

Bennington Board of Selectmen
Monday, April 21, 2025
Selectmen's Minutes – 6:00 pm

Selectboard: Chairman, James Cleary, Tony Parisi, Travis McClure

Staff:

Public:

Appointments:

6:00 – Road Agent, DJ Wing – DJ was before the Selectmen to discuss his monthly update.

- **Classes** - DJ and Curtis attended a class on paving last week at the T-square program.
- **Backhoe** - The backhoe has had minor repairs, this was covered under the warranty
- **New Truck** - The new truck will be delivered in September/October
- **Paving** – this summer Old Stage Coach Road will be paved from the Catholic Cemetery to Dodge Road. DJ provided a quote for \$76,000.00 for this project. A couple of other smaller areas are also to be considered in town, more information on that will be provided at a later date. North Bennington Road will be chip sealed, the price for that is \$40,000.00
- **Road Plan** – DJ has been working on a road plan, using the plan that was previously laid out with the help of SWRPC. SWRPC will be contacted to see if they still provide the service to assist with updating the road plan.
- **Culverts** – Belmore has been hired to clean out the culverts in town. Starting with Acre St. and Eaton Ave. The cost is \$6,000.00, they will be here in August and Bennington will have two days. Depending how far they get, Bible Hill and Antrim Rd. may also be included in the project. They are sharing the cost with Hancock, who will have 3 days and Bennington will have two.
- **Sweeping** – The town roads will be swept this week, the project will start tomorrow, April 21, 2025.

- **Grading** – This week Gillis Hill Rd has been graded, tomorrow it will be raked and calcium will be put down to keep the dust to a minimum.
- **Bridges** – Discussion followed on bridges and the maintenance. Chairman Cleary mentioned there is a grant for \$50 - \$60,000 for bridge maintenance. The Town owns 5 bridges and the file for this grant will be located, the funds need to be used by the end of this year Cleary believes. Dan's Island, Old Greenfield Rd., and down near Alberto's will be worked on. Chairman Cleary discussed the repair for the bridge near Albertos was quoted approximately \$200,000.00 for repair, the town would be responsible for 20%, or approximately \$40,000.00. DJ mentioned he had built an attachment that will go under the guardrails, this will help with mowing under the guardrails. DJ has had conversations with Dave Parker regarding the guardrails and bridge maintenance. There is a pressure washed product, it is expensive but well worth it to clean the bridges.
- **Vehicle Maintenance** – DJ stated he is up to date with all the highway equipment. The police call when they need something done on the cruisers. Selectman McClure mentioned that 1 idle hour is equal to 25 miles. It will be mentioned to Chief Sullivan to keep track of idle hours. All the highway equipment has been oiled, they will be oiled again in the fall.
- **Sawyer Field** – Chairman Cleary mentioned the logging being done at Sawyer Field. He has spoken with the neighbor who was supportive of planting arborvitaes along the driveway that goes along the right of way, providing privacy as well as keeping the ground intact. Selectmen will look into getting a machine that can pull stumps. Discussion followed. Scheduling was discussed, Tentatively May 10th will be designated as the day to get the machine and get gravel there. DJ will plan on taking a couple days off during the week and plan on he and Curtis Dude working the weekend on May 10 to help get the material on site and get the project finished up. The swings will be moved as well as the bandstand will be moved to the center of the flat area. Underground electricity will be provided for the stage.

Selectmen thanked DJ and further commended him for doing a great job on the roads.

6:30 – Melissa Clark – Melissa was before the Selectmen with recreation updates.

- **Easter** - The Easter event was very successful, there were approximately 75 children that participated.
- **Rhubarb Festival** – Melissa said there is a Rhubarb meeting on Thursday, she wondered if Selectman Parisi could attend. He was familiar with the parking last year and hoped he could be helpful with the Committee. Selectman Parisi indicated he was not available on Thursday, he has another commitment. Melissa asked if the highway crew could help set up tents on the Thursday evening before the Rhubarb Festival? A brief discussion followed, the highway crew cannot help with tent set up. The Rhubarb Committee will need to find volunteers. Selectmen agreed, the highway crew can help get the tents, tables etc. down to the park, again they cannot help set up the event unless they do it as a volunteer on their own time.

6:45 – Brian Quinn & James Creighton – Both Brian & Jim were before the Selectboard to discuss the VFW use.

- **Scheduling** – Brian opened stating that there are concerns that two years in a row there was a scheduling conflict for the pancake breakfast. Chairman Cleary stated that for 20 years the Conservation Commission has their pancake breakfast on the 3rd Saturday of April in support of Earth Day. This tradition will continue and the Town will have priority, a schedule will be needed for the office to schedule appropriately. Brian said they have events planned a year in advance. Cleary provided a building reservation application to Quinn and indicated that it needed to go through the town to avoid any conflicts in the future, Quinn was asked to return the form to the office as soon as possible.
- **Tables & Chairs** – Brian discussed that many of the tables & chairs that the VFW has purchased have disappeared. Discussion followed, it was discussed how during elections the tables are sometimes borrowed, an effort to return them all will be made going forward. The Town Administrator will look through all the tables and chairs upstairs and the VFW tables and chairs, if any are found, will be returned to the VFW.
- **Lock** – The door jam has obviously been tampered with, the lock has been changed but Quinn asked if the jam can be strengthened and if anyone who

uses the VFW can be told not to go into that closet, including the cleaners. Selectmen agreed to this request.

- **Other matters** – It was suggested that the building be checked weekly. It was reported to the board that often the heat has been left on, the building is not swept, tables & chairs have been left out and trash has not been removed. After a brief discussion Selectmen agreed that either the Town Administrator and/or the highway crew will inspect the building on a weekly basis.
- **Memorial Day** – Discussion followed with regards to Memorial Day, Monday, May 26, 2025. Creighton mentioned there is a plan for a parade with the VFW and the American Legion, also having a band on the Monday, the time is not yet determined but Creighton will be in touch with details once they are clearly set. Selectmen assured there will be police on duty. New flags were discussed, the route of the parade was also discussed.
- **POW/MIA Day** – Brian Quinn discussed that the VFW post was chosen to hold a POW/MIA Day on Sunday, September 21, 2025 at 11:00 am. Location for this event was discussed, nothing for certain at this time was determined. This is a public event. More information will be provided once it becomes available.
- **Invoices** – Not having submitted any invoices for several years, it was suggested that the VFW submit invoices for Memorial Day for wreaths and flags. Selectmen had no problem with this.

Selectmen thanked Creighton & Quinn and appreciated the updates and look forward to a positive relationship moving forward.

7:00 - Zack Anderson – Zack updated selectmen with Fire Department information.

- **New Door** – Zack is waiting for a price on enlarging the door at the fire department.
- **Old Fire Truck** – There was one inquiry to the fire truck, it was provided to the Selectboard. Selectmen suggested before accepting this bid the truck be advertised on Municibid for at least one month. Discussion followed as to the price to accept.
- **Mounting Equipment** – the bid for the mounting equipment came in much lower than originally quoted. The cost is \$2,600.00. The rescue truck is still

waiting for the box, we are waiting for brackets. Selectmen authorized purchase of the brackets.

- **Wex Codes** – new codes will be provided to Zack
- **Ambulance Services** – Selectmen and the Fire Chief discussed ambulance services and other options. No decisions were made at this time. Selectmen would like to meet with Antrim Selectboard before making any decisions. Selectmen would like the Bennington EMT's to come to the next meeting so they can talk.

Selectmen thanked Zack for the updates.

Minutes: April 7, 2025 Minutes were accepted as written.

Financial: A/P & Payroll Manifests were signed

Signatures:

- **Intent to excavate** –
- **VFW Rental** – Selectmen approved a VFW usage from the Conservation Commission.
- **Excavation Tax** – Hardwick, Craig, Frankestown Sand & Gravel
- **MS 232** – Selectmen signed the MS232

Other:

- **Cyclical Review from DRA** –
- **Insurance** - update for early retirees only – Motion by Chairman Cleary to update the insurance plan for early retirees only to option AB20225/50/3KDED. Motion accepted by Selectmen McClure and Parisi. No discussion. Motion passed 3-0
- **Edward French Scholarship** – There has been one applicant, the Town Administrator has had no luck with ConVal returning calls as to how to process the application. If there are no more applicants, the current applicant will receive the entire appropriated amount.
- **Clothing bin** – Apparel Impact is a veteran owned clothing program. They will donate clothes to at least 20 families and to any veteran families in need. They will be putting a clothing bin at the Transfer Station, they asked if they could

also place one at the VFW. Discussion followed. At this time, due to limited space, the Board does not support placing a bin at the VFW.

- **Vacant positions within the town** – Several positions remain open. The TTF have one interested resident, possibly two, but no one has stepped up to fill any of the vacancies. We will continue to encourage participation from residents in all the vacant positions.
- **Conservation Commission** – Selectmen reviewed an email from Mike Munhall, on behalf of the Conservation Commission asking for the name of the VFW to be changed to the Depot. After discussion, Selectmen unanimously agree the building will remain the VFW. The building was donated by the VFW and they continue to use it on a regular basis.
- **Mike Hoyte** – Mr. Hoyte called and spoke with the Town Administrator. He mentioned there is a meeting at the SAU on Thursday at 6:00 pm. He asked that a Selectman be present if possible. They are discussing the State of NH position and how it will likely affect towns. Selectman Cleary will try to make the meeting. Directly after the 6:00 pm meeting is a Selectman Advisory meeting, that meeting will be and the Withdrawal Committee will be discussing Temple's interest in withdrawing as well as Francistown's intent to continue to pursue withdrawing.

8:15 pm - With nothing further Chairman Cleary adjourned the meeting. The next Selectmen's meeting will be scheduled for Monday, April 28, 2025 at 6:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,



Debra Davidson, Town Administrator