

# Bennington Board of Selectmen

December 11, 2023

Meeting Minutes – 6:00 pm

**Selectboard:** Chairman, James Cleary, Tom James

**Absent:** Tony Parisi

**Staff:** Deb Davidson, Town Administrator

**Public:** Bethany Craig

Chairman Cleary opened the meeting at 6:04 pm.

## Appointments:

**6:05 – Resident, Tom Connors –**

**Whittemore Lake Fence** - Mr. Connors was present as an abutter to Whittemore Lake, though his appointment is scheduled for 6:30, Selectmen and Chief LePine agreed to change the time allowing Mr. Connors to speak first. Mr. Connors had been contacted by the Town Administrator and notified of the plan to replace the fence at Whittemore Lake and remove some trees. Mr. Connors was supportive of the removal of trees and the replacement of the fence. He also asked if the berm that has been created over the years could be leveled and feathered, this would remove the berm that has created standing water, causing mosquitos and other issues in the area. Selectmen discussed this and agreed this could be addressed at the same time as the replacement of the fence.

Mr. Connors also discussed some enormous pines that should be removed, however Mr. Connors explained had been told they were not allowed to be removed because they were too close to the water. Chairman Cleary explained the basil area. Cleary noted he is a logger, he will also donate his time in the spring. Mr. Connors will be contacted prior to any cutting occurring.

Discussion of the culvert at Whittemore and how it is not working any longer followed. Selectmen cannot relocate or touch the culvert-pipe, the State of NH is responsible for that.

Out of town people using the beach was discussed. Mr. Connors reported they are not very respectful, they are not town residents and they leave lots of trash behind. The police have been called several times, the non-residents were removed. Police will have to continue to monitor the people at the beach. The transfer station stickers could be a way to monitor residents vs. non-residents.

The history of Whittimore Lake was discussed. In the past, the lake used to offer swimming, boat rentals, there were post cards and it has always been a very nice place for residents.

Selectmen thanked Mr. Connors for coming in and reiterated they will contact him in the spring when the tree removal and new fence installation begins.

### **6:30 – Police Chief, Jason LePine –**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Full-time officer** - Chief LePine was attending the meeting to follow up on his request for a 3<sup>rd</sup> officer, schedules & prosecutor contract. Chief LePine discussed a schedule he has developed that would provide coverage for two shifts and would also provide coverage until 2 am, Monday – Saturday. The Chief went on to discuss the Police Academy, currently there are 10 people for the part-time academy signed up. That is the minimum number of applicants, all of them have to pass the physical test to hold the academy, if one person fails the physical test, the part-time academy will not be held.

Nick Cole also wants to work part-time for Bennington, he is willing to work as much as possible. He also needs to go through the part-time academy.

Chief LePine discussed the option of switching Haley to the full-time academy. Full-time vs. part time academy was discussed. The cost is full time academy is 40-hour weeks and the cost is \$14,080.00 – the part time academy is a 24-hour week and the cost is approximately \$9,000.00.

Chairman Cleary briefly discussed that Selectmen would consider a full-time officer if it was passed through a warrant article. With Selectman Parisi out, the Board will not be making any decision on this position or a warrant article at this time.

Chief LePine suggested holding a public meeting promoting the full-time position. A brief discussion followed.

Town Administrator told Chief LePine the public hearing for the budget will be on Monday January 22, 2024 at 6:00 pm and the Deliberative Session will be on Monday, February 5, 2024 at 6:30 pm.

**6:55 – Keith Nason/Dave Foster –**

**AED's**-Chief Foster and EMD Nason were asked to attend the meeting to discuss AED purchase and purchasing 2 at \$4,000.00 vs. 10 at \$8550. Discussion followed as to benefits of having 10 of the AED's as apposed to two. The 10 are refurbished and come with a 3-year warranty. Selectmen support the purchase of the 10 and ask that the funds be put into the budget for purchase in 2024.

**Knox Box** – Selectman James discussed obtaining Knox Boxes for the town buildings. Options and costs were discussed. Selectmen Cleary motioned that the fire department look into this, obtain pricing and move forward with installing Knox Boxes for town buildings.

**Dedication** – EMD Nason and Chief Foster told Selectmen there will be a dedication to Mike Beauchamp, he was instrumental in the establishment of the Antrim/Bennington Ambulance. Over the years he was always helping with calls. Initially there will be a private dedication with family only. In January there will be a public event. Both Nason & Foster stated there is no one else more influential than Mike Beauchamp was in his day.

**Crotched Mtn. Ski & Ride** - Nason and Foster reported that they have had a few discussions with CMSR management. There have been some issues with the water usage, however everyone is working to reach an agreement on the water usage. The management at the mount has been very good to work with. Selectmen were glad to hear this.

Selectman Cleary asked when the first payment on the Fire Truck will be? Chief Foster indicated it would be due in August. The truck will be ready to go upon delivery.

**Minutes:** Chairman Cleary motioned to accept the minutes of December 4, 2023 as written. Seconded by Selectman James. Motion accepted 2-0

**Financial:** Selectmen signed the A/P & Payroll Manifests

### Other:

- **Budget review** -Selectmen reviewed the budget, some minor adjustments were made to budgets. Town Administrator reported she is still looking into some prices for health insurance, but we should move forward with the prices we were provided at this time. CRF were discussed.
- **Sprinkler update** – Life Safety is working on getting us scheduled to finish the job. Once complete the POD will be removed.
- **Bat remediation update** – Matt Harwood did investigate, there are no bats. JP Pest is scheduling a time to install the one-way door.
- **Encumber Funds** – Discussion regarding encumbering the donations received followed. Peter Martel has signed a contract for sound and lights for the Friday Night Music, Selectman James would like to encumber the \$350.00 to be used for payment to Mr. Martel. Motion by Chairman Cleary to encumber \$350.00 for REC Activities, specifically Friday Night Music Peter Martel contract. Seconded by Selectman James. Motion passed 2-0
- **Lift Lock quote** – a quote has been received for \$893.00 for the installation of a lock for the lift. Discussion followed. Motion by Chairman Cleary to move forward with the installation of the lock. Seconded by Selectman James. Motion passed 2-0
- **Transfer Station** – Selectman James reported that there was an incident at the transfer station over the weekend where a resident dropped of something that is hazardous waste. The resident will be sent a letter.


### Signatures:

- **Sanders Searches** – Selectmen signed a 2024 contract with Sander Searches. They provide searches and letters for lien research and deeding of properties.

### Adjournment:

With nothing further Chairman Cleary adjourned the meeting at 8:00 pm. The next Selectmen’s Meeting is scheduled for Monday December 18, 2023 at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Debra Davidson, Town Administrator