

APPROVED MINUTES
SELECTBOARD MEETING
TOWN OF BENSON, VT
FEBRUARY 20TH, 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: Ben Bartholomew, Norma Philips, Carrie Becker, Roxy Helm, Jeff Washburn, Sam Bartholomew, Jim Pritchard, Stephanie Bourque

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:

Outright VT- Tabled

Bid Opening/ Old Garage Demolition/ Excavation:

- Two bids were received.
- Midnight Express in the amount of \$20,000 completed in 5 days.
- Orwell Sand & Gravel in the amount of \$13,750 completed in 2-3 days.

Motion by Jerod Glover, second by Guy Charlton to award the bid to the low bidder Orwell Sand & Gravel in the amount of \$13,750.00, motion passed, Tom Bartholomew abstained from the vote.

Public Comment:

- Sam Bartholomew had emailed the board with questions and asked for answers to those during public comment.
 1. What is the total cost of this project and where is the money coming from? What is the timeline and cost to prep the road for paving? Where is the money for prep coming from and who is doing the work? **Answer:** All the bids are not in yet so it is not appropriate to discuss at this point rough estimates of \$300,000 with \$200,000 in State Aid the balance would be funded through the paving line. The project is ready to do except for the lipping.
 2. Is the Town keeping up culvert inventory? What is the States deadline for Benson to address all these problems? How many sections have we addressed and is there any plan going forward? **Answer:** Nine

segments were completed last year; Root Pond Rd needs to be addressed. Steffanie Bourque of RRPC added there is a new website, Municipal Roads General Permit for water quality and Benson is on track.

3. What is the condition of the other paved roads?

Rutland Regional Planning Commission:

- Steffanie Bourque gave an update that the Rutland Regional Plan is being updated (beginning stages) to be completed in 2026 that will go through 2034. There is target of at least eight people from Benson to complete the survey that has been published <https://www.rutlandrpc.org/bulletin-board/we-want-to-hear-from-you-take-the-2024-outdoor-survey-today>. There will be a community open house March 2nd in Castleton for more information/ ideas.

Library:

- Carrie Becker gave an update for the library grant she is working on for Renovation and Expansion and Energy efficiency. Estimates have come in for the work around \$60- \$65k. The grant being applied for would be around \$100k that could possibly add a gazebo type structure for internet access on the outside of the building. Handi cap access would also be addressed. The grant match would be around \$8,000 to \$10,000. Carrie is asking the board for a letter of support.

Motion by Jerod Glover, second by Guy Charton for Linda Peltier (Chair) to sign a letter of support for a library grant to be applied for with a grant match not to exceed \$10,000, motion passed unanimously.

Approve Selectboard Minutes:

Motion to approve February 1st Selectboard minutes as amended by Jerod Glover, seconded by Guy Charlton motion passed unanimously.

Pay Bills:

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay officer's Stipend in the amount of \$6,208.30, second by Jerod Glover, motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Regular Bills in the amount of \$42,310.77, second by Jerod Glover, motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Regular Payroll in the amount of \$4,801.53, second by Jerod Glover motion passed unanimously.

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Highway Payroll in the amount of \$5,062.67 second by Jerod Glover, motion passed, Brad Barrett abstained from the vote.

Highway Department:

Rd Foreman Report

- Working on cleaning out the old garage to be ready for demolition about 70% complete.
- Plan to service the Grader this coming week.

- Excavator needed the alternator replaced.

Overweight Permits

Motion by Brad Barrett for Linda Peltier (Chair) to sign the excess weight permits for Bud Carpenter, Inc, Champlain Construction, J & D Booska Trucking, Dundon Plumbing and Heating, Markowski Excavation, Spafford and Sons Water Wells, Weston Pulp Wood, J. P. Carrara and Sons, seconded by Guy Charton, motion passed unanimously.

Action on Loan for Truck- State of VT-

- Linda Peltier (Chair) signed the application for the loan for the new International truck, more information is needed before the application can be submitted to the state of VT.

Transfer Station:

- March 9th Greg Fontaine will not be available for the transfer station and Greg reported Guy Charlton was not available. Town clerk to ask Heath Perkins to fill in.
- Tredway's does not do the freon collection from appliances, Brad supplied more vendors to check with.

Motion by Brad Barret, seconded by Jerod Glover for Greg Fontaine to be the SWAC representee and Guy Charton to be the alternate, motion passed unanimously.

Town Clerk Report:

- Supplied the board with the Treasure's report.
- Town reports are back from the printers and being sent out.
- Very busy with Town meeting and election business

Old Business:

Budget-

- Discussion on areas that could be cut to reduce the budget and the use of ARPA funds to reduce the amount raised by taxes.
- Brad Baret updated the board with gravel and trucking bids see below:
 1. Casella \$10.50/ ton plant mix and \$6.12/ Ton hauling to garage.
 2. Gun Runner\$ 7.50/ Ton hauling gravel and crushed stone to garage
 3. Midnight Express \$6.50 /ton for hauling gravel to garage, \$7.00/Ton to roads, \$7.50/Ton for winter sand hauled to the garage.

Town Garage

- Discussion on items that need to be completed for the Town Garage- See list in file provided by Tom Bartholomew

New Business:

Personnel Policy Overtime Amendment:

Motion by Jerod Glover, second by Guy Charton to approve the amendment to the personnel Policy adopted 10/14/13, revised 10-13-14, revised 10-23-17, revised 2/20/24 as followed:

1. Notwithstanding the provisions of the above titled policy, hours used and paid for Holiday leave, Vacation leave, Personal/Sick leave and Bereavement leave during the current pay period shall be counted as hours worked when determining overtime compensation.
2. Call back compensation- employees called to work on short notice for emergency or other purposes shall be compensated for a minimum of two (2) hours of work.

Motion passed unanimously.

Correspondence:

Email- Sam Bartholomew- Discussed under Public Comment

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Brad Barrett at 9:16pm.

Respectfully submitted.

Carrie LaFond

Selectboard Assistant

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