

APPROVED MINUTES  
SELECTBOARD MEETING  
TOWN OF BENSON, VT  
JANUARY 22nd, 2024, 7:00pm

**Selectboard Present:**

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

**Others Present:**

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

**Public Present:**

Jack Helm, Adam Stewart, Dave Bartholomew, Ben Bartholomew, Christa Jourdan, Jon Dodd, and Lois Trenn

**Call to Order:**

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

**Approved Agenda:**

Motion to approve the agenda as amended was made by Jerod Glover, seconded by Brad Barrett, motion passed unanimously.

**Amendments to the Agenda:**

Add Benson First Response Article

Add Law Enforcement Update

**Public Comment:**

- Linda Peltier (Chair) thanked all that were involved in the library's Getting to know Your Neighbor Event, "great job."
- Jon Dodd thanked the Highway department for a great job done on the roads.
- Informational discussion on Bill S55 currently in the Senate (that has not passed yet) of which would require the selectboard meetings to have a hybrid option. (See file for proposed bill), provided by Jon Dodd

**Listers:**

- Lois Trenn provided the selectboard with a corrected contract from NEMRC for doing the town wide reappraisal.

Motion by Guy Charlton, second by Jerod Glover to sign the corrected NEMRC contract for the town wide reappraisal, motion passed unanimously.

**Fire Department:**

Motion by Tom Bartholomew, second by Brad Barrett to invest \$15,000 of the fire departments savings in a CD for up to (2) two years and \$64,000 of the fire departments equipment reserve funds into a cd for up to (2) two years, motion approved, Jerod Glover abstained from the vote.

### **Approve Selectboard Minutes:**

Motion to approve January 8<sup>th</sup> Selectboard minutes as presented by Brad Barrett, seconded by Tom Bartholomew, motion passed unanimously.

Motion to approve January 16<sup>th</sup> Selectboard minutes as presented by Brad Barrett, seconded by Tom Bartholomew motion passed unanimously.

### **Pay Bills:**

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay the corrected Highway Payroll in the amount of \$289.48, second by Jerod Glover, Brad Barrett abstained from the vote, motion passed.

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Regular Bills in the amount of \$42,567.36, second by Jerod Glover, motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Regular Payroll in the amount of \$ 4,533.01, second by Jerod Glover motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Highway Payroll in the amount of \$ 8,309.90 second by Gerod Glover, motion passed, Brad Barrett abstained from the vote.

### **Highway Department:**

#### Rd Foreman Report

- Out plowing and sanding
- Orange Truck serviced.
- Working on clearing out the garage and preparing to use the old rescue truck as a yard truck.
- Excavator needs to be serviced.

#### Overweight Permits

Motion by Brad Barrett for Linda Peltier (Chair) to sign the excess weight permits for Barrett Trucking, Midnight Express LLC., and Bournes Inc, Bournes Propane, and Bournes Energy dba, seconded by Guy Charlton, motion passed unanimously.

#### Road Project Suggestions

1. Money hole Road- lower the knoll Estimate \$33,950
2. Carter St- Rebuilding ½ mile including all materials and 2 culverts \$60,048.
3. East Rd – rebuilding 1 mile \$160,717.

\*Estimates provided by Orwell Sand and Gravel

- Discussion that taking the blind spot off the transfer station road and re-using the material from pulling the knoll down further down the road.
- Discussion on how many projects could be done and which ones should be placed on the warning as articles.

- No action taken will continue discussion at the next budget meeting.

**Transfer Station:**

- New Stickers and permits are in

**Town Clerk Report:**

**Articles for Warning**

Motion by Brad Barrett, second by Guy Charlton to put an article of support for Benson First Response in the amount of \$2,000 at the annual town meeting, motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Brad Barrett, second by Guy Charlton to put an article of support for Benson Youth League in the amount of \$1,200 at the annual town meeting, motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Brad Barrett shall the town raise, appropriate and expend up to \$20,000 for the Cemetery, second by Jerod Glover, motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Brad Barrett shall the town raise, appropriate and expend up to \$11,000 for the library, second by Jerod Glover, motion passed unanimously.

- Discussion on the Petion to use ARPA funds for the town garage to offset the amount to be borrowed.
- Discussion on amount already reserved by motions for ARPA.

Motion by Guy Charlton, second by Brad Baret to put the following article on the warning for Town meeting day, Shall the Town vote to expend \$250,000 (Two Hundred and Firty thousand Dollars) of ARPA funds on construction of a new highway garage. Said funds be used to reduce the amount of money to be borrowed, motion passed unanimously.

- Discussion on whether the petition is discretionary or mandatory.
- Linda Peltier to contact the Town Attorney for clarification on the petition to see if it discretionary or mandatory.
- Discussion that at previous meetings it was decided that the selectboard has the authority to decide the use of the ARPA funds and not the voters.

Motion by Brad Barrett, second by Guy Charlton to put an article of support for Advocacy Resources Community in the amount of \$600.00 at the annual town meeting, motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Brad Barrett, second by Tom Bartholomew to put an article of support for Fair Haven Rescue Squad in the amount of \$62,336.00 at the annual town meeting, motion passed unanimously.

**Old Business:**

**Town Administrator**

- Discussion to proceed with a Town Administrator/ Public Works Administrator only if the board was in support.
- Position should be \$30-\$40/hr. for approximately 10 hours a week.

Motion by Jerod Glover, second by Linda Peltier (Chair) to put \$25,000 in the selectboard expense line to hire a public works Administrator, Jerod Glover- Yes, Tom Bartholmew – Yes, Linda Peltier- Yes, Brad Barrett- No, Guy Charlton -yes, motion passed (4-1)

**Town Clerk Continued:**

- Town clerk would like to hire an Accountant for 10 hrs. a month.
- Discussion on the responsibilities of Treasurer and Town Clerk

Sewer Allotments

- Forms prepared and previously approved signed by the board.

Budget Review-

- Tabled Until Monday 1/29/24.

Town Garage

- Review of the Plans provide for the new town garage (see file)
- The third door on the plans was originally to be 12' is now showing as 10.'
- The door size was changed to allow more room on the sides.
- Tom Bartholmew recommended new contract stating the changes.

Motion by Jerod Glover, second by Tom Bartholmew to change the contract for the garage to have the following doors sizes two (2) 16' doors and one (1) 10' door, motion passed unanimously.

Items that need to be completed for the garage:

- Labor & Industry Permit
- Demolition Permit
- Drain permit-
- RFP for Demolition of the old garage
- Town to do the ditch work.

Law enforcement Update

- The Sheriff's office is willing to consider 10 hrs. a week for \$28,800 (if they have the staff)

**New Business:**

Vermont 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Resolution

- No action needed- Committees have been formed already.

**Correspondence:**

Health Inspector Email

- Tent has agreed to move – No further action needed.

Isaac Danuloff- Environmental Health Specialist- Cooling Email

- Survey to see if the Town has any cooling stations- None currently.

South Lake CWSP Grant Form Due Feb 9<sup>th</sup> Email

- Grant form due February 9<sup>th</sup> – Phosphorus reduction- No action taken.

**Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn by Brad Barrett at 9:39pm.

Respectfully submitted.

Carrie LaFond

Selectboard Assistant

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