

APPROVED MINUTES
SELECTBOARD MEETING
TOWN OF BENSON, VT
MARCH 18th, 2024, 7:00pm

Selectboard Present:

Brad Barrett, Guy Charlton, Jerod Glover, Linda Peltier, Jim Pritchard

Others Present:

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

Public Present: Craig Munger, Jan Ladd, Terrie Stewart, Ron Stewart, Wes Bowen, Lynn Bowen. Lisa Fontaine, Michaela Bicknell, Douglas Yaremchuk, Diane Drake, Mary Ballard, Bob Ballard, Robin Wilson, Adam Stewart, JJ Valois, Kerry Dunseath, Jean McKeever, Jim McKeever, Pamela Bower, Ben Bartholomew, Norma Philips, Jack Helm, Dave Bartholomew, Dave Gundersen, Russell Stanton, Nancy Elkington, Tracy Howard, Leah Csiszar, Christa Capozzola Jordan, Steve Murray, Jayme Purdy, Yavonne and Elwin Smead, Wayne Fletcher, Lisa Chalidze

Call to Order:

Guy Charlton (Acting Chair) called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Approved Agenda:

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

Amendments To Agenda:

Add Signing of Election complaint

Request to move signing the complaint before public comment- Objection by public, not moved out of order.

Public Comment:

- In response to the recount request by Mr. Helm the selectboard retained council to draft a court complaint to invalidate the one year select board election. (see attached)
- Question was asked why the board of civil authority was not made aware of the issue with the election. **Answer:** The Town's Attorney had asked to meet with the board and had stated the only body that could make a ruling was the Court system.
- Discussion on the election complaint
- Public present at the meeting did not support the attorney's recommendation to ask the court for a new election of the selectboard 1 year term.
- Discussion the two board members that were elected should not recuse themselves from the board.
- Mr. Valois offered to show the Board the printout from the State of Vermont DMV to prove he was registered to vote in October 2023
- Mr. Charlton claimed the filing was a recommendation by the lawyer. Ms. Chalidze responded that they were not obligated to follow the advice of counsel. Mr. Glover mentioned that the lawyer had offered three options.

Motion by Jerod Glover, second by Brad Barrett not to challenge the election and to not pursue legal counsel in the matter, motion passed.

- Linda Peltier and Jim Pritchard returned to the table as acting board members.
- Discussion on the reason behind a floor vote for the budget and how to change that.

Animal Control Issue:

- Mr. and Mrs. Ballard stated their concerns with a nuisance dog on their property and they have been in contact with the Animal Control Officer Ron Stewart.

Motion by Jerod Glover, second by Linda Peltier to appoint Ron Stewart Jr. as the Animal Control Officer, motion passed unanimously.

- The Animal Control officer will give a copy of the dog ordinance to the owner of the nuisance dog.

Approve Selectboard Minutes:

Motion to approve March 4th Selectboard minutes as presented by Jerod Glover, seconded by Brad Barrett, motion passed unanimously.

Pay Bills:

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Regular Bills in the amount of \$625,694.34 second by Jerod Glover, Linda Peltier abstained from the vote, motion passed.

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Regular Payroll in the amount of \$6,356.68, second by Jerod Glover, Linda Peltier abstained from the vote, motion passed.

Motion by Guy Charlton to pay Highway Payroll in the amount of \$5,886.25 second by Jerod Glover, motion passed, Brad Barrett abstained, Linda Peltier abstained from the vote.

Fire Department:

- Fire Department has two members that have excess absences under the fire department's bylaws (3) unexcused.
- As a result of this violation voting privileges have been revoked and they are no longer authorized to respond to calls without an active member present
- Privileges can be reinstated at the department's semiannual review meeting on July 10, 2024, by attending three meetings.

Motion by Jim Pritchard, second by Linda Peltier to authorize Guy Charlton (Acting Chair) to sign the Notice of Violation for Scott Messer and Ellyzabeth Austin, motion passed.

Highway Department:

Rd Foreman Report

- Very busy week getting everything out of the garage.
- The garage is down!

- Orange Truck at Avalanche for service

Overweight Permits

Motion by Brad Barrett, second by Jerod Glover for Guy Charlton (Acting Chair) to sign the excess weight permits for, RK Miles, Champlain Plumbing and Heating, Feed Commodities, HDP Energy LLC, Bellavance Trucking, Dand F Excavation and paving, motion passed unanimously.

Transfer Station:

- Inspection was done by the State on Wednesday 3/13/24, no report yet.
- Pam Clap has so questions that need to be followed up on
- Refrigerator doors are off as of Saturday 3/16/24.
- Freon will be removed as soon as the weather warms up.

Town Clerk Report:

- Busy week with Layers, taxes, and dog registrations

Old Business:

Town Garage

- Landowner Discussion- Tabled, need to have the building staked out to see if there is enough room to plant trees.

New Business:

Review Selectboard Protocol- Tabled

Correspondence:

Email- Mr. and Mrs. Ballard- Dog nuisance – (discussed under Animal Issue)

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Brad Barrett at 8:06pm.

Respectfully submitted.

Carrie LaFond

Selectboard Assistant

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