

Bennington Board of Selectmen
Monday, April 3, 2023 6:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

Present: Chairman, James Cleary, Tom James, Tony Parisi

Others Present: Resident, Bethany Craig

Chairman Cleary opened the meeting at 6:00 pm. Selectman James and Chairman Cleary welcomed Toni Parisi.

Appointments:

6:00 – Edward Hardwick & Nathan Romanski-Monty – Mr. Hardwick was present to request the Town of Bennington reimburse his tow charge of \$120.00 which was necessary as a result of getting stuck on Gillis Hill Rd., March 14, 2023. Mr. Hardwick stated that “a fire guy” told him to go Gillis Hill Rd. Lengthy discussion followed regarding the roads, the storm, others who were off the road.

Selectmen discussed the very unusual storm, it was fast, heavy and very wet. Selectmen went on to discuss the highway did a great job, they could only open Gillis Hill with a loader and a backhoe, trucks wouldn’t touch it. Cleary mentioned that Hardwick opened their pit and made a two-lane road for people to pass through.

Chairman Cleary replied that the Town cannot pay this tow bill. He further explained that if the Town paid for one it would be setting a precedence. Chairman Cleary stated that Road Agent, Matt Blanchard did the best he could during the storm, further stating Matt and DJ did a good job considering the type of storm. It was a bad night to be out on the roads, the town cannot pay this tow bill. And Mr. Hardwick commented that if there is a take away from this – communication is key during such an event. He recommended a wing & plow for the grader.

Selectmen thanked Mr. Hardwick for coming in and discussing this matter with them.

6:15 – Keith Nason – to discuss the recent storm. Nason stated he did not believe any fire department member said to go forward on Gillis Hill Rd. during the storm. Nason discussed Eversource was not a good situation during the storm, there is a meeting on Thursday, April 6 at 2:00 pm. The representative Keith was working with during the storm was sympathetic, yet indicated the portal was not able to handle such a significant storm. The workers indicated to Keith they had to follow work orders from their superiors, they could not just go trim lines that were obviously a problem.

Chairman Cleary stated that Greenfield Road was very dangerous and had live wires. Cleary further stated Bridge Street Recovery did not receive power until March 15 at 2:00 am.

Nason went to say it doesn't look like FEMA will cover our expenses related to this storm. Matt Blanchard said he is hearing we may meet the threshold, best to keep tracking expenses and be ready.

Discussion followed about road closures and the unique storm and unexpected hazards.

Cleary reiterated, everyone who was involved did a really good job.

Keith Nason commented that Officer Danforth has been doing a great job. He works great, communicates very effectively and will go over and above anytime. Matt Blanchard said he agreed.

EMT Certifications – Nason said that more people are getting certified, by summer there should be a few more responders.

Chairman Cleary mentioned at some point the Town needs to get together with Crotched Mountain and discuss calls at the mountain.

Minutes: Chairman Cleary made the motion to accept the minutes of March 21, 2023 as written. Seconded by Selectman James. Motion passed

Financial: Selectmen reviewed and signed Payroll Registers for the week 3/30/23; 3/30/23 FD

Selectmen reviewed and signed the A/P Registers for the weeks of 3/30/23; 3/23/23

New Business:

Report of cut – Hardwick – 22-041-01-T certification & Warrant - \$63.63

Intent to cut – Hardwick – 23-041-02-T – M19 Lot 1

Plodzick & Sanderson Disclosure questionnaire – Chairman Cleary signed the disclosure questionnaire.

Cu -A-10 Forms – Cold Springs Land Trust – Map 15 Lot 6; Cold Springs Land Trust Map 21 – 13-3; Cold Springs Land Trust – Map 21 Lot 13

PA-38 – Intent To Excavate – Francestown Sand and Gravel

Market Analysis – Selectmen reviewed one market analysis for the property on Onset Road which someone has inquired about. A brief discussion followed, Chairman Cleary will reach out to someone he knows for another analysis.

Lifeguards – Town Administrator brought up the lifeguard position, there are two – three young men who have shown interest in this position. Bethany Craig mentioned, though she is not the recreation co-chair any longer, she would be happy to help this position to become a success. The history of this position was discussed, wages and lifeguard vs. beach attendant. Discussion followed. Selectman James suggested having a poster for the transfer station and other places indicating hours, wage and brief job descriptions for both positions. Town Administrator will take care of this.

Highway should be responsible for the raft and mowing, this should be done by Memorial Day, as should the porta potty, phone and the opening of the beach. Town Administrator, Deb Davidson will discuss signage at Whittemore with Jessie Crews.

Bethany Craig asked to discuss the April 22, 2023 clean up of Sawyer Field. She has asked Matt Blanchard to chip the downed tree limbs. Jim Cleary said he could help chip if Matt can't get to it. Bethany stated she and Jim have a chipper and can also help.

Sawyer Field policies were briefly discussed. Policies will be reviewed and worked on next week at Selectmen's meeting.

Bethany indicated she would like one night per week at Sawyer Field for 4-H. 4-H would like to have a game night. Bethany confirmed that April 22, 2023 is ok for the Sawyer Field Clean-up day. Selectmen said yes, April 22, 2023 was confirmed. NO decisions about the one night per week have been made at this time.

Selectman Parisi suggested removing the See Saw. Brief discussion followed explaining to Selectman Parisi what transpired over the past year and what our insurance company has requested the Town do at the playground. It is agreed the See Saw should be removed, options what to do with the See Saw was discussed, no decision was made at this time. Fencing should be installed at the playground area.

With nothing further at this time, Chairman Cleary motioned to adjourn the Selectmen's Meeting. Seconded by James and Parisi. The next Selectmen's Meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 10, 2023 at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Debra Davidson, Town Administrator