Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

May 24, 2022

In person – Chairman 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** – select board hours are still available – prior to meetings – encourage participation

**Public Input:**

**Barry Zitser –** congratulates Conservation Commission on the roadside cleanup last weekend – great number of bags picked up.

**Pam Sullivan –** update on tourism event at Colonial Theatre, Tuesday June 21st reps from NH Division of Travel and Tourism will present – eclipse presentation and space tourism – event afterwards hosted by WREN and Bethlehem Reimagined

**Mural Project 2022:**

**Jessica Bahrakis** – presented new murals and locations - same as last year – murals are staked in place and the ground is not disturbed – set to go up June 15 and removed around Halloween - same murals thorough the summer – QR code connects to artists and mural project – no advertising on murals.

**ARPA Fund Use:**

**Chairman Caplain opened the public hearing @ 6:06pm**

**Asked people to limit time speaking to 2 minutes on ideas – state idea, cost estimate, benefit to town – Select Board will gather ideas and continue discussion on ideas**

**Chairman Caplain read emails -** Barry Zitser on behalf of Transfer Station Committee – compost rebate – $5,000, Chris McGrath – number of projects – use to fund existing projects to keep monies in unreserved account to offset taxes in future – Barry Zitser – storage space at town hall, fire station roof, technical evaluation of route 116 transfer station, bocce shuffleboard, community garden, additional garage at highway department, administrative equipment, and a parking area for Mt. Aqassiz Trail.

**Nancy Strand** – 3 categories – 1: first impression important – improve beautification efforts in town – north side of long hill – banners on utility poles – 21 poles from country club to town hall – more banners and consistent banners – Just Be banners – south side of road – sidewalk with steep drop to street – primarily dirt – wildflower seedings or phases of perennial flowers – 6ft tall star of Bethlehem lights on poles $4,338 2: extend existing sidewalk to elementary school – makes sense to connect school to library – average cost $9 per square ft – Selectman Hibberd – Library to school approx. $5,000 from Village District – 3: funds to skate park to improve location

**Barry Zitser** – clarified his first email was on behalf of transfer station committee – compost equipment rebate – dog poop bag stations – behind library and possibly in more visible location – Selectman Morris – transferring funds to taxpayers with rebates are problematic – bulk purchase of composters could help – sell at cost, Chairman Caplain – or less than cost.

**Pam Sullivan** – sidewalk from Park St to WREN location – sidewalk sends water into WREN’s basement and floods every spring - Selectman Queiroga – Is it because the sidewalk holds water or building design? – Pam Sullivan – design of sidewalk sends water into buildings – Selectman Hibberd – when done years ago they had to go back and fix aspects of it – Selectman Jensen – lots of unhappy residents when it was redone.

**Selectman Morris** – wish list from departments at budget time – tax collector and town clerk – need new printers – refinish floors in town offices on first floor – tree growing out of building above door – preventative maintenance on building – Selectman Morris – budget a lot higher this year – can use ARPA funds to keep costs down – cemetery survey out of ARPA funds – planning board money from ARPA as well – can shift costs to ARPA funds to go back into general fund to offset taxes next year – Chairman Caplain – available to reduce tax rate next year – Selectman Hibberd – checked in with Mary Jackson – printer $1200 each, e-poll books - $1500 each – office furniture and second registration window to make it more efficient – Selectman Morris – lower counter for accessibility – Selectman Morris – mailer with town information – bear meeting today and may be beneficial to do another bear/wildlife mailer Selectman Morris – looked at inside of Police station – cramped space – interior design to use space better – may be able to reconfigure space to make it more functional – short term makes it more usable prior to long term fixes – Selectman Queiroga – on list also - better changing areas and more usable space – long term plan will take time – planning out the space - Selectman Morris - following year’s ARPA funds can go towards long term goals – Selectman Hibberd – new camera system for inside and outside of building – storage container – can help storage issues in building – Selectman Queiroga- container at highway? – Selectman Hibberd – we need to clear them out – old wooden chairs and other town items - Selectman Morris – lots of effort to empty out container – costs associated with it –

**Selectman Hibberd** – sidewalk to library from school – separate food pantry, large shed next to little free pantry – eliminate interruption of town staff – posted hours with volunteers to staff big pantry – if not open, little free pantry is an option – opens up storage area in basement – current location is a bad spot – looked at shed location in Littleton – lots of good sizes available – estimate at $15,000 for shed, heater and power – Selectman Morris – builders of little free pantry may be able to give estimate to build larger location – rough idea of cost – Selectman Hibberd – good location next to little free pantry – keep it close to keep it stocked from larger pantry – adds privacy to people using it.

**Selectman Jensen** – planning board $10,000 to get regulations sorted out – bolster direct assistance budget if economy continues to go south – skate park – can hope for earmark but wouldn’t hurt to put money into it to get $ sooner

**Selectman Morris** – list from Select Board – solar, EV charger, speed feedback signs, lighting Profile underpass ($60,000 or solar), sidewalk to library, emergency housing – Selectman Hibberd – tough solutions – likes Selectman Jensen idea to put extra money aside, Selectman Morris – board could mark $10,000 for emergency housing and move to budget after that, welfare assistance beyond housing, planning review, economic development, - Selectman Morris – pave own parking lot to clean it up – helps offset cost of materials – Selectman Jensen – grant possible, generator for town hall – Chairman Caplain – battery storage to bolster generator – Selectman Jensen – how long does it last? – Chairman Caplain – couple days with charging during day – Selectman Morris – smaller invertor generators can be chained together for larger power use and can remove one for remote location if needed – Selectman Jensen -add to list.

**Chairman Caplain** – compile list and prioritize it – look at funds this year and next year - $210k total – good idea to offset appropriated funds.

**Pam Sullivan** – adding things to town hall – need to beautify area around town hall – don’t get it cluttered up – and beautify outside of building

**Chairman Caplain** – closed public hearing at 6:49pm – thanked participants -

**Donut truck**: vendor asked to move it to next meeting – Selectman Morris – need to implement hawker and peddlers license in town – exists already in state and other towns – make sure everything is permissible – will work on for next meeting.

**Cemetery survey bids:**

**Selectman Morris** – horizon engineering - $9000 – fixed fee for full service - only bid received – in budget currently

**Selectman Morris made a motion to hire Horizon Engineering for cemetery survey for $9,000 Selectman Hibberd seconded - roll call – all – motion passed**

**Heritage roof bids:**

**Chairman Caplain** – one estimate received - $30k – doesn’t include structural part of fix – would like to go back to bidder to determine structural costs – repost in town offices to get more bids

**Trust Funds release of funds:**

**Chairman Caplain** – trustees asked to delay release of funds with market down – Frank Claffey agrees we can hold off – Selectman Queiroga – can release funds quickly –

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to delay release until market rebounds or treasurer sees need – Selectman Queiroga seconded – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Credit Card signatures:**

**Chairman Caplain** – remove Selectman Hibberd and add Dawn Ferringo to welfare card

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to remove Selectman Hibberd and add Dawn Ferringo to welfare card – Selectman Morris seconded – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Library Agreement for town services:**

Selectman Queiroga – clarifying questions – provide benefits to library decided when?

**Selectman Morris** – added during budget hearing and at town vote to provide benefits to full time employees – Selectman Queiroga – town provides benefits with agreement? – Selectman Morris – add to town benefits package – Selectman Queiroga – are they paying us for our time? – Selectman Morris – no - spoke with Nicole McGrath and Tim Fleury – dropped BCC and add library makes it a wash – leaving process out of agreement to keep library separate from town and make process work for both parties – Selectman Queiroga - does this open it up for other entities? – Selectman Hibberd – limited use case only for library – specialized for libraries – Selectman Morris school could ask but handle their own at this point – Selectman Hibberd – school different? – Selectman Morris – would need to add more employees – Selectman Jensen – building maintenance services to library? – Selectman Morris – added it for rare occasion library needs help – Selectman Jensen – should keep highway to highway – can ask Brett for help – Doug Harman – cross it out – not needed – Selectman Hibberd – keep it the same way – Chairman Caplain – comments form Primex – should be more formal – should be beyond this and have counsel look at it – time crunch if done by June 1 – need retirement info as well – Selectman Morris – agree

**Selectman Morris made a motion subject to NHRS info and town counsel approval to enter into MOU to provide Library payroll services subject to minor modification by counsel– Chairman Caplain – seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

Selectman Morris – based on library trustee association – Doug Harmon – library board voted on it with contingencies so it doesn’t need to go back and forth so it can meet timeline.

**Highway Department assistance with Elementary School Project:**

**Chairman Caplain** – Sue Greenlaw – asked for time capsule digging up and trench for water line for community garden – Brett Jackson is ok with it – Selectman Jensen – concerned Brett is too nice and would like to see it kept to highway projects – school has own budget and can deal with it – Selectman Hibberd – tough with crew taking vacation during summer because they can’t do it in the winter – Selectman Queiroga – can take a stand and keep highway as highway – need to make it a clear and consistent position – Selectman Hibberd – tree cutting for solar a big project – striping lines a small project – Selectman Jensen – needs to keep it to emergencies – Chairman Caplain – would like to know what it would cost Brett to do water lines in time and funds – each situation different – Selectman Morris – small requests add up – do we need a public works position to cover all these small requests? – Selectman Hibberd – highway department didn’t replace part time employee when they left – Selectman Morris – could be a good position – fixes small projects – simple projects and contract out larger projects – Chairman Caplain – hesitate to add additional person to payroll – cost benefit analysis – would it makes sense with projects? Do enough projects exist? – Selectman Morris – could have helped with solar on library – liaison position between town and solar contractors – liaison between town and all contractors

Chairman Caplain – would like to know hours needed – circle back to additional position during budget time and keep in mind projects that come up -

**Solar Project update:**

**Chairman Caplain** – panels delivered and installed to library – Doug Harman – additional information – committee for town set up solar project – phone call that solar project was starting on morning of solar project start – email night before – bad communication on timeline and plans for installation – equipment from original bid not available – put time in figuring out project – thought committee was handling this – Jack Anderson happened to drive by when electricians were installing equipment – no information given to contractors – not smooth – missing 1 circuit breaker to complete project – Chairman Caplain – thank you for feedback – not how this was supposed to go forward – will touch bases with Barrington Power tomorrow.

**Chairman Caplain** – next focus on highway department – energy commission meeting with the planning board tomorrow for the conceptual for the elementary school project – big trees already down – good to hear feedback prior to meeting.

**Minutes:**

**Selectman Queiroga** – change vote to 3-0 from 3-2 – clarifies absences – Chairman Caplain – date fix needed.

**Selectman Morris – motion to approve with changes noted – Selectman Jensen second – roll call – Selectmen Hibberd, Jensen, and Morris – yea - Chairman Caplain and Selectman Queiroga abstain – 3-0 – motion passed**

**Other**:

**Selectman Queiroga** – BTA is hoping to run event in August – have spoken with Jack and Alan for safety issues – no permit from town needed – informing board.

**Selectman Queiroga** – town newsletter – signed by selectboard – would like to see draft prior to publishing – Selectman Jensen – squeezes it in when he has time to make newsletter – can send out to everybody – will take more time to get newsletter out to public – Selectman Queiroga – not suggesting sign off, maybe time limit so if no comments, it goes off – WREN was in newsletter – how does business get in newsletter? – Selectman Jensen – depends on what is going on during week – can be unwieldy getting all information out, can make committee to put it out to get all information out – Selectman Queiroga – hesitant to sign off without giving opportunities to all business – can keep it to simply meeting information – Selectman Jensen – takes time to put out information – takes up a lot of his time to produce – Selectman Morris – Selectman Jensen taking big vacation in September – he won’t be doing it forever and make plan to move forward - September good time to figure out process – board discussed rotating editing newsletter – Selectman Queiroga – likes newsletter and reads it – hesitates to send something out with her “signature” without seeing it – Selectman Jensen – will try to send it out prior – Selectman Queiroga – need to figure out process to not overwhelm one member of board – Selectman Morris – knows time it takes to edit newsletter – Selectman Queiroga – suggestion – make effort to share and appreciate it – whoever it transitions to it will change subtly – Selectman Morris – appreciates Theresa Wood’s work to get newsletter out and polished – Selectman Jensen – will try to get it out earlier and send info tome to get it in it.

**Selectman Queiroga** – notice of noise on Sunday on Pleasant Street – is approval needed to operate equipment – inside quiet hours – Selectman Morris – “is a permit needed” section of website working on currently that would help problems like that –

**Selectman Morris** – bear meeting today – PD does not have physical means to issues tickets to ordinances select board has passed– can’t physically write tickets without form – need to make tickets – working on problem – noise ordinance has enforcement attached to it, wildlife and littering do not have same enforcement item – may be time to update ordinance for legality – make consistent –

**Selectman Hibberd** – at last meeting - select board procedures – currently exist – will email around and amend as needed

**Small Acts update:**

Chairman Caplain – Small Acts reached out to town for update – ideas from Acts – give out ice cream sandwiches along main street – simple and easy to implement – reached out to Super Secret to provide ice cream – Schools, BES – summer assignment for kids, Small Acts assignment for kids over summer – raffle for completed acts over summer.

**Skate Park update:**

**Chairman Caplain** – group put together application together for earmark from Senator Shaheen’s office – what entity under? – need town to sponsor group to qualify for earmark – town gets paid 2% fee from grants – Selectman Hibberd – just earmark? – Chairman Caplain – yes, just earmark – Selectman Jensen – to what extent is town responsible for money being spent? – Chairman Caplain – grant is very specific – Selectman Jensen – town’s approval but town not aware of how funds are being used – Selectman Queiroga – did we do it for Friendship House? – Selectman Morris – yes, fiscal agent for grant – town took into consideration new organization running program before signing on – would like to do same due diligence – Chairman Caplain – Ed Shansala, Nick Storella, and Bruce Etter – Selectman Morris – would like to see them come to board with request and letter – Chairman Caplain – issue is that there isn’t an organization attached – Selectman Hibberd – may be an issue that it’s individuals – if they had LLC or organization it would be different – Selectman Morris – easy to set up LLC – would be more secure with actual organization – hard to cut check to contractors directly without oversite – Selectman Queiroga – how has it been done in past? – directly to organizations or contractors? – Selectman Hibberd – grant administrator with NCC dispersed funds on older project – Selectman Queiroga – in support of due diligence – have done it for other places that have organizations – would like to make it consistent – Selectman Jensen – hard to endorse group without knowing information about group – lose control over town’s reputation – Chairman Caplain – too many strings attached to allow issues – Selectman Morris – don’t know terms of grants - no objections to individuals seeking help from town – individuals asking for grant to do project – different from organization seeking grants - Selectman Queiroga – option to decline grant after awarded – can do due diligence before awarding grant – give sign off with contingency that they present to board what money is being spent on – Selectman Jensen – comfortable with supporting grant contingent on project goals and what money is being spent on –

**Selectman Queiroga made a motion to approve town being administrator for skate park earmark contingent on individuals coming to select board and presenting plans on what money is being spent on – roll call 4-1 – Selectman Morris nay – motion passed**

**Non-public Session per RSA 91A-3 II (legal, personnel)**

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to hire PF to fire department – Selectman Queiroga seconded – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Selectman Hibberd** – old regular year-round part-time employees had prorated time off – would like to add to current employees

**Selectman Hibberd made a motion to give year-round part-time employees that average 25 hours per week one week of prorated time off equal to the average hours per week – Selectman Queiroga seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

**Selectman Hibberd** – holidays on Mondays – part time employees that normally work Mondays – prorate holiday pay based on regular schedules for those Mondays – Selectman Queiroga – can come in on other day off during week to make up hours –

**Selectman Jensen** – Douglas Drive –discussed reaching out to counsel for second opinion on road use

**Selectman Morris made a motion to adjourn @ 8:27pm - Selectman Queiroga seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Fleury

Administrative assistant