

**BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD MEETING
BENNINGTON RESCUE SQUAD FACILITY
120 MCKINLEY STREET – COMMUNITY ROOM
BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201**

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2017

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Jacobs-Chair; Donald Campbell-Vice Chair; Jim Carroll; Jeanne Conner; Jeannie Jenkins; Chad Gordon

Absent: Carson Thurber

ALSO PRESENT: Stuart Hurd, Town Manager; Dan Monks, Zoning Administrator & Assistant Town Manager; Zirwat Chowdhury, Community Development Director; Linda E. Bermudez – Secretary; (6) Citizens

At 4:30 P.M., **Tom Jacobs** called the meeting to order.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Girl Scout Troup #30029.

2. CONSENT AGENDA (A-B)

A) Minutes – December 11, 2017

Jeannie Jenkins noted same spelling corrections for “Jerry Byrd, “James Salerno” and “Lightning Jar”.

B) Warrants

MOTION: Donald Campbell motioned and Jim Carroll seconded to accept and approve the Minutes of December 11, 2017 (with spelling corrections as noted) as well as the warrants as submitted. Motion passed unanimously (*Carson Thurber absent*)

3. BENNINGTON RESCUE SQUAD BUDGET DISCUSSION

Tom Jacobs reviewed the last year’s events surrounding the Rescue Squad’s first request for funding. Ultimately, the Rescue Squad petitioned to be on the ballot and the approximate \$207,000 request was approved by the public. Mr. Jacobs continued by stated they will discuss the option of placing the Rescue Squad into the budget as a line item if both sides can agree on

an amount. Jim Carroll asked if this would then be in the budget each year moving forward. The Manager stated it would.

Forest Weyen and Brian Murphy stepped forward to represent the Bennington Rescue Squad. Mr. Weyen reviewed how they came to the chosen dollar amount last year. It estimates to \$12-13 per person for their services. It is the same amount per person that is requested to Shaftsbury and Woodford. There would be no increase in this year's request. They would like to be stable moving forward and looking ahead.

Discussion continued regarding the Rescue Squad's annual budget, capital investments and "endowment". Donald Campbell stated he is concerned to find the right number so as to not overburden the taxpayer. He had multiple questions regarding their budget and investment income.

Bill Carmorda, Rescue Squad's Operations Manager joined the discussion regarding some of the different income based work (i.e. transports etc). More questions were asked about increased costs in personnel as well as the decrease in calls. Mr. Weyen stated the increase in costs were mostly due to the addition of benefits to certain positions. It is very hard to find "per diem" and personnel in general because of the pay.

Mr. Jacobs and Mr. Campbell noted there will be a big hit in the education tax this coming year. Ms. Jenkins had more questions regarding the endowment and spending projections from it. Mr. Campbell suggested that as part of their application each year they provide updated information on the endowment.

Jim Carroll again expressed his frustration with their billing issues. Mr. Carroll believes they still should send out bills to people with "non-billable" services (called but refused to go to hospital etc). Additionally, Mr. Carroll would like to be a part of transport conversation. He is unhappy that outside services are being called to transport within Bennington. Mr. Weyen stated he could facilitate that meeting. Various other means of income were then discussed such as fundraising and event appearances, and education.

Tom discussed a timeline for the budget. The Manager noted if the Board decides to make the Rescue Squad part of the budget, they could then negotiate the dollar amount at the second budget meeting in January. If a number cannot be agreed upon or the Board does not want to place them within the budget this year, the Rescue Squad can remain on the Ballot this year since they are not requesting any increase.

A consensus from the Board was reached to try to add the Rescue Squad into the budget moving forward. Mr. Campbell stated he was not sure what number he could be comfortable with but he was confident it would be at least \$100,000. Mr. Jacobs asked the Rescue Squad be put on the January 13th, 2018 Budget Agenda for discussion.

Mr. Murphy stated their long-term goal was to be a part of the budget.

Mr. Jacobs thanked the Rescue Squad for their presentation.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

The Manager submitted a new liquor license for signatures.

There was no other business this evening

Tom Jacobs stated there was an unexpected need for Executive Session.

Motion: Chad Gordon moved and Jim Carroll seconded a motion finding that an Executive Session be held on a Real Estate matter and that premature general public knowledge of this matter would place person(s) involved at a substantial disadvantage. Motion passed unanimously (*Carson Thurber absent*)

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION (*Added*)

A) Real Estate

Respectfully submitted,

Linda E. Bermudez
Secretary