

TOWN OF BENNINGTON

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes of the Meeting – March 17, 2010

Selectmen Joseph Cuddemi, Philip Germain and Joseph Cuddemi were present as well as Administrator Denise French. The meeting was called to order at 5:37 p.m.

Emergency Management Directors Steve Campbell and Kristie LaPlante as well as Road Agent Gary Russell met with the Selectmen and discussed the following emergency management matters:

- With regard to the most recent rain event:
 - A few homes and the Library were flooded; the Town Hall basement flooded in the front section of the building. A home adjacent to Town Hall experienced significant basement flooding due to what appears to be a pipe sticking out of the ground. Fire and Highway Department personnel assisted the homeowner during the height of the rain event. The Road Agent will pursue an as-built Sewer Department plan and the Administrator will pursue any easements that could affect this property.
 - Bible Hill Road and the Deering end of North Bennington Road were closed due to flooded roadways. The Antrim/Bennington bridge was closed when water rose to the girders.
 - Bible Hill Road culvert appears it could have been compromised by the swollen river; water needs to recede to allow closer inspection. Bible Hill Road, at the North Bennington Road intersection, will remain closed pending a favorable outcome of the inspection of the culvert. Should the culvert need replacing it is possible that FEMA funds would provide 75% funding to replace the culvert in kind. Before any repairs or replacement are undertaken a thorough review of this section of road would be undertaken by engineers.
 - The Road Agent will contact the NH Rails Bureau to determine usage of the rail trail (where it accesses North Bennington Road from Bible Hill Road) and consideration of safety mechanisms that could be put in place to alleviate liability for both the State and the Town.
 - March 22nd is the deadline to compile an estimate of damage costs associated with the rain event.
- With regard to the wind event in late February:
 - Emergency Management Director Steve Campbell reviewed the events which took place during his absence. The most significant event was the loss of electricity in the South Bennington Road neighborhoods due to a downed tree, broken pole and downed wires. He reported he has received positive feedback regarding the Town's efforts to keep the residents informed through the delivery of flyers. With regard to isolated incidents of inaccurate information being put forth, Campbell explained that it appears the inaccuracies stem from PSNH officials and their out-of-state support crews. He had high praise for the efforts of the Highway Department, the Fire Department and Deputy Emergency Management Director Kristie LaPlante.
 - The Road Agent reported his Department was unable to plow a portion of South Bennington Road due to the presence of downed wires.
 - Director Campbell distributed a written report to the Selectmen in which he addresses Lynn Heinzman's concerns which she sent to the Director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management without his knowledge. In summary, Director Campbell reported he has absolutely no concern about how the emergency was managed and that he believed it was handled in a thorough and professional manner. The Selectmen will revisit Campbell's letter at their next meeting.

Board of Selectmen Minutes – March 17, 2010

- Road Agent Gary Russell reported that he, Walter Kiblin and Gary Langlois all felt that the emergency was well handled and commended Assistant Emergency Management Director Kristie LaPlante for her efforts.

From 6:45 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3II(c) to discuss a personnel matter. Present were Selectmen Philip Germain, Steven Osienski and Joseph Cuddemi, Administrator Denise French, Emergency Management Director Steve Campbell, Deputy Emergency Management Director Kristie LaPlante and Road Agent Gary Russell. No decisions were made.

From 7:03 p.m. until 7:23 p.m. the Selectmen met in Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3II(c) to discuss a personnel matter. Present were Selectmen Philip Germain, Steven Osienski and Joseph Cuddemi as well as Kristie LaPlante. No decisions were made.

Norm Sheppard and Jim Griswold met with the Selectmen and received permission for alcohol to be brought in to the Sportsmen Club game supper May 22nd at the Fire Station. The vote was Cuddemi and Osienski – yes; Germain – opposed. The Sportsmen Club plans to partner with the Recreation Committee to provide additional recreational benefits related to the outdoors. Jim Griswold agreed to his appointment on the Recreation Committee; Norm Sheppard agreed to serve as an Alternate on the Recreation Committee.

Town Clerk Debra Belcher met with the Selectmen by invitation to discuss the following:

- The Town's use of Pierce School for the March 9th Town Meeting was reviewed with an eye towards how the change in voting location affected various town officials and the townspeople. Concerns passed on through the Town Clerk included 1) people not following signage and walking through the school, 2) the election employees were chilled from the air circulation system, 3) limited onsite parking. Mrs. Belcher reported that all classes were treated to a civic's lesson from the Moderator while they watched the voting process first hand.
- Also discussed was the small work environment shared with multiple town employees and the need for all to compress their workspace and archive items occasionally used with the goal of a more efficient office layout. Safety considerations were identified and discussed.

George Chicoine Jr. and Brenda Baldwin met with the Selectmen and Town Clerk to discuss their displeasure of having to pay a \$1 notification fee when registering each of their two dogs. It was agreed that the Town Clerk would remove their name from the Town Clerk's mailing list for future dog registration matters with the clear understanding the Town takes no responsibility if the owner fails to register their animal and is subject to associated consequences for same. Information to this effect will be included in the Town's Newsletter and on the website. The Town Clerk refunded Mr. Chicoine \$2.00 in cash.

Zoning Board of Adjustment members Peter Martel and Chris Clough met with the Board to develop a list of candidates who might be interested in serving on the Zoning Board of Adjustment. It was agreed that the ZBA will interview potential candidates and make recommendation to the Board of Selectmen.

In other matters the Selectmen took the following action:

- Reviewed and approved the March 10, 2010 Selectmen's Minutes.
- Reviewed and approved the March 12, 2010 Accounts Payable Register.
- Reviewed and approved the Accounts Payable and two Payroll Registers for March 17, 2010.
- Heard updates on the hiring process for the Welfare Director and Recycling Attendant.

Board of Selectmen Minutes – March 17, 2010

- Asked to review the ZBA files for M3/L14 and M10/L25 regarding replacement of mobile homes.
- Approved content of the existing Elderly Exemption Financial Form for use when requiring applicants to substantiate their income and assets for Elderly Exemption qualification/requalification.
- Heard a report that the 2009 Intent to Excavate for M3/L1 was erroneously omitted by the owner. The Department of Revenue Administration has been consulted and approved receiving the late filing without doomsday since a history of compliance exist for this landowner.
- Received courtesy copy of a Letter to the Editor put forth by Library Trustees and personnel applauding the efforts of Walter Kiblin, Gary Langlois, Hillsborough County Correctional Workers, Dee French, Joe MacGregor and Jon and Robyn Manley during the recent flood event that adversely affected the Library's basement.
- Tabled a communication from Complete Recycling Solutions.
- Tabled the 2009 audit documents pending their review by the Board of Selectmen.
- Appointed the following members to the indicated committees:
 - Road Agent – Gary Russell for two years.
 - Capital Reserve Funding Committee – Joseph Cuddemi, Philip Germain, Steven Osienski, Harvey Goodwin, Joseph MacGregor and Robyn Manley each for one year.
 - Conservation Commission – Dennis McKenney and Letitia Rice each for three years.
 - Hazard Mitigation Planning Committee – C. Stephen Campbell, Kristie LaPlante, Joseph MacGregor, Richard Reed, Michael Roina and Gary Russell each for one year.
 - Highway Safety Committee – C. Stephen Campbell, Joseph Cuddemi and Gary Russell each for one year.
 - Newhall Park Board – Gretchen Hutton for three years; Alternate Brian Whittemore for one year.
 - Solid Waste Committee – Joseph Cuddemi and Gary Russell each for one year; it is assumed that the new hire for Transfer Station Attendant will fulfill the third position.
 - Zoning Board of Adjustment – Christopher Clough and Peter Martel each for three years.
 - Board of Selectmen Chair – Philip Germain
 - Planning Board ex-officio – Philip Germain
- Nominated Michelle Hamm to the Department of Environmental Services for appointment to the Local River Management Advisory Committee.
- Approved content of the Administrator's letter to Cold Springs Land Trust confirming mutual agreements for the construction of four driveways.

The meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Denise French
Town Administrator