

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – January 24, 2018

Selectmen James Cleary, Jeffrey Rose and Mark Mackesy were present as well as Administrator Denise French and Deputy Administrator Kristie LaPlante. The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m.

State Representative Jon Manley met with the Selectmen to update the Board on the status of HB101 FN which he sponsored. This bill lengthens the time a Solid Waste Operator Certificate is valid from one year to two years. The Selectmen will send a letter to the Senate in support of the two year renewal in which the Town would realize savings from renewal fees, wages, mileage and at times eliminating the need for a substitute employee when attendance at a training workshop conflicts with the Town's needs.

Conservation Commission members Jon Manley, Joseph MacGregor and Michael Munhall met with the Selectmen to discuss the following:

- Surprise that the Commission's decision to support Francestown Land Trust with a \$7,000 payment from the Conservation Fund is stalled until an affirmative Town Meeting vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 36-A:4-a, I(b).
- An understanding that the investment in the Bennington land (Map 5, Lot 5), soon to be owned by Francestown Land Trust, could include a deeded executory interest to protect ownership; i.e. if Francestown Land Trust goes out of business then the Town of Bennington would become the owner of this 112-acre parcel.
- An understanding that the investment in the Bennington land, soon to be owned by Francestown Land Trust, could include a Conservation Easement.
- Expressed support from the Selectmen that, if an affirmative vote appropriates \$5,000 to the Conservation Fund, the money would come from the fund balance rather than from taxation.
- Disappointment that the requested 50% funds realized from the sale of gravel and timber tax revenue could not be combined into one warrant article.
- Concern about the placement of the four Conservation Commission sponsored warrant articles. It was agreed that the article requesting adoption of RSA 36-A:4-a, I(b) will immediately follow the Operating Budget warrant article.

Deputy Administrator Kristie LaPlante addressed the need to improve communications and responsibilities between the Cemetery Trustees, Trustees of Trust Funds and Town Administration due to the following:

- A Cemetery Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund was created in 2014 without following protocol prescribed by the State of NH. Funds in this Trust were donated through NH Charitable Trust.
- In November the Trustees' apparently received notice that the David Glynn Estate gifted \$50,000 for the Sunnyside Cemetery. A Sunnyside Cemetery Expendable Trust Fund has not been established although the gifted funds have been invested. The Selectmen will address this oversight at a future Board meeting where they will vote to ratify the Sunnyside Cemetery funds received that was invested prematurely.

- In November the Trustees' apparently received notice that the David Glynn Estate gifted the Town \$7,500 for the establishment of an Evergreen Cemetery Trust. The Selectmen will accept the \$7,500 at a future Board meeting and establish this Trust according to protocol.
- Any future funds received from gifts, legacies and devises for any public purpose that is allowed must be presented to the Board of Selectmen for acceptance under RSA 31:19 which was adopted by the voters at March 2008 Town Meeting.

The Selectmen took action on the following matters:

- Reviewed and approved the Board's January 10, 2018 Minutes. Also reviewed was the January 10th Budget Hearing Minutes as well as the January 3rd Energy Committee Minutes.
- Reviewed and approved Payroll and Accounts Payable Registers for January 18, 2018 as well as the January 25, 2018 Payroll Register.
- Excepting the Board's unanimous vote to remove the \$30,000 warrant article for VFW engineering services, the Board approved content of the 2018 Warrant and Budget. The Selectmen each agreed to sign the final documents during the weekend as well as the Default Budget.
- Heard a further report that the VFW likely ran out of fuel earlier in the month due to the configuration of the oil tank which disbursed the oil to a minimal depth and, also, the single oil feed from the basement tank to the elevated furnace. The Selectmen agreed to install suggested remedies as put forth by the Town's furnace contractor.
- Authorized the Administrator to sign an agreement with NH Schoolcare to continue providing health insurance to the Town through June 30, 2019; the premium will increase 0.5% at July 1, 2018.
- Selectman Rose agreed to seek background information on a potential new hire.
- Completed the Auditor's risk management questionnaire ahead of the January 30th annual audit.
- Accepted, with regret, Peter Martel's notice of impending resignation from the Energy Committee.

Reviewed, approved and executed were:

- NHDOT Work Zone Agreement
- Auditor's engagement letter
- 2018 Assessing Contract
- Acceptance of the 2019 Revaluation Proposal

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise French
Administrator