

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – March 9, 2021

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 6:01 p.m.

Chairman Jim Cleary reported on a recent meeting he had with Highway Department employees Matt Blanchard and Chris Davies to discuss Highway Department Operations. Jim shared with the Board positive feedback he has received about the Board's decision to have Matt serve as pro-tem Road Agent.

The Board discussed staffing options within the Highway Department and the Road Agent vacancy. The Board agreed there could be a financial benefit to leave the Road Agent position vacant and the Board of Selectmen could oversee the Department and projects; Matt and Chris would remain laborers within the Department. The Town could then use offers of assistance from neighboring Highway Departments and would sub out any specialty projects. Motion was made by Jim Cleary, seconded by David Hardwick, and unanimously approved to table hiring a Road Agent and for the Selectmen to oversee the Department operations and give Matt Blanchard a \$2/hour raise to oversee the day to day operations of the Department. The Board intends to revisit Highway Department operations in a couple of months.

At 6:11 p.m. a motion was made by Selectman Jim Cleary to enter in to Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3-II(c) and seconded by Selectman David Hardwick; all voted in favor of entering Non-Public Session. Also present during the Non-Public Session was Town Administrator Kristie LaPlante. LaPlante provided the Board with a written report outlining a comparison of employee time cards and dispatch logs. No decisions were made. All voted to reconvene the Public Session at 6:26 p.m.

At 6:28 p.m. a motion was made by Selectman Jim Cleary to enter in to Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3-II(c) and seconded by Selectman David Hardwick; all voted in favor of entering Non-Public Session. Also present during the Non-Public Session was Police Chief Bret Sullivan Town Administrator Kristie LaPlante. Chief Sullivan and the Selectmen discussed the content of a written complaint received from a Bennington resident specific to a Bennington Police Officer. The Selectmen provided Chief Sullivan with a copy of a report comparing employee time cards and dispatch logs. Chief Sullivan expressed his frustration with the Selectmen's inquiry and how he feels his Officer is being publicly shamed. The Board was adamant they were doing their diligence in addressing the complaint. Chief Sullivan was asked to review the report and report back to the Selectmen. No decisions were made. All voted to reconvene the Public Session at 6:55 p.m.

The Selectmen reviewed and approved the Minutes of the Board's March 2, 2021 meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m. for the Selectmen to participate in counting votes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristie LaPlante  
Town Administrator