Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

August 8, 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.

**Public Input –**

**None**

**Highway Department – sealed truck bid offer**

Chairman Caplain – sealed bid for truck sale – 1 received - $650 –

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to accept bid for purchase of the highway truck for $650.00 - Selectman Hibberd seconded – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Liquor Approval – El Mirador Restaurante**

Chairman Caplain – 2 approvals for El Mirador Restaurante

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to approve alcohol sales inside and out for El Mirador – Selectman Morris seconded – roll call – all - motion passed.**

**Liquor Approval – Wayside Inn – August 15th event**

Chairman Caplain - special event on Aug 15th for anniversary – seeking approval to serve outside for event

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to approve outside alcohol service for the Wayside Inn on August 15th - Selectman Queiroga seconded – roll call – all - motion passed**

**Sign Permit – Washwick Agency**

Chairman Caplain – Mascoma Bank building up for sale – Washwick Agency buying building – currently tenants at WREN – Selectman Morris – bought building and want to add sign to replace where the Mascoma bank sign was – meets night sky restrictions.

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to approve sign permit for the Washwick Agency – Selectman Queiroga seconded – roll call - all – motion passed.**

**Land Use Change Tax – Map 413-50.2**

Chairman Caplain – land on Swazey Lane – roughly 70 acres - .5 acres removed from current use - $3,100 tax

**Selectman Morris made a motion to approve 413-50.2 coming out of current use, .5 acres – Selectman Hibberd seconded – roll call – all – motion passed**

**PRIMEX – Premium Holiday distribution**

Chairman Caplain - Premium holiday distribution – check or credit – Selectman Hibberd credit is how we’ve done it in the past.

**Selectman Queiroga made a motion to accept holiday contribution as a credit in amount of $7448.70 - Selectman Hibberd seconded – roll call – all - motion passed**

**Abatement – Map 414-15-T143**

Chairman Caplain – camper on property not worth amount on appraisal – recommended to deny by assessor due to filing abatement form after deadline

**Selectman Hibberd made a motion to deny abatement request per assessor due to deadline missed – Selectman Queiroga seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

**Heritage Roof inspection – follow up with findings by HEB Engineers**

Chairman Caplain – HEB engineers did assessment – recommended to get contractor to open walls to inspect areas better: foundation, framing, and roof supports – Selectman Queiroga – is it safe to occupy the building? – Selectman Morris – letter doesn’t make it sound that way. Selectman Queiroga – given the age of the building – open the walls – what can come out of it – how much do we want to spend before we go to a bigger plan – opening and closing walls without a fix – Chairman Caplain – have to either open walls and give up on building now – Selectman Queiroga – estimate on opening the walls – Selectman Hibberd – look for a contractor that will continue the work – open and close the walls after assessment – Selectman Morris – have building inspector look at building to see if we can mitigate damage – RFP and look for contractors based on HEB assessment – set date for inspections.

**Indigenous Peoples’ Day – follow up conversation**

**Chairman Caplain** – had conversations with local residents that are Native Americans – spoke with local Abenaki tribe – across the board all were in favor of changing to Indigenous Peoples Day – Selectman Queiroga – spoke with individuals and for changing name – no financial impact on town – Selectman Hibberd – in support – right thing to do – Selectman Jensen – lots of things the select board should just do and not go to town meetings – exception this time – feels that it should go to larger town meetings – Selectman Queiroga – why for this and not Juneteenth with financial impact? – Selectman Jensen – Juneteenth is a federal holiday – only a handful of people spoken to – would like to see public hearing to get more feedback – Chairman Caplain – feels set precedent with Juneteenth and added this to agenda so it was open for public comment – Selectman Jensen – Juneteenth is a federal holiday – Selectman Queiroga – not a state recognized holiday – Juneteenth gave extra day off and financial impact to town – Chairman Caplain – research on state gov’t stance on IPD – political issue – if state gov’t recognizes, possible to give land back to indigenous people – Selectman Jensen – should be public hearing

**Selectman Queiroga – motion to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples’ Day in town – Selectman Hibberd seconded – roll call – yes: Selectmen Caplain, Hibberd, Morris, and Queiroga – no: Selectman Jensen - for public hearing – motion passed – 4-1.**

**Gear Library Update**

Chairman Caplain – asked to remind residents that it is available for rent for free in town for outdoor gear

**Energy Commission update: Village District, Ride and Drive Day, and NH Saves Energy Audits**

**Chairman Caplain –** Energy Commission met last week – grant application for Village District solar project – preliminary approval to move ahead - $421k project - $250k grant $171k loan at 2% - commission meeting with district tomorrow – Selectman Morris – did they receive ARPA funds? – **Chairman Caplain** – unknown, will reach out – Selectman Morris – can use those funds for solar and possibly sidewalk

**Chairman Caplain** – Drive Electric NH – ride and drive day for electric car owners – library location - can ask questions about electric cars and ask owners questions – NH Saves there to offer audits on homes and other projects – Franconia Basecamp will bring electric bikes – Selectman Queiroga – would like to see bike safety info available if e-bikes are there – Selectman Hibberd – agree – which lane to be in, keep everyone safe, etc.

**Selectman Hibberd** – communities can contract with 3rd party electric providers to save money – community power law – Community Power Coalition – would have to have warrant article to create plan, enact plan, and enter into agreement – residents can opt out – Selectman Hibberd – would like to pursue it and if Energy Commission is on board with assisting with that – Chairman Caplain – talked about propane buying groups – Selectman Queiroga – would love to see more information on it – Selectman Morris – RSA allows towns to join nearby towns to combine efforts – town does have disused hydro station on river and unused biomass generator in town – other options available

**Minutes – 7/19/2022 and 7/25/2022**

**Selectman Queiroga made a motion to approve both minutes – Chairman Caplain seconded – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Other**

Bruce Caplain – Frank recommending increasing limits on Rec and Exec credit cards – $3000 to $5000 and $4000 to $6000 respectively – also need to add Abbie Sawyer to Rec and remove Tim Fleury from Rec credit card.

**Selectman Morris made a motion to increase limits on the Recreation credit card to $5,000 and the Executive credit card to $6,000 and add Abbie Sawyer to the Recreation card and remove Tim Fleury – Chairman Caplain seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

**Selectman Morris** – Conservation Commission meeting on Thursday – state Solid Waste commission open for public comments – CC – will respond to state from town

**Chairman Caplain –** Small Acts – gave out ice cream sandwiches in town with Sue Greenlaw and BES and at gazebo concert – residents loved it -

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to go to Non-public Session per RSA 91A-3 II (personnel, legal) @ 6:40pm– Selectman Queiroga seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

**Board discussed personnel issue.**

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**Board discussed legal advice.**

**Selectman Morris made a motion to adjourn 7:26@ Selectman Queiroga seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Fleury

Administrative assistant