Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

January 3, 2022

In person – Chairman Boisseau, Chairman Caplain, Selectman Hibberd, Selectman Jensen, Selectman Morris.

Chairman Boisseau opened the meeting at 6:01 pm and reminded people to leave their microphones on mute. He continued to remind in person participants to use the microphone so Zoom participants can hear

Public Input:

**Barry Zitser** – Dec 22nd center for Eco Tech – free tech services to Rek-lis and BES to asses ways to reduce food waste and increase recycling and decrease food waste costs – formal report to Rek-lis and issue one to school shortly – educational and thorough – select board has been helpful in supporting free service to introducing to food services – helpful to know when new food pantry will open – Selectman Hibberd has been working on. Mr. Zitser – very thankful for help

**Nancy Strand** – Mt. Cleveland Rd – aware that Selectman Hibberd has been in contact with PMR with Pinewood motel purchase – cloud has been lifted and good to see without negative signage – would like to see the abandoned building on pond taken care of next – dismayed at exit ramp on 302 covered in garbage – 4 bags of garbage removed before snow fell – would like to see it added to road cleanup – investigated other town’s programs. Merrimack – adopt a road, adopt a spot – residents/individuals/group/business – Ms. Strand explained the program and passed along paperwork to the board.

**Allegra Wright** – Bethlehem Facebook page – enforcement on recent ordinances, noise ordinance, parking – no enforcement of ordinances SB has enacted – if ordinances aren’t enforced, they become useless – not meeting needs of citizens – makes town look bad if no enforcement – Chairman Boisseau – haven’t heard personally about issues – Selectman Hibberd – not on Facebook – Nancy Strand – New Year’s issues on Facebook – Selectman Caplain – people need to call police to enforce ordinance – Selectman Morris – Facebook isn’t calling police – they must be informed to enforce.

**Authorize Transfer Committee to explore EPA grants** –

Selectman Jensen – in addition to transfer station committee working on new location for permanent station they have been working on reducing what does into local landfill now and in the future – EPA program for funding for outreach for recycling and reducing what goes into landfill – exploratory right now, not committing to any program, will return to board.

**Selectman Jensen made a motion to allow transfer station committee to pursue grants with select board approval before applying for said grants – Chairman Boisseau seconded – roll call – all – motion passed**

Nancy Strand - January 12th textile recycling bin delivery

**Budget review**

**Chairman Boisseau –** The board has been meeting with department heads on individual budgets – $2,857,389 – to $3,110,863 – ~253,000 increase – Selectman Morris – board not thrilled budget had to go up as much as it did, but not as big a change as originally thought – would like to see the revenues go up to offset difference – small increases add up – Selectman Jensen – demand for employees has pushed for substantial pay raises for existing employees to keep good employees that have institutional knowledge of their jobs – Selectman Caplain – big number for overall change but breaks down to compensation increases on individual budgets and justifiable increases in other line items – Selectman Morris – town is in good position to keep existing employees and not have to fill positions with just any warm body. Revenues are up in 2021 and is hopeful the increase to budget will be offset by increased revenues. Selectman Jensen – asked if proposed budget will be posted on website – Tim Fleury – yes – Selectman Hibberd – budgets came in close this year – Board discussed cemetery survey budget – missing from 2022 budget – not found in 2021 or 2020 budget – looking for monies set aside – discussed if it should be part of GGB or own budget – discussed options for cemetery budget – add $10,000 for line at budget hearing if needed – Selectman Morris – added health officer position and new budget item – board discussed amounts in budget – go high or go low – hard to budget during pandemic year – Selectman Morris – training opportunities would be good investment – Selectman Jensen – health officer position is a new unknown with new expectations from board – leave it high to see what actual needs are – Selectman Hibberd – town being more proactive with position.

Selectman Morris made a motion to approved default budget of $2,831,068 – Selectman Hibberd seconded – roll call - all – motion passed.

**Sansoucy Assessment** – Stored Solar appeal contract

Chairman Boisseau – Sansoucy assessing special properties and received an appeal from Stored Solar – Selectman Morris – board previously approved but no cap for spending was in place, added.

**Selectman Hibberd made a motion to approve the Sansoucy contract as amended with spending cap – Chairman Boisseau seconded – roll call - all – motion passed.**

**Fire Dept equipment purchase**

Chairman Boisseau - $3535 purchase for fire equipment from existing budget.

**Selectman Morris made a motion to allow purchase from budget – Selectman Jensen seconded – roll call all – motion passed.**

**Minutes – 12/20/2021**

**Selectman Hibberd made a motion to approve minutes with the added bill number. – Chairman Boisseau seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

**Other/Follow up from the board**

Selectman Morris – anonymous donations to fire dept $250 and the PD $250 for unbudgeted ways to enhance officer safety and comfort.

**Selectman Morris made a motion to accept $250 PD and $250 FD donations – Selectman Caplain – seconded – roll call – all - motion passed.**

**Selectman Morris made a motion to distribute $250 to FD and $250 to PD for unbudgeted enhancement to officer safety and comfort – Selectman Hibberd – seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

Selectman Hibberd – HB 307 bill on gun issues – Selectman Morris – bill parked – municipalities prohibited from controlling firearms on town property – prohibit use on town property – intended to punish local officials from enacting local level ordinances – NHMA doesn’t support bill because it puts real legal penalties on volunteers and town officials – penalties are the problem, not the process of boards acting in good faith – Selectman Morris – if the house is doing virtual hearings, she can call in – Selectman Hibberd – contact senator to not support bill. How should the board reach out to senator to discuss STR bill 249? Board discussed - letter for STR drafted, firearm bill make call to senator, have Tim Fleury call on behalf of board to discuss HB 307.

Chairman Boisseau – need to step down from board after next election cycle – finish out through March so next position is voted on – discussed options for transition – open position in March – Selectman Morris – 2 one-year terms on ballot and 2 three-year terms – Chairman Boisseau – wants to keep working through March – Selectman Morris – NHMA questions, will reach out to find the best way to proceed.

**At 7:26pm Chairman Boisseau made a motion to go into non-public session per RSA 91A-3 II (personnel, legal) – Selectman Hibberd seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

**Board discussed legal issue with common land.**

**Board discussed personnel issue.**

**Board discussed welfare position update.**

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to adjourn at 8:06pm – Selectman Hibberd seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Fleury

Administrative assistant