

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – January 5, 2011

Selectmen Joseph Cuddemi, Philip Germain and Steven Osienski were present as well as Administrator Denise French. The meeting was called to order at 5:42 p.m.

The Selectmen took the following action:

- Reviewed and approved the December 29, 2010 and January 4, 2011 Selectmen's Minutes.
- Reviewed and approved the January 5, 2011 Payroll Register.
- Heard a report that only one estimate has been received for replacing the Fire Station furnace with a second one promised. Arrangements were made with the Fire Chief to meet January 19th to finalize arrangements for the furnace replacement.
- The Board voted to meet January 8, 2011 for the purpose of viewing Town-owned property at 186 State Route 202.
- Police Statistics for December 2010, 4th Quarter 2010, 2010 Calendar Year and a Comparison of calls for 1999-2010 were reviewed.
- Agreed to permit a resident to use the Town Hall gym for conducting free writing/painting workshops; the tentative designated day is Saturday afternoons when Town Hall is not open to the general public.
- Agreed that the Town should explore the possibility of aggregating the purchase of electricity as proposed by the NH Municipal Association.
- Received notice of a January 12th "Button Up, New Hampshire" workshop which is being sponsored by Antrim, Bennington & Hancock Energy Committees. Regrettably the date and time conflicts with the Selectmen's weekly meeting schedule.
- Tabled action on the Transportation Enhancement Program's Municipal Agreement.
- Signed the 2011 Contract for General Assessing Services with Commerford Nieder Perkins, LLC. The vendor agreed to reduce their 2011 per parcel assessing cost down to the 2010 rate of \$45 per parcel.
- Heard a report that the Planning Board will not be proposing 2011 changes to the Zoning Ordinance but will be putting forth Non-Binding Referendums to the voters to get a sense of the community's perception regarding zoning controls.
- Discussed the upcoming implementation of Direct Deposit for payroll.
- In view of the immediate need to replace the Fire Department's furnace the Board agreed to add \$5,000 to the Town Building Expendable Trust Fund's requested appropriation.

By invitation the following Departments/Committees were present to discuss proposed 2011 funding prior to the January 12th Budget Hearing: Road Agent Gary Russell, Water/Sewer Commissioners John Spanos and Sal Landi, Capital Reserve Funding Committee members Harvey Goodwin (also Budget Committee), Joe MacGregor and Robyn Manley, Budget Committee members Deb Whitney and Rick Reed, Fire Department Officials Allan Wilson and Mike Roina, Planning Board Chair Jeff Rose, Town Clerk Deb Belcher, Police Chief Steve Campbell, Library Officials Leslie MacGregor, Lisa Shingler and Laurie MacKeigan. Also attending this portion of the meeting was resident David McKenzie. The following topics were discussed:

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- A proposed purchase of real estate at 172 State Route 202, formerly known as “Plants Alive”. An opportunity has been presented to the Selectmen to purchase the property for \$63,000 – which represents actual out-of-pocket costs from the seller at the time of his January 4, 2011 purchase without any addition of profit. The assessed value of the property is \$189,000, of which \$20,000 in value is attributed to the greenhouses. The consensus of the majority in attendance was to move forward with a Warrant Article for the purchase and let the voters decide whether or not the acquisition of the two-acre property with building is in the Town’s best interest.
- Consideration was given to reducing or eliminating some of the 2011 proposed appropriations to the Capital Reserve Funds. It was overwhelmingly agreed that the voters should decide the fate of these funds since any deviation from the planned funding format would compromise future purchases.
- The audience received the proposed 2011 Budget; no questions were put forth to the Selectmen.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Denise French
Town Administrator