

1 **BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD**

2 **BENNINGTON FIRE FACILITY**

3 **130 RIVER STREET**

4 **BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201**

5 **SEPTEMBER 23, 2019**

6 **MINUTES**

7 **SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Donald Campbell-Chair; Jeannie Jenkins-Vice Chair; Jeanne
8 Conner; Jim Carroll; Chad Gordon; Bill Scully (in at 6:55pm by phone and out at 7:00pm); and Bruce
9 Lee-Clark.

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

11 **ALSO PRESENT:** Stuart Hurd-Town Manager; Daniel Monks-Assistant Town Manager and Planning
12 Director; Shannon Barsotti-Community Development Director; Melissa Currier-Finance Director;
13 Stephanie Lane-Shires Housing; Susan Sommer-Habitat for Humanity; Becky Arbella-SASH; Dave
14 Adolphus-NeighborWorks of Western Vermont; Marsh Knapp; Andre Anne Chenaille; Jared Newell;
15 Glen Brimmer; Barbara True-Weber; 10 citizens; Jim Therrien-Bennington Banner; Mike Cutler-CAT-TV;
16 and Nancy H. Lively-Secretary.

17 At 6:02pm, Chair Donald Campbell called the meeting to order.

18 **1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

19 The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

20 **2. CONSENT AGENDA**

21 **A. MINUTES - SEPTEMBER 9, 2019**

22 **B. WARRANTS**

23 *Jeannie Jenkins moved and Jeanne Conner seconded to approve the Consent Agenda*
24 *amended as follows:*

25 *Septemer 9, 2019 Minutes - Line 243, Change "McNeely" to "Maneely"*

26 *The motion carried with Bill Scully absent.*

27 **3. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

28 Marsh Knapp, and a group of six others, shared drawings and verbal information from children
29 in the community to bring awareness to everyone on our climate emergency.

30 Barbara True-Weber noted the well-attended Global Climate Strike demonstration that took
31 place on September 20, 2019 at the Four Corners and gave the Board a Declaration of a Climate
32 Emergency for their future consideration.

33
34

35 Andre Anne Chenaille, Director of the Catamount BMX track at Willow Park, was joined by Jared
36 Newell and Glen Brimmer from the Bennington Area Trails System (BATS), stated that the Track has not
37 been taken care of in 2 years. Beginning on October 7th, it will be rebuilt with \$3,400 which we have
38 raised locally to cover expenses. Additionally, we will be responsible for equipment, dirt, and lodging.
39 The Town has donated left over dirt from the Stark Street project and we will be partnering with BATS.
40 The resurrection of the Track will have a positive effect to the children and families of the Town, as
41 well as, to the Town, itself. The public will be able to get information at www.CatamountBMX.org and
42 Facebook. It will also be added to the www.VermontBeginsHere.com website.

43 Mr. Campbell invited the group to contact the Town for any in-kind help that they may be able
44 to provide.

45 **4. HOUSING PRESENTATION**

46 Ms. Barsotti stated that Affordable Housing is a large part of community development. Her
47 office applies for and administers community block grants to various local organizations in the area.
48 Four organizations did the following presentation on Affordable Housing:

49 Stephanie Lane - Shires Housing

- 50 • Shires Housing owns and self manages 348 units in Bennington County.
- 51 • We are the Designated Regional Affordable Housing Organization for the SASH program.
- 52 • Affordable housing offers security, stability, and a healthy environment to the families that it
53 serves.
- 54 • We continue to improve the quality of our buildings, as well as, making them more energy
55 efficient.
- 56 • Our rents are capped, so it is especially important that we remain stewards of the properties
57 for a minimum of 20 years without further renovations.
- 58 • With the acquisition of Applegate Apartments and the collaboration with SASH, we now
59 provide resident services.
- 60 • Applications can be done in the office with the help of staff, if needed, or a pre-application can
61 be done online for future contact by a staff member.
- 62 • Our phone number is 802-442-8139.
- 63 • We will be rehabilitating 211 and 213 Depot Street, 300 Pleasant Street for the potential
64 relocation of Thatcher House, and the new construction at Lake Paran Village. Plus we are
65 always looking for land to build on.

66 Becky Arbella - SASH

- 67 ➤ We no longer just work with seniors as we are now working with the Hospital, RiseVT, Greatful
- 68 Hearts, the Lions Club of Manchester and Bennington College, as well as, being members of the
- 69 Opioid Task Force.
- 70 ➤ We are members of the Community Care Team, which is a group of agencies that meet monthly
- 71 and bring their hardest cases to the table for the group to brainstorm on.
- 72 ➤ Our 3rd Annual Health and Wellness Fair will be held tomorrow with 25 vendors at the Masonic
- 73 Hall from 10:00am-2:00pm and our 5th Annual Fair will be held in the Deerfield Valley. We were
- 74 told these would not be successful, however, it has been proven that they are.
- 75 ➤ We have been working closely with the Bennington Senior Center with classes on jewelry
- 76 making, cooking, AARP driving instruction, Aqua Tai Chi, beginning and advanced Tai Chi, flower
- 77 arranging, and health and wellness talks.
- 78 ➤ We also have a food bank at Applegate with cooking demonstrations that is open to the whole
- 79 community on the 2nd Wednesday from noon-1:00pm.

80 Susan Sommer - Habitat for the Humanity

- 81 ✓ On September 21st, we had the dedication of the 27th and 28th houses since 1999 on Corcoran's
- 82 Way off of North Branch Street.
- 83 ✓ There is a "rigorous application process" for a family to be accepted for a Habitat home that
- 84 includes sufficient income to support the home, a good credit rating, and to not be
- 85 overwhelmed by debt. NeighborWorks and Habitat staff can help the applicant get through
- 86 the process.
- 87 ✓ Our phone number is 802-337-1000.
- 88 ✓ The appeal was made to the Town to dedicate Corcoran's Way as a Town Street maintained by
- 89 the Town for the 6 residents that are now on it. Also, the Habitat is always looking for land to
- 90 build on.
- 91 ✓ Stories were shared how home ownership benefits the new homeowners, as well as, the Town.

92 Dave Adolphus - NeighborWorks of Western Vermont

- 93 ○ Our mission is to work with low to moderate income people to help keep them in their houses
- 94 by offering 17 services to them.
- 95 ○ We are lenders that offer 6 different types of loans for a total of 900 active loans.
- 96 ○ We work with 1st time home buyers, as well as, those facing foreclosure.
- 97 ○ We do energy audits, have energy project management, a wood stove program, a home repair
- 98 department, and realtors on staff.
- 99 ○ We are one of 240 NeighborWorks across the country and have been in Rutland since 1986.
- 100 ○ We work with several agencies and cover all aspects of home ownership.
- 101 ○ We hope to work with the Planning Commission for standards on density increases in the
- 102 Downtown.

103 The Board extended kudos to all of the organizations for their presentations and the work that they
104 do.

105 **5. REVISED PURCHASING POLICY**

106 Ms. Currier stated that the following changes to the proposed Purchasing Policy were
107 recommended at the last meeting:

108 *Page 1 - Add "POLICY REVIEW. It is recommended that the Select Board review this policy every*
109 *5 years."*

110 *Page 4 - Delete "The following exceptions may apply:"*

111 ***Bruce Lee-Clark moved and Jeannie Jenkins seconded to approve the Revised Purchasing***
112 ***Policy as presented.***

113 Mr. Scully stated that he is a strong supporter of transparency and this policy is reflective of the
114 management that we have today.

115 Mr. Lee-Clark noted that the standard for reviewing government policies is every 3 years
116 instead of every 5 years but will support the policy with the 5 year review.

117 Mr. Campbell thanked everyone involved in bringing the rewrite of the Purchasing Policy to
118 fruition.

119 ***The motion carried unanimously.***

120 **6. MANAGER'S REPORT**

121 Mr. Hurd reported the following:

- 122 o PFOA - Construction Contracts 8 and 9 for the Upper East Road and Chapel Road areas are
123 scheduled to go out to bid by the middle of October. The State permitting processing has held these
124 up.
- 125 o WWTF Project - Both digester covers are in place, unfortunately the contractor is waiting for
126 key parts to complete the upgraded roof. Composting continues with our own wood chips as does
127 hauling of sludges. Once the digesters are fully up and operational, odors will be eliminated.
- 128 o Morgan Spring Delivery System - We are close to an agreement with a new vendor that will
129 require Select Board and DRB approval. It will be an agenda item on either the October 14th or October
130 28th Select Board meeting.
- 131 o Opioid Lawsuit - The meeting hosted by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns on September
132 18th included our attorneys meeting with 9 other communities who expressed an interest in joining the
133 lawsuit. Bennington is currently the only town in Vermont to have filed with the federal lawsuit in
134 Ohio. The feeling is that the more towns from Vermont that participate in the lawsuit, the more
135 impact we will have.

136 o Select Board Policies - A shortage of staff has prevented us from developing this policy book.
137 We will get to that in the late fall or into the winter.

138 Mr. Hurd added that the digs closest to the Four Corners are water and sewer, and the one
139 closest to Washington Avenue is a water line extension that will go to the former Town Garage for a
140 required sprinkler system needed by the new owners.

141 Mr. Campbell noted that adding individual board member e-mail addresses to the website is
142 still a work in progress.

143 **7. FUTURE AGENDA**

144 The following are planned for the indicated meeting dates:

- 145 ❖ October 14th - Executive Session on Personnel
- 146 ❖ October 14th - YMCA Update
- 147 ❖ October 14th - Charter Reconsideration Issues
- 148 ❖ October 14th - Bond Documents for Consideration
- 149 ❖ October 28th - Letters will be going out before September 13th for the VTRANS Presentation.

150 **8. OTHER BUSINESS**

151 Mr. Campbell: Thank you to the Energy Committee and their organizational meeting will be October
152 2nd at 5:00pm at an undetermined location.

153 Ms. Jenkins: On October 2nd from 6:30pm-8:00pm at CCV will be the second round of 802
154 Entrepreneurs and October 4th is Manufacturing Day with information in the Bennington Banner for
155 open houses that will be open to the public.

156 Mr. Carroll: Wished Ms. Currier and her new husband a long and happy marriage, and a Happy 57th
157 Birthday to his brother.

158 Ms. Conner: Noted that the IACP will be in town on October 7th and the public can contact them at
159 www.benningtonvt@theiacp.org . The IACP will be doing their own press releases and a link to this
160 contact information will be put on the Town's website.

161 **9. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

162 **A. REAL ESTATE**

163 **B. CONTRACTS**

164 **C. PERSONNEL**

165 *At 7:15pm, Bruce Lee-Clark moved and Jeannie Jenkins seconded that the meeting was*
166 *adjourned finding that an Executive Session be held on Real Estate, Contracts, and Personnel as*
167 *premature public knowledge would place a person involved in the subject matter at a substantial*

168 *disadvantage. There will be no actions taken on these items when going back into Open Session.*
169 *The motion carried with Bill Scully absent.*

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172

173 Respectfully submitted,

174 Nancy H. Lively

175 Secretary

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