

1 **BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD**

2 **BENNINGTON FIRE FACILITY**

3 **130 RIVER STREET**

4 **BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201**

5 **MARCH 11, 2019**

6 **MINUTES**

7 **SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Thomas Jacobs-Chair; Donald Campbell-Vice-Chair; Jim
8 Carroll; Jeanne Conner; Chad Gordon; Carson Thurber and Jeannie Jenkins.

9 **SELECT BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** None.

10 **ALSO PRESENT:** Daniel Monks-Assistant Town Manager and Planning Director; Shannon Barsotti-
11 Community Development Director; T.J. Greene; 10 citizens; Bennington Banner; Mike Cutler-CAT-TV and
12 Nancy H. Lively-Secretary.

13 At 6:00pm, Chair Thomas Jacobs called the meeting to order.

14 Mr. Jacobs congratulated Ms. Connor, Ms. Jenkins and Mr. Scully for their victories, and
15 Mr. Clark for a very close contest. And, he also mentioned that he was "sincerely disappointed
16 by the turnout". We have over 9,000 voters and only 20% showed up to decide some very
17 important issues - the ladder truck bond for \$1.2M, the mayor issue, elections, and agency
18 financial requests. "If you want a town to be proud of, you have to get involved."

19 **1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

20 The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

21 **2. CONSENT AGENDA**

22 **A. MINUTES - FEBRUARY 25, 2019**

23 **B. WARRANTS**

24 *Donald Campbell moved and Jim Carroll seconded to approve the Consent Agenda as*
25 *submitted. The motion carried unanimously.*

26 **3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

27 T.J. Greene stated that it is very easy to say negative things about the Town, the staff,
28 and the Board and very hard to say positive things about anything. Mr. Greene cited the good
29 that we have in Bennington, challenged the citizens to get involved, and extended kudos to all
30 for their efforts.

31 **4. INTRODUCTION COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR**

32 Shannon Barsotti, newly hired Community Development Director, shared her history
33 and thanked Town Staff for the warm welcome that she has received. Her first day of work was
34 on Town Meeting Day, and during her first week, she participated in Staff Meetings, meetings
35 with the Grow Bennington/Splash Pad initiative, the United Counseling Services/Bennington
36 Recreation project, and the Rec Center/Senior Center/YMCA project just to name a few.

37 She is also forming the Transition Committee for the Rec Center and YMCA that will be
38 made up of 10 community members that will be meeting quarterly beginning at the end of
39 March. Rec Center Staff, Select Board members, United Counseling Service, and any parties
40 with a special interest will be invited to the meetings to support the Committee. Each
41 committee member will submit agenda items they want to discuss. Reports will be made at the
42 public meetings of the Select Board and Minutes of the meetings will also be available to the
43 public.

44 The Board welcomed Ms. Barsotti to her new position.

45 **5. DISCUSSION "SMALL ASK" POLICY**

46 Mr. Monks explained that he is looking for ideas for the development of a Small Ask
47 Policy. The Board currently has a \$2,500 Contingency Fund.

48 The Board had the following suggestions/comments:

- 49 • Recurring requests should be built into the budget.
- 50 • Deserving parameters should be set to determine the eligible entities.
- 51 • We should be made aware of the other sources of income that the applying entities
52 have so that we are "part of the puzzle and not the entire puzzle".
- 53 • A report should be given to the Board on how the dollars were used.
- 54 • There should be some amount that the Community Development Director could deal
55 with for unexpected requests.
- 56 • A standard application form should be developed for everyone who is applying to fill
57 out.
- 58 • We should see what, if any, such policy other communities have.

59 Mr. Monks will send out a draft of the policy to the Board for their review.

60 **6. HEALTH OFFICER APPOINTMENTS**

61 Mr. Monks stated we are fortunate to have both a Town Health Officer and a Deputy
62 Health Officer. Knowing the Vermont Health Codes is basically the only requirement and their
63 work is mostly for residential housing. There is a small stipend with the position(s).

64 *Carson Thurber moved and Donald Campbell seconded to re-appoint Larry McLeod as*
65 *Town Health Officer effective April 1, 2019 and to re-appoint Kevin Goodhue as Deputy Health*
66 *Officer effective August 1, 2019. The motion carried unanimously.*

67 **7. LIQUOR LICENSES**

68 The following 2019 Liquor License Renewal Applications were circulated for signatures:

69 *2019 1st Class Renewals -*

- 70 1. Cilantro's
- 71 2. Papa Pete's Restaurant
- 72 3. Veterans of Foreign Wars Post #1332 (& outside consumption)

73 *2019 2nd Class Renewals -*

- 74 1. Bennington Beverage Outlet
- 75 2. CVS Pharmacy #337
- 76 3. Dollar General Store #14357
- 77 4. Tennybrook

78 **8. MANAGER'S REPORT**

79 Mr. Monks reported that we are working with SC-Spirits on the Town Garage purchase
80 as they are looking into being sure they can get sufficient fire code requirements for the
81 building.

82 *It was the consensus of the Board to continue negotiations with SC-Spirits for the*
83 *purchase of the Town Garage beyond the previously approved 30 days.*

84 **10. OTHER BUSINESS**

85 Ms. Conner would like to have a policy developed, after the Board's re-organization, on
86 how Board members should interact with the public. Mr. Monks will consult the Vermont
87 League of Cities and Towns for best practice on this. He will also see if they could come down
88 and do a Board member training for multiple towns in the area as the elections have created
89 substantial Board member turnover in nearby towns.

90 Mr. Thurber thanked Mr. Greene for his comments, and extended kudos to the
91 Chamber of Commerce for utilizing a vacant building in Town for their successful Homebrew
92 Event this past weekend.

93 Mr. Thurber also mentioned that the recent closure of Southern Vermont College is on
94 the minds of everyone in Town. It's a "big blow" and we all have to figure out what is going to
95 happen and its affect throughout the community.

96 Mr. Carroll stated that our local State Representatives are planning a meeting at
97 Bennington College to discuss the SVC situation and the former President has started a Go Fund

98 Me initiative to raise the \$50,000 to appeal the accreditation. Several alumni, and others, are
99 working to prevent SVC from leaving the area.

100 Mr. Campbell acknowledged that many people are working on the SVC situation but this
101 is not just a "Bennington thing" with Goddard College on the ropes and Green Mountain
102 College, St. Joseph College, and New Hampshire College going out. "We're fighting a
103 demographic drop in students through the 2030's."

104 Ms. Jenkins concurred with the previous comments on SVC and added that the
105 Department of Labor has already been active at SVC to help the staff and faculty seek other
106 employment.

107 Ms. Jenkins stated that the start of the 802 Forum is March 13th at the CCV Community
108 Room beginning at 5:00pm with an entrepreneur's workshop.

109 Mr. Gordon congratulated the Boys Nordic Ski Team for winning the State
110 Championship last weekend and the Girls came in third. The MAU Music Department presents
111 the Pops Concert this weekend Thursday thru Saturday - tickets are \$5.00/each before
112 Thursday and \$8.00/each at the door.

113 Mr. Monks announced that the New School District will be electing officers soon and the
114 deadline for petitions is March 18th.

115 ***At 6:41 pm, Donald Campbell moved and Jim Carroll seconded the adjournment of the***
116 ***meeting. The motion carried unanimously.***

117 Respectfully submitted, Nancy H. Lively, Secretary