

1 **BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD**

2 **BENNINGTON FIRE FACILITY**

3 **130 RIVER STREET**

4 **BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201**

5 **APRIL 8, 2019**

6 **MINUTES**

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

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

10 **ALSO PRESENT:** Stuart Hurd-Town Manager; Daniel Monks-Assistant Town Manager and Planning Director;
11 Shannon Barsotti-Community Development Director; Representative Mary Morrissey; Henry Marchand and
12 several other Members of the American Legion; Bill Knight; Bruce Lee Clark; John Shannahan; Elizabeth
13 Schumacher; Nancy White; Jerry Byrd; Joel Lentzner; Austin Beven; Betsy Greenawalt; 20 citizens; Bennington
14 Banner; Mike Cutler-CAT-TV and Nancy H. Lively-Secretary.

15 At 6:03pm, Vice-Chair Donald Campbell called the meeting to order.

16 **1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

17 The Pledge of Allegiance was led by the Members of the American Legion and recited by all
18 present.

19 **2. REORGANIZATION**

20 Board members welcomed Bill Scully to the Board.

21 *Carson Thurber moved and Jeanne Conner seconded to nominate Donald Campbell as Chair.*
22 *The motion carried unanimously.*

23 *Jeanne Conner moved and Chad Gordon seconded to nominate Jeannie Jenkins as Vice-Chair.*
24 *The motion carried unanimously.*

25 Chair Donald Campbell made the following comments:

26 1. The full Select Board is the head of this Town and he encouraged the public to contact any member
27 of the Board with their concerns noting that certain Board Members have more expertise in certain
28 areas than others, but any board member will bring concerns back to the full Board. Also, any issues
29 with town services should be brought to the Town Manager first.

30 2. There will be the implementation of an Annual Work Calendar for more consistency and
31 transparency.

32 3. The Town Manager's Review will be done in Executive Session to review the Manager's job and
33 better help him to achieve his goals.

34 4. The Town's Vision is in the Town Plan and the public was encouraged to review it. The top 7 goals
35 within the Town Plan are - To strengthen Bennington's economy; To enhance downtown areas while
36 supporting rural countryside; To capitalize on our natural and historic resources; To encourage housing
37 that is affordable and desirable; To provide a good transportation system for all users; To improve
38 community facilities as able; and To promote energy efficiency and renewable energy. The Planning
39 Commission will be invited to a Select Board meeting within a month for an update on their current
40 projects.

41 5. The current Town Plan somewhat understates this community's commitment to being a fair,
42 inclusive society where we actively resist discrimination against people for their race, gender, sexual
43 orientation, religion or financial circumstances.

44 6. The Town will be implementing Implicit Bias Training for all staff.

45 7. With outside help, we will be evaluating best practices for our Police Department.

46 8. We are exploring a possible year long relationship with the Center for Advancement and Public
47 Action to decide a meaningful inquiry as to how we can be the most welcoming, inclusive community
48 possible. This should be part of the Town Plan.

49 9. We must always live within our means and sharpen our pencils to keep our budget at or below
50 inflation. Under Mr. Hurd's management, this frequently happens.

51 *The Board signed the Conflict of Interest Policy and it was agreed that a Board Member would*
52 *recuse themselves from an area that was funded through the annual budget that the Board would have*
53 *voted on.*

54 *The Board reviewed the Rules of Procedure. No comments were made.*

55 **3. CONSENT AGENDA**

56 **A. MINUTES - MARCH 25, 2019**

57 **B. WARRANTS**

58 *Carson Thurber moved and Jeannie Jenkins seconded to approve the Consent Agenda as*
59 *submitted.*

60 Mr. Scully asked about the subtraction of checks with small amounts, and Mr. Hurd will get
61 back to him on that.

62 Ms. Jenkins asked about the \$12,000 amount for solar, and Mr. Hurd explained that that is a
63 reimbursable amount for the lease proposal to place solar panels on the roof of the Waste Water

64 Treatment Facility. Mr. Monks added that this could also have been for South Street. Mr. Hurd will
65 verify which it is for.

66 ***The motion carried unanimously.***

67 **C. PROCLAMATION - AMERICAN LEGION CENTENNIAL DAY**

68 Mr. Campbell read the Proclamation, and Henry Marchand, a 95 year old veteran, shared that
69 he spent 3 ½ years in the Pacific during World War II and was shot at several times.

70 ***Carson Thurber moved and Jeannie Jenkins seconded to approve the PROCLAMATION***
71 ***American Legion Centennial Day as presented. The motion carried unanimously.***

72 **D. PROCLAMATION - BENNINGTON CAREER MONTH**

73 Ms. Jenkins read the Proclamation and shared some activities that will be taking place during
74 April in recognition of it.

75 ***Jim Carroll moved and Jeanne Conner seconded to approve the PROCLAMATION Bennington***
76 ***Career Month as presented. The motion carried unanimously.***

77 **E. PROCLAMATION - NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK APRIL 7, 2019 - APRIL 13, 2019**

78 Ms. Conner read the Proclamation.

79 ***Jim Carroll moved and Bill Scully seconded to approve the PROCLAMATION National Library***
80 ***Week, April 7, 2019 - April 13, 2019. The motion carried unanimously.***

81 **4. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

82 Bill Knight, as representative of the Apple Hill Homeowners Association, spoke to the Apple Hill
83 Solar Project in that the site plan states that, if the 20 acres of trees are cut, they are to be chipped.
84 Mr. Knight just wants to see that they adhere to the site plan and do not burn anything.

85 Bruce Lee Clark suggested that the Town do their own plastic bag ban ordinance now and not
86 wait for the State to act on S113. Mr. Clark feels that this would encourage the State to speed up their
87 action on this matter.

88 Elizabeth Schumacher would like the Select Board to write a letter to our legislatures to support
89 S113. Mr. Hurd stated that the Bennington County Solid Waste Alliance meets on Thursday and it is
90 unclear if they are going to pursue a regional letter on this issue. *The Board will review a draft of a*
91 *letter to our legislatures in support of S113 at the next meeting.*

92 Nancy White is concerned that the Recreation Center Community Committee isn't open to the
93 public for comment, and Ms. Barsotti stated that there will be a quarterly presentation of the quarterly
94 meetings to the Select Board. Ms. White and Ms. Barsotti will meet privately to address Ms. White's
95 additional concerns.

96 Jerry Byrd recommends that the Select Board support the plastic bag ordinance and solar
97 energy. "It is mind blowing to me why you wouldn't."

98 **5. MARKETING RFP**

99 Ms. Barsotti explained that the Town will post a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a
100 comprehensive digital marketing campaign for Bennington - Vermont Begins Here. In the first year, the
101 cornerstone of these efforts will be the launch of the tourism lure site along with ongoing digital
102 marketing efforts to drive traffic to the site. By providing meaningful, visually appealing content, and
103 promoting that content through Search Engine Optimization (SEO) management and digital marketing
104 efforts, the goal is to draw users to the site and in turn, drive tourism traffic to Bennington
105 establishments and attractions. Funding of this project is sourced through the Town of Bennington
106 Community Development Office. Digital marketing is measurable with Google Analytics so we can see
107 how successful it is.

108 Proposals will be reviewed by the Marketing Task Force which includes the Community
109 Development Director and possibly a short list of consultants selected for interviews. Project
110 completion is to set up Mail Chimp on or by 7/15/19 and launch the website on or by 8/15/19 with
111 ongoing Digital Marketing Management.

112 Ms. Barsotti will be reaching out to at least four companies and the Proposal Evaluation is
113 according to the following factors:

- 114 1. Consultant Qualifications - experience with similar projects, ability to work with Task Force to attain
115 desired outcomes, and knowledge of the topic - 40%.
- 116 2. Scope of work, fees, methodology and schedule - 30%.
- 117 3. Ability to share workload and collaborate with Town reps on hourly work - 15%.
- 118 4. Proposal quality, completeness and clarity - 15%.

119 *Board comments/questions:*

120 Mr. Carroll: There has been discussion at the State level to boost tourism dollars and he could
121 refer Ms. Barsotti to the several witnesses who spoke on their success with a limited budget.

122 Ms. Jenkins: Who will be deciding on the content of the website, and Ms. Barsotti answered
123 that we will be relying on the consultant, the Task Force, and what has been successful with others in
124 the region, such as the Chamber of Commerce, BCIC, etc.

125 Ms. Conner: Clarified that the Task Force members are Maru Leon, Sheena Harden, and Lynn
126 Green who will be working with the consultant and Ms. Barsotti. The Task Force's role - because of
127 their marketing expertise - is to provide input for the project. Mr. Hurd added that the hope is to have
128 community input, as well, so it isn't limited to just a few people.

129 Mr. Gordon: The RFP was well written and will be available with a link on the Town's website.

130 Mr. Scully: It is important to reach out as far as is necessary to be sure to get a quality
131 consultant, and Ms. Barsotti stated that there are several regional companies that have excellent
132 portfolios to choose from but will go out as far as needed to get the best that we can.

133 Mr. Campbell: Sees this as a pilot program without a commitment from the Board for \$50,000
134 next year. We know there is a need for marketing so the analytics as to the success of the project is
135 very important. Also, it must be noted that we are marketing all of the town, and not just downtown.
136 Kudos to the Task Force for their contributions. Ms. Barsotti stated that hiring a consultant to create
137 the infrastructure that will be able to be maintained internally will be beneficial to the Town long term.

138 *Public comments/questions:*

139 John Shannahan: Shared the origination of the Task Force and that, since it isn't a Town's Task
140 Force, their volunteerism will not continue if the marketing of Bennington takes on a direction that was
141 not their intent. He also noted that he and Eric Peterson are also on the Task Force and encouraged
142 everyone to review the presentation that the Task Force did for the Select Board a few weeks ago.

143 Joel Lentzner: Shared the process for forming a group of 6 people to put a billboard in Hoosick,
144 NY. The current Task Force decided to go digital and the other 3 dropped out of the group. That being
145 said, many good things have been done. However, since none of the members of the Task Force have
146 businesses in the downtown, Mr. Lentzner has a petition requesting that the downtown merchants be
147 more involved with the marketing plan. He also feels that it should be verified that establishing the
148 infrastructure without establishing the content at the same time is a wise way to proceed.

149 Betsy Greenawalt: Reviewed the RFP proposal commenting that there should be more key
150 performance indicators for accountability, questioned the timeline, questioned the limitation to only
151 digital, and the fact that there are only 3 people on the Task Force who may step down if the project
152 doesn't go as they wish. Ms. Greenawalt will confer with Ms. Barsotti privately on her specific issues
153 with the RFP proposal within the next couple of days.

154 Austin Beven: Is concerned about the ability for a small business to have the exposure they will
155 need to succeed, and feels that there should be more input from downtown, and more members on
156 the Task Force.

157 *It was the consensus of the Board to authorize the Community Development Director to take the*
158 *additional information provided and to get the RFP out by April 12, 2019.*

159 **6. LIQUOR LICENSES**

160 The following 2019 Liquor License New and Renewal Applications were circulated for
161 signatures:

162 *2019 New Liquor License Application -*

163 1. Loose Cannon Café (formerly The Brown Cow)

164 2019 1st Class Renewals -

165 1. Allegro Ristorante

166 2. Your Belly's Deli

167 2019 2nd Class Renewals -

168 1. Henry's Market

169 2. Apple Barn

170 3. Willy's Variety

171 **7. MANAGER'S REPORT**

172 Mr. Hurd reported that he has revised the Select Board Annual Calendar to reflect the Board
173 term (April - March) and to note that the DID funding timeline has been altered. More detailed
174 information will also be added to the calendar at a later date.

175 Mr. Hurd reported that the State and Saint-Gobain have reached a tentative agreement on
176 PFOA Phase 2 and work is now likely to start in early summer with an expected two years to complete.

177 Mr. Hurd reported that the second phase of the WTF project is about to begin with Town Staff
178 working hard to have preparations done for the start of construction - including the time consuming
179 cleaning of the digesters.

180 **8. OTHER BUSINESS**

181 Ms. Conner: Asked about the Implicit Bios Training schedule, and Mr. Hurd answered there are
182 two sessions on April 30th with mandatory attendance by all Town employees. The Rescue Squad has
183 paid for their employees to attend, as well.

184 Ms. Conner: Also asked if the trees will be replaced in the downtown, and Mr. Hurd said they
185 would be.

186 Mr. Thurber: Asked about the Kids Night Out schedule at the Recreation Center, and Ms.
187 Barsotti stated every Friday night at the Rec. Center from 6:00-8:30pm for children 7-12 years old.

188 Mr. Carroll: Asked if CAT-TV would be filming the Implicit Bios Training, and Mr. Hurd noted
189 that it would be inappropriate to do that so as not to deter those in attendance from participating.

190 Mr. Campbell: Distributed copies of the Town Plan to the Board. Mr. Monks noted that the
191 Planning Commission will be at the next meeting to share what they are working on.

192 Ms. Jenkins: Is concerned that too many people in attendance at the Implicit Bios Training
193 would inhibit participation, and asked if there was a Supervisor Training, as well. Mr. Hurd responded
194 that the Supervisor Training will be done on May 1st.

195 Ms. Jenkins: Kudos to Ms. Barsotti for starting the First Wednesday walk from the Town Office
196 to the Rec. Center.

197 Mr. Gordon: Stated that there will be a special election on April 23rd for the new SWVT Union
198 Elementary School Board and urged everyone to attend.

199 Mr. Scully: Verified that there wouldn't be an open meeting violation if four Board members
200 showed up for the Implicit Bias Training, and Mr. Hurd said that would not be a problem because it is a
201 training where no Board actions will be taken.

202 Mr. Scully: Requested that Mr. Hurd share the Burn Policy for the public, so Mr. Hurd stated
203 that the State provides for each town to have a Fire Warden - Bennington has a Fire Warden and an
204 Assistant Fire Warden. They issue burn permits through the Town that are good for 2 weeks, as well
205 as, camp fire permits for the season that are specifically for burn pits in the back yard. Mr. Hurd added
206 that if the site plan at the Apple Hill Project stated they were required to chip the wood, they would
207 not be issued a burn permit.

208 **9. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

209 **A. REAL ESTATE**

210 **B. CONTRACT**

211 **C. LEGAL**

212 *At 8:03pm, Carson Thurber moved and Jim Carroll seconded that the meeting was adjourned*
213 *finding that an Executive Session be held on Real Estate, Contract, and Legal as premature public*
214 *knowledge would place a person involved in the subject matter at a substantial disadvantage. The*
215 *motion carried unanimously.*

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218

219 Respectfully submitted,

220 Nancy H. Lively

221 Secretary