

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – May 3, 2017

Selectmen James Cleary, Mark Mackesy and Jeffrey Rose were present as well as Administrator Denise French. The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

Molly Eppig met with the Selectmen to discuss the following:

- Invited each of the Selectmen to be a tasting judge at the June 3rd annual Rhubarb Festival. Board members will check their schedules and report back to Molly by May 8th.
- On behalf of the Historical Society discussion ensued as to the Town's interest in reviving the Boston Post Cane presentation; the original Cane is housed at the Bennington Historical Society. The Selectmen enthusiastically support the award of the replica Boston Post Cane to the oldest Bennington resident as determined using criteria for NH voter registration.
- Concern that a situation exists where an individual is a member of both the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The Selectmen assured Molly that NH Statue provides for this dual role.

Police Chief Bret Sullivan met with the Selectmen to discuss the following:

- Accepted, with regret, the resignation of Crossing Guard Dottie Gates. The Chief has received three applications; interviews are underway.
- Discussed the Chief's decision to hire David Bell to fill a vacant part-time police officer position. The Selectmen signed the appointment; Selectman Cleary administered the Oath of Office to Mr. Bell.

The Selectmen took action on the following matters:

- Reviewed and approved Payroll and Accounts Payable Registers for April 27 and May 4, 2017.
- Discussed the importance of adequately recording Minutes of Nonpublic Sessions. Selectman Mackesy shared information gleaned from his attendance at the Selectmen's Workshop recently held in Peterborough. The Administrator distributed a three page "fill in the blanks" template for the Board's use. The Selectmen asked that more right-to-know law criteria be sought from Town Counsel.
- Were pleased to hear that the Town can now accept credit and debit card payments for any financial obligation. It was agreed to include town-wide notification of this new service within the spring newsletter that will be mailed by month's end.
- Agreed to replace the Invoice Cloud, which only accepts credit/debit card payments for the Tax Collector, with the ePay2GOV program which will accept credit and debit card payments for any Town obligation. Recognizing that the Town is liable to pay the vendor an annual user fee, Selectmen Cleary and Rose voted that the credit/debit card users should bear the associated \$1.50 per item cost to the Town; Selectman Mackesy voted that the Town should pay the annual \$425 user fee.
- Heard a revised report that the Road Agent and VFW officials will temporarily place the gifted granite bench at The Common ahead of Memorial Day; this fall the bench will be permanently installed.

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- Revenue of \$92,812.05 from the closed Sewer Capital Reserve Fund was deposited into the Town's General Fund on May 3rd.
- Were disappointed to learn that Howard Clow resigned his employment without notice.
- Voted to correct a wage disparity which exists amongst the Town's as-needed Transfer Station employees. Wages were in the range of \$10 to \$13.50 an hour; the new wage as of May 1, 2017 is now \$14 an hour for as-needed certified employees who do not receive any employee benefits.
- Received a rebuttal from Transfer Station Manager William O'Connor relative to the Transfer Station's operating hours. The matter will again be referred to the Solid Waste Committee for their review and recommendation.
- Agreed to abate a \$201.73 tax lien which was recorded July 29, 1986. Neither the Tax Collector nor the Title Examiner has been able to find a paid statement or release of the tax lien for property identified as M21/L8.
- Upon review of the Energy Committee's draft Request for Proposals, the Selectmen voted to delay requesting Proposals to allow Eversource time to turn-off approximately 28 targeted street lights ahead of determining which street lights should be upgraded with a LED fixture.
- Heard a report that the Planning Board approved two Decisions at their April 24, 2017 Public Hearing for Tax Map 16, Lot 2 - 1) approved a Subdivision application, and 2) approved a Site Plan Review for the newly created Tax Map 16, Lot 2A which should eventually permit the construction of a Dollar General mercantile.
- Schedule permitting, Selectman Mackesy will attend the May 25th Conval Selectmen's Advisory Committee meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- Accepted the invitation of Richard Maloon, associated with the NH Old Graveyard Association, to teach volunteers how to properly clean monument markers. The invitation was received as a result of the Administrator's inquiry about the proper cleaning of the Civil War monument. The workshop, which is free of charge, will be open to the public and likely take place at Sunnyside Cemetery at a date to be determined.
- As previously recommended by Fire Chief David Foster, the Selectmen signed a State form to appoint Matthew Hall as Bennington's Forest Fire Warden.
- The Selectmen signed a Current Use application for M21/L13-4; an Eversource Petition and Pole License; and a corrected version of a Gravel Tax Levy for M3/L1.

The Board unanimously adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

Prior to members departing the Selectmen's Office, Selectman Mackesy shut the meeting room's door to initiate discussion relative to the lingering suspension of a Fire Department employee. No votes were taken.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise French
Administrator