

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – March 10, 2010

Selectmen Joseph Cuddemi, Philip Germain and Steven Osienski were present as well as Administrator Denise French. Also attending the meeting were Lynn Heinzman, Shelagh Clough and Peter Martel. The meeting was called to order at 5:42 p.m.

As a result of the March 9th elections, Chairman German administered the following Oaths of Office:

Shelagh Clough, Cemetery Trustee for three years

Steven Osienski, Selectman for three years

Peter Martel took an Oath of Office for appointment to the Zoning Board of Adjustment membership for three years.

Road Agent Gary Russell met with the Selectmen and discussed the following:

- The Road Agent and Dave McNamara from FST toured the downtown sidewalks and curbs which were installed under the TE Project. Measurements and photographs were taken of areas that have heaved or separated. The sidewalk material does not seem to be the problem; however, the origin could be unknown unless the Town hires a contractor to test 3–5 locations to determine soil conditions. The Road Agent will compare FST's color coded sidewalk graphic to the pictures he has. The Selectmen will await receipt of TEP reimbursement funds in transit before notifying NHDOT of the Town's observations.
- County inmate workers will be in Town during the next two weeks. Their task will be sidewalk and road sweeping. Whatever remains unswept will be done by a contractor April 12th.
- Since the obsolete kitchen equipment at the VFW does not meet code, the Road Agent proposes removing the free-standing grill and converting it to a portable outside grill that can easily be transported in Town for various Department/Committee outside functions. Russell will investigate costs for the grill's transition and report to the Selectmen.
- PSNH has notified the Town that the recent wind storm left behind a damaged light fixture on South Bennington Road pole #112/4 and needs either removal or replacement. As a result of the 2006 contract between the Town and PSNH at the time of conversion to low energy fixtures, the Town is liable for the purchase of the replacement fixture at an estimated cost of \$275-\$300. The Selectmen unanimously voted to replace the light fixture.
- It is probable that FEMA will provide reimbursement funds for the February wind/snow storm. It was agreed that the cost incurred replacing the street light fixture could be included in the Town's reimbursement request.

Steve Campbell met with the Selectmen and discussed the following:

- In his capacity as Police Chief the Selectmen discussed their frustration at not being informed of the Town of Dublin's contract with the Town of Antrim for regional prosecutor services. Chief Campbell agreed that the Board of Selectmen should have been timely notified.
- The Selectmen authorized the Police Chief to order a replacement Crown Victoria police cruiser at a purchase price not to exceed \$22,100 which includes the car, trade-in and extended warranty. The Chief estimated additional costs of \$2,500 to transfer the equipment, \$1,000 to replace obsolete equipment and \$750 for stenciling for a total of \$26,370. It was jointly agreed the cruiser would be

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black and white with the logo “working to make a difference” and the Police Department website displayed. Beltronics was authorized to do the work gearing up the cruiser.

- In his capacity as Chairman of the Joint Loss Management Committee Campbell reviewed the Risk Management Report with the Board. It was agreed that a plan of action would be developed to prioritize items that can be effectively taken care of this year in light of the voters’ rejection of funding \$20,000 for the Town Building Expendable Trust Fund. Larger capital expenses will be incorporated into the 5/10 year maintenance plan.

From 7:30 p.m. until 7:40 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3II(a) to discuss a personnel matter. Present were Selectmen Philip Germain, Steven Osienski and Joseph Cuddemi. No decisions were made.

Results of the March 9, 2010 Town Meeting was reviewed:

- Out of 23 Warrant Articles only three were defeated – Article 6 which requested a change to the purpose of the Sewer Capital Reserve Fund; Article 15 which requested \$1,000 funding for the Mower Capital Reserve Fund and Article 17 which requested \$20,000 funding for the Town Building Expendable Trust Fund.
- Voter turnout was 35%. It appears that the personal phone calls made by the Selectmen and Budget Committee members had an influence on the voter turnout.
- This Town Meeting was the first one held at Pierce School; the children were in session throughout the day. Observations were that the larger facility was appreciated although the room might be setup differently in the future to avoid drafts from the entrance door; flyers handed out to the voters were sometimes left behind in the voting booth; electioneering encroached into the vehicular travel portion of the parking lot; signage for parking could be improved as well as posting the former Town Meeting site with direction to the replacement site.
- Feedback will be sought from Pierce School Principal Pamela Campbell.

From 8:03 p.m. until 8:10 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session with the Fire Chief under RSA 91-A:3II(a) to discuss a personnel matter. Present were Selectmen Philip Germain, Steven Osienski and Joseph Cuddemi and Fire Chief Allan Wilson. No decisions were made.

Fire Chiefs Allan Wilson and Chester Heinzman met with the Selectmen and acted on the following matters:

- Firefighters Caleb Healey and Joshua Towne were introduced to the Board of Selectmen.
- Selectmen expressed appreciation to the Fire Department for their assistance in delivering flyers to those residents affected by the February 26th power outages.
- Chief Wilson will continue his pursuit of paperwork for the donated boat and trailer so that they may be insured by the Town.
- The DMV registration of the utility trailer is forthcoming.
- The “new” forestry truck is now in service.
- SOG revisions are three-quarters done and will be presented to the Selectmen for review prior to their distribution.
- A grant application is in process requesting funds for the purchase of Self Contained Breathing Apparatus. A second grant request is in process for an all terrain vehicle.
- The Administrator was provided with password information to access Firehouse Software. Assistant Chief Heinzman offered his assistance with payroll questions.

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- Chief Heinzman will check with International to see if they have an interest in the unused 9-1-1 jumpseats.
- The old body from the former rescue vehicle will be transported to the Transfer Station.
- Chief Wilson's office is now locked and not subject to cleaning by the Town's maintenance vendor. He agreed to provide the Selectmen with a key for emergency access.
- Impending 5/10 Year Plans will be discussed with the Capital Reserve Funding Committee. The Administrator will inquire of the Planning Board what their needs are from Town Departments for the Master Plan review.
- The Chiefs agreed to meet at least monthly with the Board of Selectmen.

From 9:02 p.m. until 9:13 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session with the Fire Chiefs under RSA 91-A:3II(c) to discuss a personnel matter. Present were Selectmen Philip Germain, Steven Osienski and Joseph Cuddemi and Fire Chiefs Allan Wilson and Chester Heinzman. No decisions were made.

Lynn Heinzman delivered a copy of her letter sent to Homeland Security and Emergency Management Director Christopher Pope in which she alleges a dysfunctional Town of Bennington Emergency Operations Center. Mrs. Heinzman discussed with the Selectmen her concerns about her patients' well-being during the recent power outage. Ideas were discussed about ways to educate the townspeople about emergency management issues and their responsibility to notify the Town of special needs circumstances. The Selectmen plan to debrief the storm event.

In other matters the Selectmen took the following action:

- Reviewed and approved the March 3, 2010 Selectmen's Minutes.
- Reviewed and approved the March 10, 2010 Accounts Payable and Payroll Registers.
- Agreed to change website vendors if the cost to update both the Administration and Police Department websites does not exceed \$375.
- Discussed replacement of a mobile home within the Village District where manufactured housing is prohibited and requested information from Town Counsel as to whether or not there is case law that addresses this scenario.
- Approved content of the Welfare Director and Recycling Attendant job descriptions. Advertising of these anticipated vacancies is forthcoming.
- Tabled review of vacation compensation for lack of time.
- Heard a report from Shelagh Clough that a homeowner was willing to donate beach sand from their property. She was referred to the Road Agent.
- Conservation Commission will be hosting a Community Clean-up Day for an April date to be determined.
- At the request of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the Selectmen appointed Gary Russell as the contact in matters concerning local debris management.

The meeting adjourned at 10:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Denise French
Town Administrator