

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – October 24, 2007

Selectmen Philip Germain, James Trow and Joseph Cuddemi were present, as well as Administrator Denise French. The meeting was called to order at 5:29 p.m.

Motion was made, seconded and voted to accept the October 17, 2007 Selectmen's meeting Minutes subject to three amendments. Page one, last bullet under the Road Agent section, replace "committed to attending" with "was asked to attend"; page three, first bullet, begin the first sentence with "Selectmen Trow and Cuddemi". Page three, first bullet, end the first sentence with "; Chairman Germain opposed".

The Selectmen reviewed an Estimated Budget Request for the Antrim-Bennington-Hillsboro-Deering Regional Prosecution Program and noted an increase of \$6,810.44 (52.74%) from last year's budget. The Board will review the proposed Regional Prosecution Budget with the Police Chief.

Road Agent David Blanchard met with the Board. Mutual items of interest discussed included:

- A review of FST's meeting with the Selectmen the previous evening since Blanchard was unable to attend the planning session.
- Gravel has been put out; grading has not been completed as yet due to the inclement weather. "Well Road" also needs to be graveled.
- A report was received that the compactor's shaft required welding, which was provided by Gary Langlois.
- Bible Hill Road culvert and shoulder work should be done next week.
- Approximately twenty hours is needed to finish roadside mowing.
- Walter Kiblin is scheduled to work with the County inmate workers next week. Schedule permitting, the County workers will assist the Highway Department with clearing brush away from the fence at the former Tri-Town Landfill site.
- A report was received regarding David's progress on developing the Ten-Year Road Maintenance Plan. The Selectmen asked that the Plan be delivered at their November 7th meeting.
- Also on November 7th, the Selectmen plan to review winter snow removal operations with the Road Agent and David Desaulniers from Pine View Excavation/Landclearing.
- The November work schedule calendar needs to be developed and submitted to the Board.

The Selectmen received a report that the Water Commissioners would not apply for a Water Protection Grant because the Selectmen had not marked the property to show where the fencing should be installed. Furthermore, Commissioner Wilson was hesitant to file the Grant Application since the Town does not own the perimeter of the well. The Administrator was instructed to notify the Water Commissioners that the Board of Selectmen would apply for the Water Protection Grant even though the Commissioners refused to. The perimeter fence around the well is required by law.

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Antrim Selectmen Steve Schacht and Ben Pratt, Antrim Town Administrator Bill Prokop and Quantum Construction Consultants, Inc.'s President/CEO Lisa Martin met with the Board of Selectmen to discuss the jointly owned bridge near the Bible Hill Road and North Bennington Road intersection. The group reviewed a report prepared by Quantum Construction Consultants which described Bridge #184/071 and its condition. Short-term recommendations include temporary measures to provide guardrail improvements and immediate maintenance that should be undertaken to prevent further deterioration of the bridge. The short-term repair budget is estimated to be \$80,000. Additionally, an Application for State Bridge Aid Construction should be filed soon since, based on the current funding program, funds for the bridge may not be available until 2013 or later. The shared cost to Antrim and Bennington would be 20% of the project. The estimated cost for bridge replacement is \$1,350,000. Rehabilitation cost is estimated at \$650,000. Antrim and Bennington Selectmen agreed that the two towns would undertake temporary repairs now and seek assistance from NHDOT to determine future needs for the bridge. Unofficially the two Boards agreed in principle to a shared cost of 50% each community. Antrim Selectmen will officially vote on the matter at their next public session of the full Board.

Antrim Town Administrator Bill Prokop apprised the Bennington Selectmen of concerns expressed by Hillsborough Town Administrator Jim Coffey regarding the Hillsborough District Court. Prokop reported that the Hillsborough District Court is no longer recognized by the State and is now considered a substation of the Henniker District Court. Further Henniker no longer plans to construct a new courthouse. The Hillsborough Board of Selectmen is seeking support from Antrim and Bennington to work with Senators to promote a new courthouse in Hillsborough on land currently owned by the State. The Bennington Board of Selectmen unanimously agreed to participate in this endeavor.

The Selectmen reviewed Invoice No. 2 from Fay, Thorndike and Spofford. The bulk of the invoice is for surveying services. Based on a report presented at their October 23rd meeting with FST and Chas H. Sells, Inc. that the survey plan lacks a professional stamp, the Selectmen voted to table Invoice No. 2 until they speak with FST officials.

The Selectmen acted on the following matters:

- Received a work copy of the 2008 Budget indicating the 3% budget increase limitation.
- Tabled the Draft of the Campaign/Fundraising Policy until the November 14th meeting.
- Reaffirmed that the sick leave provisions of the May 16, 2007 Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual are in force.
- Viewed a letter being circulated by the VFW stating that the Post is having financial difficulties and is considering turning the property over to the Town, with stipulations.
- Received a written report from Chief Campbell outlining his attendance at the International Association Chiefs of Police Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana.
- Declined an invitation from the Peterborough Cable Committee to continue the legal process for renewal of the cable franchise agreement. In the past Bennington combined efforts with other communities under the Monadnock Consortium.
- Reviewed a Fire Department invoice for the purchase of three pagers. The Selectmen voted to pay for the purchase from the equipment replacement line-item rather than the radio repair line-item, as presented.

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- Received confirmation from DRA that the 2007 tax rate is \$21.24, an increase of 1.2%.
- Heard a report that the Code Enforcement Official issued a Stop Work Order for construction at 144 Onset Road.
- Signed a Building Permit for Map 3, Lot 8-1.
- Signed two Time-off Requests.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Denise French
Administrator