

**BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD MEETING
BENNINGTON FIRE FACILITY
130 RIVER STREET
BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201**

MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2015

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Sharyn Brush-Vice Chair; Tom Jacobs; Michael Keane; Jim Carroll; Justin Corcoran; Donald Campbell (*newly elected*)

Absent: John McFadden

ALSO PRESENT: Stuart Hurd, Town Manager; Dan Monks, Zoning Administrator & Assistant Town Manager; Police Chief Paul Doucette; Fire Chief Jeff Vickers; Mike Harrington, Economic & Community Development Director; Keith Whitcomb - Bennington Banner; Linda E. Bermudez – Secretary; (4) Citizens.

At 6:00 P.M., **Sharyn Brush** called the meeting to order.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Sharyn Brush, recited by all.

2. REORGANIZE

Motion: Michael Keane motioned and Jim Carroll seconded to appoint Tom Jacobs as Select Board Chair. Motion passed unanimously (*John McFadden absent; Tom Jacobs abstained*)

Motion: Donald Campbell motioned and Justin Corcoran seconded to appoint John McFadden as Vice-Chair. Motion passed unanimously (*John McFadden absent*)

At this time Tom Jacobs reads a prepared statement. He noted that moving forward he has great hopes for the new board. There will be some notable changes including this evening seating arrangements and a new agenda format coming in next few weeks. Mr. Jacobs would like the Board to be the catalyst for change and risk taking. He invited developers and investors to attend Select Board meetings as well as the general public. Mr. Jacobs would like to recruit

ideas for common goals for the community. All the goals may not be completed in his tenure but we must keep them moving.

Mr. Jacobs finished his statement by stating we must use social media to our advantage.

3. MINUTES – MARCH 23, 2015

There were no corrections for the minutes of March 23, 2015.

Motion: Sharyn Brush motioned and Michael Keane seconded to approve the Minutes of March 23, 2015 as submitted. Motion passed unanimously (John McFadden absent; Justin Corcoran abstained)

4. WARRANTS

The next warrants of FY'15 were reviewed. There were no questions.

Motion: Justin Corcoran motioned and Michael Keane seconded to accept and approve the warrant as submitted. Motion passed unanimously (John McFadden absent)

Warrants were then circulated for signatures.

5. MARKETING VIDEO PRESENTATION

Michael Harrington stepped forward to present. He noted that the Town had received grant funding to develop a new marketing program. There have been two videos developed so far. This evening he would show a small part of the shorter of the two. The funding also allowed the development of flyers, informational packets and folders. Each of the packets &/or folders would contain more information tailored to the type of business &/or recruitment it would be presented to. For example, small business vs. large &/or industrial businesses vs. Healthcare type businesses would all be looking for different information.

After viewing the short video, Mr. Harrington noted that the full version of each interview was available for viewing on-line. Sharyn Brush stated it was well done. Mr. Harrington also noted that they used local people for the video production (photographers, videographers, local participants) as well as in the paper marketing tools. Two local printers were utilized for production & design.

Jim Carroll asked whom these packets would be going to. Mr. Harrington stated they would be distributed at trade-shows, expos, visitor centers etc. as well as by request on-line. State Representatives have all received copies and support the video as well.

Justin Corcoran asked about the funding and what was left if we need to do additional printings. Mr. Harrington stated the development & start-up printing were approximately \$9,000. When we are in need of printing more, that cost would be approximately \$4,000. The Town does have a small Marketing budget line. This may need to be increased as we move forward.

Donald Campbell noted this was fresh & new. A great job was done. Tom Jacobs requested to be updated periodically on how many requests for information come through.

Tom Jacobs took this time to officially welcome Donald Campbell to the Board. He also welcomed Jim Carroll back.

6. CITIZENS

Tom Jacobs noted that moving forward the “Citizen’s” portion is not meant for full presentations. He asked that anyone interested in speaking in the Citizen’s portion that they keep their statements &/or questions focused and brief. If more information is necessary, they can be placed on a future agenda to address the issue.

At this time Jim Carroll stated he is a part of the upcoming issue and recused himself from the board for this item.

Jeff Grimshaw stepped forward and noted he is a “new” resident for the last (2) years and very happy here. He addressed the cancellation of the 2015 Car Show. Several concerned citizens have come together and to see if they can do something. They feel they need to take bold action.

The concerned citizens have drafted a “new event” for a “Downtown Car Show”. This would be a one-day event – Saturday September 19th, 2015 from 10:00am to 11:00pm. Mr. Grimshaw proceeded to review some of the drafted event’s details. They would include:

- Closing Main Street within the parameters of Mayfest from 5:00am to 12:00am
- Involve local dealerships
- Vendors
- Have classic cars but also new models to be released
- A car-hop dance party with bands in the evening
- Contests and awards (ie “people’s choice”)
- Free admission for the public

They would like to make the car-show younger and sexier. This would be free to the public. They would make their money from vendor fees, car entry fees, sponsorships and merchandising. These numbers seem to work so far.

Mr. Grimshaw stated that he has spoken with both the BBC and the Chamber of Commerce who state they should move ahead with this idea.

Tom Jacobs noted this had moved more towards a presentation. He suggested that they deal with the Manager’s Office to find out more what they need from the Town to move forward. Mr. Jacobs would then like to see this as an agenda item to be discussed further as soon as possible.

Justin Corcoran thanked everyone for all the work so far and hopes to see this move forward.

7. FIRE DEPARTMENT – PRIVATE ALARM ORDINANCE / 2ND READING

The Manager noted he is looking for approval tonight on these next three ordinances. He asked the Police Chief and Fire Chief to step forward and answer any questions the Board may have.

Fire Chief Vickers noted that the current state report they must fill out make it difficult to extract some of the numbers that the Board had requested. If the ordinances are approved they can be altered slightly to pull that information more easily moving forward. Chief Vickers however did report the number of false alarm calls over the last three years.

- 2012 = (6) False Alarm calls
- 2013 = (17) False Alarm Calls
- 2014 = (22) False Alarm Calls

Each one of these calls must be treated as if it were an actual fire. We cannot take any chances.

Michael Keane asked why there was such a big increase in false alarms. Chief Vickers noted it is purely random, however one location alone had (7) false alarm calls.

Donald Campbell stated the fees were not very large. He questioned if the Town would be wasting more money trying to get reimbursement. Police Chief Paul Doucette stated the Police Department has been doing this now for the last (3) years with mostly success. The department is not looking for big revenue. What is wanted is compliance; to fix the alarms. The fee acts as an incentive to come into compliance.

Michael Keane also noted the danger in manpower and equipment waiting at a false alarm to be confirmed when another “real” fire call can come in.

Motion: Michael Keane motioned and Sharyn Brush seconded to accept and approve the amendment to the ordinance as presented. Motion passed unanimously (John McFadden absent)

8. FIRE DEPARTMENT – SERVICE REIMBURSEMENT ORDINANCE / 2ND READING

The Manager explained this would be to address accidents/negligence that could have been avoided.

Chief Vickers stated some statistics for the last three years:

- Vehicle Extraditions
 - 2012 = 19
 - 2013 = 23
 - 2014 = 25

- Unauthorized Burning
 - 2012 = 1
 - 2013 = 4
 - 2014 = 4

Tom Jacobs questioned how well they would be able to collect these fees. Chief Vickers stated they would be submitted to the insurance companies. Most companies now expect to pay these fees as many locations have adopted such a policy. Chief Doucette noted that many of our surrounding smaller towns have already been doing this. They however pay a third-party company to produce and mail the bills. We will be using “in-house” personnel at either the Police Department or the Town Offices. Whatever is collected will be put into a reserve fund to offset costs for any repairs or replacement of equipment used for these type calls. It will be less burdensome on the taxpayer.

Motion: Sharyn Brush motioned and Michael Keane seconded to approve and accept this ordinance as presented. Motion passed unanimously (John McFadden absent)

9. MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE VARIABLE RATE PRICING AND HAULER REGISTRATION REPORTING ORDINANCE / 2ND READING

The Manager noted that this is now mandated by the State of Vermont and must be in place by June 18th, 2015. This was developed based on a draft developed by the State. The fees for the Haulers by Bennington shall be \$15 for an individual vehicle and \$50 for a fleet.

Motion: Sharyn Brush motioned and Justin Corcoran seconded to accept and approve this ordinance as submitted. Motion passed unanimously (John McFadden absent)

10. ALLIANCE AGREEMENT / 2ND READING

The Manager noted there are many new laws and State goals coming our way. The State would like to move towards 50% recycling rate – we are currently at approximately 30%. By 2020 everyone will be required to remove compostable materials from their garbage. Large consumers as in restaurants, hospitals, dormitories etc are already doing this. Single Family homes will be required soon. This alliance will allow for shared costs. Many towns listed have already adopted this. Once this is in place we can move forward with the development of the tools to comply and an implementation plan. This has been well vetted.

The next Hazardous Waste day has been scheduled for May 9th, 2015. The Manager noted a few of these smaller towns have been invited to participate. This will be a good test run to see how well we can work together.

Motion: Sharyn Brush motioned and Justin Corcoran seconded to accept and enter into this Alliance Agreement as submitted.

Discussion:

Sam Restino, resident was allowed to speak. He stated he sees many new rules and regulations coming. He expressed concerns that the costs to the haulers will be put back onto the residents.

The Manager noted if a resident disposes of their garbage & recycling themselves there would be no impact on them. Only those who have curbside pick-up will see any type of impact, which should be minimal.

Tom Jacobs noted Bennington was the largest of the towns in the alliance. He questioned if we would have more responsibility. The Manager noted that each member is weighted appropriately. Everyone wants a cost savings and we all must meet the new law requirements.

Michael Keane stated that if we are the largest Town involved then we need to lead by example.

VOTE: **Motion passed unanimously** (*John McFadden absent*)

11. CONSENT AGENDA DISCUSSION

Tom Jacobs asked to table this discussion. He would like to suggest some changes in the future but would like to share with the Board first so they may review them before discussion. Mr. Jacobs also suggested developing a “Rules & Procedures” as a reference point.

12. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FUND PROGRAM UPDATE

Michael Harrington provided a brief update regarding this redevelopment fund. He noted he has met with most of the Board individually to discuss this item. However, there are still two more to be met with.

Tom Jacobs reminded Mr. Harrington that this should be “warned” soon in order to have the required two meetings and then pass the changes. It is important to get this off the ground as soon as possible.

Michael Keane noted that (50) other towns in New England already have a fund like this in place. We are not doing something new we are simply playing catch-up.

13. 2015 LIQUOR LICENSE APPLICATIONS

The Manager noted there had been (2) additions since the packet was sent. They were highlighted for easy identification. One new application is for Abigail’s Country Kitchen at Power’s Market. Tom Jacobs noted he would be abstaining from this one due to a conflict of interest. Applications were circulated for signatures.

14. GRAND LIST 2014 – NO APPEAL PENDING

The Manager noted that the annual appeals are complete. There are none pending for 2014. The Board is required to sign off on this. The 2014 tax year can then be closed.

15. MANAGER'S REPORT

The Manager reported he had several conversations with John Miner recently. In 2010 he had requested and was awarded by the Town \$50,000 for the development of a memorial at the Veteran's Home. When he finished that phase \$10,000 was left unexpended and was rolled into the General Fund.

Mr. Miner is now ready for the next phase. He is developing a "Dessert Storm" memorial also to be located at the Veteran's Home. Mr. Miner is requesting the remaining \$10,000 to continue.

Motion: Michael Keane motioned and Jim Carroll seconded to grant the remaining \$10,000 (from the General Fund) of the original amount requested in 2010 to Mr. Miner for the development of the Dessert Storm Memorial at the Veteran's Home as submitted. Motion passed unanimously (John McFadden absent)

The Manager continued by noting his recent discussions with Mike Bethel. Mr. Bethel would like to have music on the Town Office front porch similar to recent years. BBC is not running this program this year. The wiring has been updated so it could be accommodated; however the Town needs to understand better how Mr. Bethel & Mr. Sweet will run this program on their own.

Sharyn Brush asked if this would coincide with "1st Friday's". The Manager stated it would not but it is a good venue to music.

A *consensus* was reached to have the Manager continue to work with Mr. Bethel to see how this can develop further.

16. OTHER BUSINESS

Donald Campbell stated he is happy to be a part of the Board. It has been a privilege to work with the Town employees for the Morgan Street Wetlands project. Their professionalism and endurance was impressive. Thank you.

Michael Keane stated that he, along with Sharyn Brush and John McFadden developed a performance matrix. They would like to call for a Saturday session to show the rest of the Board what they are moving towards. Once that has been reviewed it will be brought into open session for the general public.

Tom Jacobs noted this is important and appreciate all their efforts. They will work on some possible dates and times for that review.

Justin Corcoran asked if the Town has heard from VT-AOT regarding the letter we sent. The Manager stated there had been no formal response to our letter or request for discussion. He noted however that Sue Mintor now has the Secretary seat. This could help us as he and Dan Monks have a long business history with her.

Also Walmart will be moving forward with their expansion project. They will be installing their own "round-about" to deal with the anticipated increased traffic. Larger interest

in Northside Drive can then be expected and could showcase the need for the larger overall improvements discussed.

Sharyn Brush asked about the complaints received on the recycling bins at the Transfer Station. The Manager noted that because we have moved to “Zero-sort” there would never be more than (3) bins now. They will be raising the bins to make them more accessible.

Donald Campbell wanted to congratulate all those who took part in “Career Week”. This was an exceptional event. There was fantastic activity here and a great job was done.

Tom Jacobs noted there is a lot going on in Town lately and appreciates the Banner’s recent coverage. Mr. Jacobs also reminded the public of the upcoming Cultural EXPlosion at the Mount Anthony Country Club.

Mr. Jacobs thanked everyone for an “easy” first meeting.

Tom Jacobs noted there was need for Executive Session.

Motion: Sharyn Brush motioned to close the meeting and move into Executive Session. Michael Keane seconds the motion. Motion passed unanimously (*John McFadden absent*)

17. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Contract

Respectfully submitted,

Linda E. Bermudez
Secretary