Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

March 28, 2022

In person – Selectman Caplain, Selectman Jensen, Selectman Morris, Selectman Hibberd, and Selectman Queiroga

Chairman Caplain opened the meeting at 6:00pm and reminded zoom participants to keep their microphones on mute and in-person public members to use podium to speak.

**Chairman Caplain – quick thank you for main street property cleanup to Selectman Morris and Selectman Jensen – privately cleaning up property.**

**Public Input:**

**Allegra Wright –** thank Selectman Morris and Selectman Jensen for taking care of trash issue in town – good to see board members fillings needs in town

**Greenhouse discussion at community garden:**

**Chairman Caplain –** school approached board to install greenhouse on ballfields – walkthrough with Chairman Caplain and David van Houten – fantastic idea

**Kristin Bruno –** representing garden club and Carole Bays – 21ft by 32ft greenhouse between baseball field and existing garden with grant money – permission from board paves way for grant – Carole Bays – summary – garden club started with 8 students – summer only, students want to do it year round – tying in academics and gardening – twice weekly meetings – 41 students currently participating in garden club – all classrooms starting seeds until planting by garden club – great academic opportunity – donating food to community supper and SWAN program – Chairman Caplain – exciting after first meeting at ballfields – Carole Bays – plenty of room in area to expand community involvement at fields – Selectman Morris – town land? – would it be change of use for planning board approval? – Mike Bruno – not needed for approval, just informing – municipalities have leeway – Selectman Queiroga – already garden on property, expanding use – Mike Bruno – write a letter to planning board as a first step – Selectman Jensen – not near solar array or in path of equipment? – Chairman Caplain – in front of, not in way of solar – no impact to trails or other areas –

**Selectman Morris made a motion to approve the use of the expansion of the garden to include a greenhouse pending planning board approval – Selectman Jensen second – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Selectman Jensen –** will draft letter of support

**Stella’s Dogs –** hot dog cart permission – Chairman Caplain seeking permission to operate in same spot as last year

**Stas Swirzewski –** paperwork still up to date until renewal time – will pass along when new paperwork comes in – slow start last summer due to weather – Selectman Hibberd – good thing to add to website –

**Selectman Hibberd made a motion to approve location of hot dog cart – Selectman Jensen second – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Stas and Lynn Swirzewski –** community has been great and very receptive – thanks board and community

**Raffle approval – Northern Grafton County Republican Committee**

**Chairman Caplain** – Selectman Hibberd – should have form online for this in the future – Selectman Morris – looked it up and very specific RSA’s required to do raffle – held in Bethlehem at Elk’s club – Selectman Jensen – request comes from NGCRC, not Elks – Selectman Morris – RSAs allow political parties – Selectman Jensen – vague in what they are using raffle for – Selectman Queiroga – not board’s decision to decide what raffle is for – Selectman Jensen – more information in letter would have helped – Selectman Morris – when is raffle? – Chairman Caplain – July 11th at Elks – does Elks need permit or does the NGCRC? – Selectman Queiroga – who is holding the raffle, gets permit – Selectman Morris – could extend to next meeting – Chairman Caplain – no reason to hold up

**Selectman Morris – motion to approve Northern Grafton County Republican Committee raffle to be held on July 11th, 2022 – Selectman Queiroga second – roll call – all less Selectman Jensen – nay – motion passed**

**Follow Up – review shared list of items**

**Chairman Caplain –** looking at monthly follow up – Selectman Morris Conservation Commission wants to add to website – more information for events/activities – permit needed list – Chairman Caplain – have Selectman Morris work with Tim Fleury and Sullivan Creative to add to website – Selectman Hibberd – storage issues added to list -

**OAKS, Bethlehem Cares, Small Acts update**

**Chairman Caplain –** talked about a while back – Selectman Jensen and Chairman Caplain met with Kay Kerr – in need of volunteers to id vulnerable people in town and reach out on regular basis to follow up with OAKS – Selectman Jensen – Bethlehem Cares – part of initial idea behind Beth Cares – small volunteer force – Chairman Caplain – looking for volunteers to connect individuals with providers – checking in with residents – 4 volunteers already.

**Outreach**

**Chairman Caplain** – last meeting set record straight – next step is making the SB available to people to help prevent misinformation – office hours for board on a weekly basis – would like to see board available – Selectman Jensen – share emails and liaison list better – Selectman Queiroga – good to get information out on how to reach select board – Selectman Morris – suggest flyer for people in town for those that don’t travel in “downtown” are much – possible ARPA funds to do mailer to connect to people in town – Selectman Queiroga – good idea for people not on social media and reach broader audience – Selectman Morris – magnets possible – Selectman Queiroga – will price out various offerings – Chairman Caplain – office hours – board discussed options for office hours – Zoom option discussed – hours and availability discussed – Chairman Caplain – follow up at next meeting after discussing over next 2 weeks -

**Congressional Earmarks**

**Chairman Caplain –** congressional earmarks available for a lot of funds – asking select board to give permission to move forward – tiny home project – for people that otherwise can’t afford home in Bethlehem – permanent houses – 400-700 sq feet, sustainable and not overly expensive as far as housing goes – go to agriculture department to fund infrastructure for project – not a profit seeking project, will only recoup expenses for landowner – Selectman Hibberd – not only specific for affordable housing – desirable for people that can’t afford home ownership in Bethlehem – needs to go before planning board – basically condo association – not for AirBnb or short term rentals – Selectman Queiroga -what does town need to approve? – Chairman Caplain – permission for town to apply for earmark – similar to Tri Town bike – Selectman Queiroga – town housing money and distributing money – Selectman Morris – USDA rural development or HUD chapter 7 otheroptions – Chairman Caplain – just looking for quickturnaround with these specific earmarks – Selectman Jensen – town is for earmark or tiny home business? – Chairman Caplain – town involved just for earmark – Selectman Morris – who is building project? Landowner? – Chairman Caplain – landowner – Selectman Queiroga – holding money – town has no obligation to oversee project – Selectman Morris – town does that with known entity like with Friendship House – happy to support earmarks but builder is unknown – requesting money for unknown entity – asking for earmark for unknown developer – Chairman Caplain – earmarks not awarded for over a year – cannot accept if wanted – Selectman Morris – Northern Border funds? – another option – can we tie it in to support workforce housing – can it be kept vague? – Chairman Caplain – needs to be specific for this – Selectman Queiroga – 2 separate things – town apply for grant and giving money out versus town fiscal sponsorship – Selectman Morris – uncomfortable with town being fiscal sponsor for unknown entity – Selectman Jensen – town not on hook for initial ask – take a chance, more to gain and no loss for town – Selectman Queiroga – if money gets earmark does town have to accept? – Chairman Caplain – no – can say no – Selectman Hibberd – extensive vetting process with landowner and work involved – Selectman Morris – project goes to fundamental issue in town – housing people in town.

**Selectman Jensen – motion to allow Chairman Caplain to seek earmark for affordable housing project – Selectman Hibberd – roll call – all less Selectman Morris – nay – motion passed**

**Appointment of Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer**

**Chairman Caplain –** appointment for treasurer and deputy treasure

**Selectman Hibberd motion to appoint Frank Claffey and Libby Staples as treasurer and deputy treasurer – Selectman Morris second – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Selectman Hibberd –** had board as treasurer liaison for years – now with Selectman Queiroga on board – good fit for financial information – Selectman Queiroga for first and board as second liaison – Selectman Queiroga – happy to be in that position

**Overpayment Refund – 205-238**

**Chairman Caplain – motion to repay overpayment of Map 205, Lot 238 – Selectman Hibberd second – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Minutes – 03/14/2022, and 3/22/2022**

**Selectman Hibberd – motion to nominate Chairman Caplain as chair – corrected second – NHMA policy added to minutes –**

**Selectman Morris – motion to accept minutes as amended 3/4/2022 and 3/22/2022 as submitted – Selectman Queiroga seconded – roll call – all –**

**Selectman Morris – 3/22 meeting minutes sealed under 91:A3 chapter 3**

**Other**

**Selectman Hibberd –** last time set dates for future board meeting – confirming meeting on 4/25 – discussed May meeting dates – Selectman Morris – ARPA meeting date – 5/9 – Selectman Hibberd can’t make 5/23 – agricultural committee meeting 5/6 too

**Selectman Morris –** Conservation Commission - roadside cleanup – supplies are in – Saturday May 14th at 10:00am – Gazebo on Main street – road assignments – no registration needed

**Selectman Jensen –** brief panning update – PMR resort plan to rebuild restaurant on Miller Pond – framing in next 3 months – no site plan, DOT driveway permit, DES with being close to pond – Selectman Morris – setback from road? – Selectman Hibberd – 60ft from center of road – Selectman Jensen – 50ft from shoreline – parking an issue in small area – will probably approach board for traffic issues – Selectman Morris – does there need to be a plan for too much signage on 302 for visual clutter?

**Chairman Caplain –** bid for cabinets on stage – custom cabinets on stage – locking secure storage area – Selectman Morris – storage downstairs can be freed up.

**Selectman Jensen made a motion to accept bid for cabinets with inclusion of shelving – Selectman Queiroga second – roll call all – motion passed.**

**At 7:18pm Chairman Caplain made a motion to go into non-public session per RSA 91A-3 II (personnel, legal, reputation) – Selectman Hibberd seconded – roll call - all – motion passed.**

**Board discussed employee issues with department head**

**Selectman Morris motion to approve tool allowance of $20 a week to be paid as employee chooses – Chairman Caplain second – roll call – all – motion passed –**

**Chairman Caplain motion to approve SC at $17.00/hr - Selectman Morris - seconded – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Board discussed deed waivers with tax collector.**

**Selectman Morris made a motion to approve deed waiver list – Selectman Queiroga second – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Board discussed distressed property in town.**

**Board discussed employee support for committees.**

**Board discussed eviction process of town owned property.**

**Selectman Morris motion to rescind job offer to PD – Selectman Jensen seconded – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Board discussed posting code officer position again and job descriptions.**

**Board discussed management of trust funds – find trust company.**

**Selectman Morris made a motion to adjourn @ 8:24 Selectman Queiroga seconded – roll call - all – motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Fleury

Administrative assistant