

APPROVED MINUTES
SELECTBOARD MEETING
TOWN OF BENSON, VT
OCTOBER 2ND, 2023, 7:00pm

Selectboard Present:

Linda Peltier (Chair), Guy Charlton, Jerod Glover, Brad Barrett, Tom Bartholomew

Others Present:

Heidi Chandler (Town Clerk/Treasurer), Carrie LaFond (Selectboard Assistant), Lois Trenn (Lister)

Public Present:

Jack Helm, Jon Dodd, Mrs. and Mr. Smead,

Call to Order:

Linda Peltier (Chair) called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Approved Agenda:

Motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Brad Barrett, seconded by Tom Bartholomew, motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment:

Yavonne Smead-

- Yavonne Smead reported to the Board that her neighbor is causing problems for her family.
- She stated, "he chased her goat with his 4-wheeler, which caused the baby goat to run through the fences and was badly hurt." At the time of the incident, she stated she, and her husband were going out to catch the goats that had gotten out and felt that if the individual had been patient, they would have caught it quickly.
- Yavonne asked for a slow for animals' sign be put up.
- Yavonne Smead asked to be put on the agenda for the other issues in her email.

Board Response from Linda Peltier (Chair)

- The Selectboard is looking into her concerns, however, needs more time to investigate the issues.
- Most of the board is new and it's going to take some time.
- The issue with the Neighbor sounds like a civil issue

Question was asked; Did this take place on the public portion of the road? **Answer:** Yes

- The Road Foreman will investigate the possibility of a sign.

Approve Selectboard Minutes:

Motion to approve September 18th Selectboard minutes as presented by Brad Barrett seconded by Jerod Glover, motion passed unanimously.

Pay Bills:

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Regular Bills in the amount of \$81,437.48 second by Jerod Glover, motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Regular Payroll in the amount of \$4,394.25 second by Jerod Glover, motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Highway Payroll in the amount of \$6,437.48, second by Jerod Glover, motion passed, Brad Barrett abstained from the vote.

Listers:

- Lois Trenn (Lister) supplied the Selectboard with a copy of the Reappraisal Agreement from NEMRC * (Copy in file)
- Question was asked if the bill currently in legislature could affect what is required in the contract?
- Last town wide reappraisal was in 2011.
- Re-appraisal set for July '25 through April '27
- The payment schedule will be \$2,750/month.
- Lois Trenn went over a question-and-answer sheet from NEMRC *(see file)
- Feed back from the District Manger was that it looked good but would need the Three prong Test language added.
- Question was asked will property Owners be notified in writing regarding the reappraisal? Answer: Yes, but it is still two years down the road.

Motion by Guy Charlton, second by Jerod Glover to authorize the Listers to send NEMRC Agreement to the Town Attorney for review with the "Three Prong Test Language" added for the purpose of a town wide reappraisal, motion passes unanimously.

Highway Department:

Road Foreman Report:

- Highway department is splitting time between excavation and grading.
- Continued Grant work on Money Hole Road and Root Pond Road
- Finished Rte. 144 from East Road to Pleasant Valley Rd
- Rock on Stage Road to be hammered out near the Manley residence.
- 48" Culvert on Stage Road to be replaced by the 20th
- Question was asked will the road be closed during the Culvert project? Answer: No, Orwell Sand and Gravel will be doing the project in sections so the road will not have to be closed.
- Mack is back w/ new springs and winter ready, will be ordering tires on rims.
- Still trying to catch up from all the rain.

Transfer Station:

- Guy Charlton worked on the backhoe, a broken wire is keeping it from starting all the time, the machine also needs to be winterized.

Town Clerk Report:

- Sent out bills for properties late on taxes approximately (40)
- The Sewer rates need to be set.
- Question was asked if the Town was aware of an online program that allows property owners to pay their tax bills online, doesn't cost the town anything only the payer and might be helpful for the Elderly of Disabled?
Answer: The board is aware of the program had investigated it in the past, could investigate it again.
- Town Clerk asked the Board to make a motion for the Town Clerk to pay certain bills * (See list in file) without board approval. **Answer:** The Board agreed by consensus the Town Clerk could pay re-occurring expenses without prior board approval as approved by a motion at a previous meeting.

Motion to renew the PACIF insurance application with Vermont League of City and Town by Jerod Glover, second by Guyt Charlton, motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Town Garage:

- Tom Bartholomew- Gary Freeguard will be attending the meeting on the 30th with cost updates.
- Tom Bartholomew supplied the Board with an updated Selectboard schedule *(see file).
- Selectboard Assistant will work on a formal Calendar for the board.

Town Administrator:

- Discussion on the benefits of a Town Administrator could do the following:
 - Oversee Road Crew
 - Sewer
 - Transfer station
 - Review Policies
 - Research issues for the Board
- Suggestion that maybe the Town Administrator could be shared between some other smaller towns.
- Selectboard would be better prepared to make decisions based on information that could be provided by a Town Administrator
- Need to update fees for Zoning.

Discussion on Investing Town Funds:

- Discussion what funds could be invested and who would be responsible for investing.
- Tabled For Advice from Pyle Agency

New Business:

Picnic Table Purchase:

- Jerod Glover would like to cost out some new picnic tables for the Town, the others were deemed unsafe.

Motion by Jerod Glover seconded by Tom Bartholomew to allow Jerod Glover to purchase (3) three new picnic tables for the Town, not to exceed \$1,000, motion passed unanimously.

Correspondence:

- Email from Yavonne Smead- Tabled for more information.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Brad Barrett; 9:12pm.

Respectfully submitted.

Carrie LaFond

Selectboard Assistant

Documents referenced in these minutes can be found at the Benson Town Office.