

Bennington Board of Selectmen

Monday, April 1, 2024

Meeting Minutes – 6:00 pm

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

Staff: Deb Davidson, Town Administrator

Public: Bethany Craig, Melissa Clark

Chairman Cleary opened the meeting at 6:00 pm.

Appointments:

6:15 – Rhubarb Festival Chair, Molly Eppig – Molly was present to update on the Rhubarb Festival. Library Trustees are involved, though they do have a number of questions.

Volunteers – At the moment, the six Library Trustees are working on things, they do realize they will need many more volunteers. Ms. Eppig asked if the Selectmen could authorize the highway crew to help set – up? Selectman James replied that it is the Festival Committee’s responsibility to find volunteers. The highway can bring stuff over, tables, tents etc. Selectman Parisi stated that with dates and time he can get help and help set up. Molly replied that May 30th & May 31st the committee would need help. The Festival is Saturday, June 1, 2024 only this year.

Selectman Parisi indicated he has access to a field-marker, a paint marker is what should be used. Chairman Cleary stated he has a case of paint, he will donate.

Parking - Parking on the Wilson property was discussed. Selectman James will contact Alan and see if it is ok to park on the field.

Discussion regarding parking for vendors and day people followed. Parking on the road has plenty of room, keeping room for rescue vehicles. The parking should go one way only. Parking on infield is better than parking on outfield. They are working on a map for parking.

Music – Selectman James said he has music scheduled for 4:00 Eyes of Age; 6:30 White Mountain Rounders. Peter Martel will do a music feed during the day – ending at 3:30

Pig Roast – Chairman Cleary stated he is looking into the pig roast. Town Administrator was instructed to check with Primex to see if the Town’s insurance will cover the roast. Chairman Cleary is going to purchase the pig and provide washing stations. There are codes to meet, cost per plate needs to be determined. Provided with the pig will be an assortment of sides. Electricity will be provided for the roast.

Judging – Eppig asked if the Selectboard would judge the pies. The pie contest will take place at 10:00 am. All three Selectmen stated they would be judges for the pie contest.

Expenses – Eppig asked how can she get the invoices paid with the funds that were authorized at Town Meeting. The process for submitting invoices was explained to Eppig.

Selectmen thanked Molly for coming in and updating them, she will be back towards the end of April or beginning of May with more follow up.

6:30 – Resident Education Committee Chair, Bethany Craig – Mrs. Craig was present to update the Selectmen as to her status of the committee. She also has questions for the Selectboard.

Chairman Cleary started by discussing he was at the last Selectmen’s Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting, there were no answers to the many questions. Residents need more information, the School Board needs to be more transparent, how much money will actually be saved.

Committee Name - Mrs. Craig asked what the name of the committee should be. Selectmen agreed on Bennington Education Committee. Craig also commented she does not have to be the Chair. The committee consists of Mike Hoyte, Mike Munhall, Rich page, Joe McGregor, Michelle Stahl, John Manley, Melissa Clark and Bethany Craig.

SAC Meeting – Tuesday, April 2, 2024 at the Conval SAU will be a meeting to discuss the feasibility study, what will be studied. Bethany stated she too was present at the

last SAC meeting, majority was from Dublin, many key players were absent. Who will represent Bennington, Committee must be formed no later than May 10. All towns must have one school board rep and one board of selectman.

Statement – Mrs. Craig asked if the Selectmen would agree to a statement that could go into the paper, be on our website. Selectmen will discuss this amongst themselves.

Questions for the School District –

What are the actual goals

What is best for the students

Are they striving for better education throughout the District

Social Impact

Betterment of the district

Again, a reminder of the School Board meeting tomorrow, April 2, 2024 at 7:00 pm

Schedule – Mrs. Craig requested quarterly meetings with Selectboard. The next meeting would be Monday June 24th, then followed up with a meeting September 30th.

Dublin Education Committee – holding a meeting on Wednesday at 6:00 pm in Dublin, at their town hall on the lower level. Dublin, Temple, Frankestown & Bennington Education Committees to be present. The goal is for all 4 towns to come together.

Selectmen thanked Mrs. Craig for the information she provided.

7:00 – Road Agent, Matt Blanchard – Monthly department update.

Upcoming Snow Storm - Matt reported that a lot of snow 8-10" is expected on Wednesday, starting mid Tuesday. Brief discussion followed to close the transfer station on Wednesday. Offices also, we will wait to see what actually transpires.

10-hour days – Blanchard reported to the Board the Highway Crew is back to 4/10 hour days.

Chairman Cleary stated, residents have expressed they want to see things getting done quicker than what they have been. Selectman Parisi suggested staggering the plow schedule. Blanchard said that yes, he was planning on doing that for the next storm.

Wing is on the small truck, however it is way too soft right now. The ground is soft, but not real bad at this time. Still able to plow and sand.

Selectmen discussed Red Listed Bridges. Bennington is NOT on the State replacement list until at least after 2027.

7:15- Jason LePine – Monthly update; swearing in of Asst. Prosecutor.

Appointment - An appointment was prepared and Joshua Gallant was sworn in as the Assistant Prosecutor for Hillsborough. He will be assisting with prosecution for Bennington cases.

Portable Signage – The State will pay for 75% of the signs. Each sign is \$12,000.00. Selectmen authorized starting with 3 signs, \$9,000.00 is Bennington's share. Discussed location for the signs. We have done the electronic set up with the State, they have criteria we needed to meet before applying for any funds. We are all set.

Mileage Logs – Selectmen reviewed the mileage logs

Key Fobs – Selectmen and Chief LePine discussed the key fobs and access to the Selectmen/Town Clerk Office. It is Chief LePine's opinion that less is better. Selectman James believes the central office has too much access considering some sensitive information that is in the office. Selectmen strongly agree, the conference room could be used more by committees and if needed, file cabinets could be placed in the conference room. Knox Boxes are installed, emergency personnel do have access if needed. Those who have keys will be reviewed one more time and all will be notified if/when their fobs will be deactivated.

Minutes: Motion by Chairman Cleary to accept the minutes of the March 18, 2024 as written. Seconded by Selectmen Parisi & James. Chairman Cleary motioned to accept the non-public minutes of March 26, 2024 and to further seal the minutes. Seconded by Selectmen Parisi & James. Vote passed 3-0

Financial: A/P & Payroll Manifests were reviewed and approved.

Other:

- **Bi-weekly meetings** – Chairman Cleary motioned to start bi-weekly Selectmen’s Meetings. Seconded by Parisi & James. Vote passed 3-0. Town Administrator will be out of town of April 15th, however Cathy McGillicuddy will take minutes.
- **Matt Harwood** – Selectmen briefly discussed the gymnasium floor, it was unanimously agreed not to move forward with anything at this time. They would like to do a punch list and have Mr. Harwood complete that before going forward on any new projects. Unanimously agreed.
- **Easter Festivities** – The Newhall Field Easter Egg Hunt was a huge success.
- **Appointments** – Selectmen reviewed and approved two appointments for the Library Trustees, David McKenzie was reappointed for the 14th consecutive year, Rhonda Davie was reappointed for her second term.
- **Signatures** –

Town Hall Gymnasium Use - Baby Shower T/H Gymnasium – Saturday, 5/25/24;

VFW use - VFW Conservation Commission April 20th Earth Day Breakfast. Town Administrator, Deb Davidson asked if this was the same event that is advertised on the board at the VFW. Selectman James said yes it was. Davidson stated she hasn’t heard back from the Conservation Commission.

Intent to Excavate – Francestown Sand & Gravel; D.H. Hardwick

Adjournment:

With nothing further, Chairman Cleary motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:43 pm. Seconded by Parisi and James. Motion passed 3-0.

The next Selectmen’s Meeting will be on Monday, April 15, 2024 at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Debra Davidson, Town Administrator