

Bennington Board of Selectmen
December 4, 2023
Meeting Minutes

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

Staff: Deb Davidson, Town Administrator

Public: There was no public present

Chairman Cleary called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. Seconded by Selectmen Parisi & James. 3-0 in favor

Appointments:

There were no scheduled appointments

6:21 – VFW Representative, Jim Creighton – Mr. Creighton stopped in hoping to meet with the Board to present a quote for work to the VFW. Selectmen welcomed Mr. Creighton who presented a quote from Cobb Hill for updates. Selectmen were presented with a proposal. Mr. Creighton is still waiting for a quote from Bear Hand. Discussion followed, no decisions were made at this time.

With regards to the use of the VFW, signage will be installed reminding those who use the building what to check before leaving the building.

At this time Brian Quinn also arrived. Mr. Quinn asked for a key for the storage area, as well as mentioning the checklist that should be checked before closing up the building.

Mr. Creighton mentioned they are having their 3rd breakfast on January 20, 2024, 8:00 am-10 am. All are welcomed.

Minutes: Chairman Cleary made the motion to accept the minutes of November 27, 2023 as written. Seconded by Selectmen Parisi and James. Motion passed 3-0

Financial: A/P & Payroll Manifests for the week of December 7, 2023 were signed by all three Selectmen.

Other:

- **Budget review & Work Session** – Selectmen reviewed the budget a few changes were discussed
 - Adding \$9300.00 for Whittemore & Newhall field, those items will be reimbursed via insurance
 - Adjust CRF payments
 - COLA & raises were discussed
 - Look into switching back to Eversource at this time for electric supplier, Eversource has dropped their rates quite a bit.
 - Warrant Articles were discussed
- **Lights Parade overview** – Selectmen were happy with how the parade turned out considering the weather
- **Estimate gymnasium floor** – Estimate from Cutter Flooring was discussed. No decision was made at this time.
- **Primex fencing estimates** – Newhall \$490; Whittemore \$8,595.90 after depreciation was discussed. Selectmen all agreed to fund the projects for 2024, knowing the reimbursement from Primex will cover the expense.
- **Computer Security replacement** – A proposal from Twin Bridge Services LLC for computer Security Wall replacement, including first year subscription of \$1,810.00 was discussed. The importance of this security wall was further discussed, it was mentioned this has been put off for several years and it should be updated to keep the Town of Bennington safe. Motion by Chairman Cleary to accept the quote for the security wall as proposed by Twin Bridge Services LLC. Seconded by Selectmen Parisi & James. Motion passed 3-0.
- **Whittemore Fencing** – Selectmen discussed contacting the abutter, notifying them of the need to remove some trees. Selectman Cleary will contact Crowe Fencing to see if their price would be adjusted if the town removes the trees and the fence?
- **Police follow-up** – Selectmen agree they are not prepared to make any decisions regarding a third full-time officer without seeing a schedule of what is covered now vs. 3rd full time officer coverage.
- **State Education Court Finding** – Selectmen discussed the recent court decision that found the state education funding unconstitutional. The discussion also

went to the recommendation from Consolidation/Reconfiguration Study done by the ConVal district. Selectmen do not support the recommendations of the study to close several of the smaller elementary schools. The cost of this study was discussed. Selectmen asked the Town Administrator to find the exact cost of this study.

- **Backhoe** – the new backhoe arrived early last week. Selectman James stated he used it Saturday and it works great.
- **Sprinkler System** – Town Administrator reported to the Board, Matt Harwood went up into the attic, there are no bats. Selectmen instructed the Town Administrator to contact Life Safety and have them finish ASAP. Further instructing Deb to contact Matt to see if he can seal the area the bats entered through or does JP Pest have to return. Also seeing if an electronic deterrent is still available.

Signatures:

- Abatements for the following properties were signed Map 21 Lot 13-1; Map 21 Lot 2-B

Adjournment:

With nothing further, Chairman Cleary adjourned the meeting at 8:00 pm. The next scheduled meeting will be Monday, December 11, 2023 at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Debra Davidson, Town Administrator