2020 and the Payroll Registers for April 16 and May 7, 2020.
- Discussed replacing the dump body on the 2007 International to extend the life of the vehicle. The Selectmen voted to approve the project based on a quote from HP Fairfield for \$42,000.
- Discussed the importance of the small driveway portion of the Congregational Church by the Civil War Monument and voted to have the Highway Department place cold patch in various spots.

- Reviewed and approved a request from the property owner of Map 12, Lot 01C-34A to abate a \$23 Inventory Penalty for 2019.
- Reviewed and approved a request from the Town Administrator to refund the EB2Gov Convenience Fee for an out of State property owner.
- Heard a report that the Emergency Management Director and Town Administrator have been working with the owners of two restaurant establishments in Town to minimize barriers to outside dining in accordance with Governor Sununu's Stay at Home 2.0 Order.
- Discussed Town Hall operations and agreed not to open the Town Hall to regular business at this time.
- Discussed vacation time allotments as outlined in the Town's Personnel Policy and voted not to provide a third week of vacation for a five-year employee.
- Discussed a request from the Department of Revenue to come to Town Hall to finish their compliance inspection of the 2019 Revaluation. Citing their concerns for Town employees and the inability to properly socially distance, the Selectmen denied their request.

There being no other business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristie LaPlante, Town Administrator