

Bennington Board of Selectmen

Monday, October 7, 2024

Meeting Minutes – 6:00 pm

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

Staff: Deb Davidson, Town Administrator; Cathy McGillicuddy, Administrative Assistant

Public: Melissa Clark

Chairman Cleary called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. Seconded by Selectmen James & Parisi.

Appointments:

6:00 – Open Fuel Bids – The Town received two fuel bids; the bids received were from Ciardelli & Dead River

Ciardelli – Propane – Fixed rate \$1.89

#2 Oil – Fixed Rate \$2.869

Dead River – Propane – Fixed rate \$3.61

#2 Oil – Fixed rate \$2.57

Discussion followed.

Motion by Chairman Cleary to award the 2024/2025 heating season contract to Ciardelli. Second by Parisi & James. All in favor. Motion passed 3-0

Decision: Town Administrator will notify the two bids as to who won the contract.

6:10 – Melissa Clark – Melissa was present, Chief LePine was not yet here so Melissa opted to discuss her matters at this time.

Melissa updated the Selectboard of the Halloween plan. The Halloween Hayride and Trunk or Treat will be held on October 26, 2024, 7-9 at the Transfer Station.

Generators are available for additional lighting. Selectman Parisi asked if DJ & Matt could scoop a hole where he would like to have his skit. Parisi will ask them.

Melissa mentioned that Peter Martel has expressed wanting a recording secretary for the ZBA. Currently, Melissa is taking minutes and she is fine doing it.

Motion by Chairman Cleary to support the ZBA Chair position and continue with her taking the minutes. Seconded by Selectmen Parisi & James. Voted 3-0 affirmatively.

Decision: ZBA Chairman, Melissa Clark will continue to take the minutes and do what she thinks is best for the ZBA in the absence of a recording secretary.

6:20 Police Chief, Jason Chief LePine

2025 Grants - Chief LePine opened discussing the speed grant and reporting it is going very well. Chief LePine stated many tickets have been written. Some in excess of 30 mph over the speed limit.

Chief LePine discussed the many videos that have been provided from a resident regarding speeding, but they are not admissible in court.

Will be applying for more grants in 2025

Officer, Hayley Minahan – It was reported, she is on week 11 of 16 and still at the Academy. She is 4th in her class of 55 recruits.

Officer, Nick Cole – Chief LePine reported Nick has completed his FTO and is on his own. He works Saturday and is loving it.

Officer, Jeff Danforth – Chief LePine reported that Danforth has done many speed details, filled in a few shifts a month. Chairman Cleary stated we might as well let him work as much as he is comfortable.

Antrim Police Agreement – Chief LePine indicated he would like to continue with the Antrim agreement over 2025. It is a cost of \$52,000.00/year – this would make the town be covered basically, 24/7. Chief LePine was asked how many cases has Antrim picked up? Chief LePine indicated, “quite a few”.

Mileage Logs – Chief LePine presented 3 months of mileage logs to the Board for review.

2025 Budget –

- Chief LePine discussed his 2025 budget, he indicated Bennington could have a department that is covered 24/7 with his proposal. He asked the Selectmen to consider extending this agreement for 2025. Excluding benefits and/or raises, the PD budget, if presented to voters as Chief LePine has presented, has an increase \$6,200.00. LePine discussed continuation of Antrim agreement into 2025, no decision was made.
- Chief LePine would like a raise for Ms. Minahan once the academy is completed. He would like to propose \$1.00/hour which would bring her up to \$23.00/hour.
- Cruiser replacement – no new cruiser in 2025. The old cruiser only has 86,000 miles and is in great shape. The maintenance budget was increased \$3,000.00 just in case. The Tahoe is in great shape.

Old Greenfield Road – Chairman Cleary mentioned he would like to see speed detail done on Old Greenfield Road. Now that it is repaved, cars go fast and there are children that play at the end, near South Bennington Road. Selectmen encouraged Chief LePine to go speak to the parents of the children and emphasize the importance of them not playing in the road.

6:41 – Road Agent, Matt Blanchard –

Roadwork - Blanchard informed Selectmen that shimming is complete. DJ made a shoulder spreader, with material the town got from the Transfer Station, it works great. DJ has also made a cutting edge to go between the railings for overgrown weeds.

Selectmen thanked Matt for the “No Trucks” sign at Starrett Road, they would like another one placed on the other side of the road.

Whittemore –

- Raft is coming out of the water this week
- The road looks great

- Grass is growing and filling in nicely
- Rototill the beach in the spring
- Perforated pipe & ¾" stone that was installed at the backside of the beach helped a lot with mosquitos and bugs this past summer

Selectman James asked if the backhoe was leaking pressure? Blanchard responded that no, the machine lets pressure out so it doesn't constantly hold pressure. It is a pressure release valve.

Asked how the vehicles are running, Matt said DJ has been taking care of all the maintenance of town trucks and they are running great.

CV515- Blanchard reported that the cab & chassis for the new truck should begin being built between Thanksgiving and December. The build will take 4-6 weeks. We should take receipt of the truck February/March as was scheduled.

Once the new truck is received and the current truck is dismantled, there is someone who has shown interest in the vehicle. The business would like to purchase it for parts. This same person has inquired about purchasing the freightliner truck. The price offered is right in the ballpark of what we had discussed when selling the truck was discussed.

Discussion followed that the funds from the sale of the freightliner could be placed into the CRF

Winter Sand – The town is doing well with the winter sand. Next year we may need to process some. Received the Tri-Town report from Frankestown, nothing from Antrim to date. Antrim did process quite a bit of sand and stone in 2024.

Hours - Winter hours are in place for the DPW

2025 Budget – Selectmen suggested Blanchard be ready for the next meeting with his proposed budget and review it with the Board.

Minutes: Selectmen approved September 23, 2024

Financial: Selectmen approved A/P & Payroll Manifests

Other:

NHDOT Grant – The Town Administrator has reached out to JB Mack from Southwest Regional Planning Commission and discussed grants for sidewalk extension on Antrim Road. Mr. Mack did do some research, and at this time, that location does not seem to be a good fit for the grant that is available. The grant would be a 50% match, noting that the area on Antrim Road is very dangerous and it would be very expensive to provide a safe sidewalk.

NHMA Conference – October 30 & 31 – Selectmen approved Town Administrator and ZBA Chair attendance at this conference.

Trustee of Trust Funds Reimbursements – Town Administrator mentioned July 3, 2024 request for reimbursement was made and not yet been taken care of. There are 3 more requests since then for other reimbursements. There are currently \$56,494.62 of requests for reimbursement that have not been processed. It was further noted, there have not been minutes of any meetings; TTF are required to meet at a minimum quarterly, post meetings and minutes.

Brief discussion followed.

Motion by Selectman Parisi that the Trustee of Trust Funds need to be notified that funds \$56,000.00 +/- need reimbursement to the town. Some of the reimbursements were requested several months ago and have not been addressed. Further in accordance with RSA 31, meetings, postings and minutes need to be followed accordingly. Town Administrator to contact the TTF and determine what the delay has been. Seconded by Selectmen James & Chairman Cleary. Motion passed affirmatively, 3-0.

Decision: Town Administrator to contact TTF and further follow-up with the motion.

Sawyer Park Monument – Selectmen Parisi & Cleary met at Sawyer Park, they will remove and replace the bushes at the monument in the spring.

Adjournment:

With nothing further, Chairman Cleary motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:12 pm. The next scheduled meeting is October 21, 2024 at 6:00 pm. Seconded by Selectmen Parisi & James.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debra Davidson".

Debra Davidson, Town Administrator