

1 **BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD MEETING**
2 **BENNINGTON TOWN OFFICES**
3 **205 SOUTH STREET**
4 **BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201**

5
6 **SATURDAY, JANUARY 17, 2015**

7
8 **MINUTES**
9

10 **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Greg Van Houten, Chair; Sharyn Brush,
11 Vice Chair; Jim Carroll; Justin Corcoran; John McFadden; Thomas Jacobs;
12 and Michael Keane.

13
14 **ALSO PRESENT:** Stuart Hurd, Town Manager; Melissa Currier, Finance
15 Director; Lynne Fonteneau-McCann, Bennington Free Library Director;
16 Blake Greenawalt, CAT-TV Videographer; Michele Johnson, Human
17 Resources & Contracts Administrator; RJ Joly, Highway Superintendent;
18 Tracy Knights, Parks and Recreation Director; Daniel Monks, Assistant
19 Town Manager & Planning Director; Tom Momberg, Bennington Banner
20 Reporter; and Joan Pinsonneault, Director of Collections and Town
21 Treasurer.

22
23 G. Van Houten called the meeting to order at 8:05 A.M.

24
25 **1. F.Y. '16 Budget Work Session**

26 **A. Agency Interview – Bennington Free Library**

27 L. Fonteneau-McCann gave the Board a brief presentation on the library's
28 proposed allocation request and explained that the bulk of the increase is a
29 result of the change in minimum wage. 2.7% is the non-personnel line
30 increases. She noted that the library raises 25% of its own budget. She
31 further reviewed the programs offered by the library and the number of
32 employees. The Board asked her for a line item budget. She left the
33 meeting to obtain and will return.

34
35 **B. Highway Budget**

36 RJ Joly gave a brief overview of his budget. He discussed River Road and
37 its past failure. He further explained the engineering that has been

38 performed and what work is necessary to be completed and will be done by
39 the Town. J. Carroll inquired about the purchase of a soil power-screen
40 and a hay mulch blower *02-5330.830 Vehicles & Equipment*. RJ
41 explained that the department has a hay mulch blower now that needs to
42 be replaced. The department currently rents a soil power-screen as
43 necessary to screen top soil which is much cheaper than purchasing top
44 soil. The proposed equipment should pay for itself over a couple of
45 construction seasons. T. Jacobs inquired about the Class II Paving Grant.
46 S. Hurd replied that the Town should be at the top of the list as it has not
47 received monies within the last four years. They top out at \$175,000. J.
48 Corcoran inquired about *02-5110.221 Supplies – Winter* costs increases
49 and the *02-51103.560 Contracted Services*. Discussion followed
50 reviewing the costs increases for salt, the budget for winter sand and liquid
51 chloride. The major increase for *02-5110.56 Contracted Services* is to
52 place new guardrail at Branch, Park/East Road at Kocher Drive. There
53 was discussion about the fiscal year's paving schedule. G. Van Houten
54 discussed the Town's Strategic Objectives and reminded the Board that it
55 includes paving. T. Jacobs inquired about a formal list of road priorities.
56 S. Hurd explained there was a list developed by the VT Local Roads
57 Program that looked at a number of variables. The Town now
58 updates/maintains that list. J. Corcoran inquired if top coat can be
59 quantified. RJ Joly explained the average life of black top is 10 – 15
60 years. Once it begins to crack, it goes the other way and is too expensive
61 to bring back. J. McFadden initiated discussion regarding sidewalks and
62 groups wanting sections either repaired and/or replaced. RJ Joly replied
63 that most of that work has been done. Work to be done will be Pleasant
64 Street, Benmont Avenue, parts of Washington, Main and Dewey Streets.
65 S. Brush questioned the grids and replacement. RJ Joly explained they
66 are being replaced as the sidewalks are being replaced and cast iron is
67 now being used. She also inquired about crosswalks. RJ Joly replied
68 that it took more than three months to find a materials supplier and by then
69 the department was pouring concrete. Once finished with concrete it
70 began snowing and warm nights are required to apply the material so the
71 timing did not work out. He will work on a schedule. There was
72 discussion of the Board regarding the need for a new highway garage and
73 whether it would be worth it to do some repairs. It was asked if the

74 furnace from one of the current garages could be used at a newly built
75 facility and that is not an option. G. Van Houten thanked R.J. Joly.

76

77 L. Fonteneau-McAnn returned to the Board with a proposed line item FY
78 '16 budget. There was review and discussion. M. Keane inquired about
79 the library's upcoming 150th Anniversary fundraising. The director
80 explained that there are plans to kick up their efforts. The library will be
81 participating in the parade, sponsoring a Chamber Mixer, etc. Many things
82 to come. The Board thanked L. Fonteneau-McCann.

83

84 **C. Recreation Budget**

85 T. Knights reviewed the necessity of re-grouting the pool at the recreation
86 center and replacing the drains as required by law. There was discussion
87 regarding \$4,500 proposed for equipment purchases to upgrade the
88 Frisbee golf course at Willow Park from nine to 18 holes and the support of
89 recreation to the community. T. Knights discussed the sander/salter unit
90 proposed for the Recreation Department's current truck. This will save on
91 a great deal of time and man power. Discussion continued regarding the
92 Senior Citizens salaries and the proposal to eliminate a part time bus
93 driver. S. Hurd explained that the part-time driver stopped working for the
94 Town more than a year ago and the Town did not replace him. Current
95 staff has been driving the van when necessary. There are talks with
96 Green Mountain Express to provide services to the center. The services
97 would be funded on a pay as you go basis by the users. This would
98 hopefully extend the life of the van to be used two or three times a month
99 as necessary for trips to the mall, etc. S. Hurd explained that the Town
100 has been altering the schedule of three full-time employees between the
101 two facilities (Recreation and Senior Center.) T. Knights discussed that
102 volunteers are dwindling; however, there is a 29% increase of baby
103 boomers using the Senior Citizens Center currently.

104

105 **D. Finish General Fund Budget**

106 S. Hurd reviewed the Holiday Celebrations and the Other Improvements
107 line items. There was discussion regarding the Bennington In Bloom and
108 the need for the dead roses to be removed. Further discussion regarding
109 the plantings for the upcoming roundabout on Northside Drive. The Board
110 continued discussion regarding Northside Drive, what the Town is

111 responsible for with regard to maintenance, infrastructure issues and bridge
112 and traffic. The Town Manager was asked to reach out to the VT Agency
113 of Transportation to see where we are with the State paving Northside
114 Drive.

115
116 T. Jacobs inquired about the Microloan Program. S. Hurd explained that it
117 will be treated as a reserve and Michael Harrington will come up with a
118 protocol. He will hopefully have the information ready and to the Board by
119 the end of January. There is currently \$139,000 in the program fund and
120 this is what we intend to allocate. The proposal will be much more agenda
121 driven.

122
123 **G. Van Houten asked for an action regarding the Agencies. Motion:**
124 **S. Brush made a motion to approve the increase in funding allocation**
125 **requests as follows:**

126 **for BCRC from \$ 14,260.00 to \$14,550.00;**
127 **for Bennington Free Library from \$387,600.00 to \$412,000.00;**
128 **for J. McCullough Library \$13,900.00 (level funded);**
129 **for North Bennington Recreation from \$5,000.00 to \$6,000.00;**
130 **for Paran Recreation \$2,700.00 (level funded).**

131 **T. Jacobs seconded.** J. McFadden commented that 1,500 people visit
132 the Bennington Free Library each week and 2,500 to 3,000 visit the J.
133 McCullough Library each year, so there is a huge difference. J. Corcoran
134 inquired about the North Bennington Recreation and would like to see their
135 budget. S. Hurd will request the information and forward. J. McFadden
136 discussed Paran Recreation and its revenues and his concern to support.
137 S., Hurd explained that they will be conducting a capital campaign in the
138 near future. **Motion passed unanimously.**

139
140 J. Corcoran left the meeting at 10:06 A.M.

141
142 **E. Executive Session**
143 **Personnel – Set Salaries**
144 **For Town Manager, Town Clerk & Town Treasurer**

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146
147

148 **Motion:** S. Brush made a motion for the Board to enter into
149 **Executive Session for Personnel – to set salaries for the Town**
150 **Manager, Town Clerk and Town Treasurer. J. Carroll seconded.**
151 **Motion passed unanimously by remaining members.**

152
153 The Board came out of Executive Session to set salaries as follows:

154
155 **Motion:** S. Brush made a motion to increase the Town Manager’s
156 **salary by 2% for FY ’16 and M. Keane seconded. Motion passed**
157 **unanimously by remaining members.**

158
159 **Motion:** J. McFadden made a motion to level fund the Town Clerk’s
160 **salary for FY ’16 and M. Keane seconded. Motion passed**
161 **unanimously by remaining members.**

162
163 **Motion:** S. Brush made a motion to increase the Town Treasurer’s
164 **salary by 2% for FY ’16 and J. McFadden seconded. Motion passed**
165 **unanimously by remaining members.**

166
167 **F. Finalize Budget Work**

168 **Motion:** M. Keane made a motion to approve the budget as amended
169 **with all changes and revisions proposed. S. Brush seconded.**
170 **Motion passed unanimously by remaining members.**

171
172 G. Van Houten thanked all and asked for a motion to adjourn. **Motion:**
173 **S. Brush made a motion to adjourn the meeting and J. Carroll**
174 **seconded. Motion passed unanimously by remaining members.**

175
176 The meeting adjourned at 10:06 A.M.

177
178 Respectfully Submitted

179
180
181 Michele M. Johnson