Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

August 28th, 2023

In person –Chairman Morris, Selectman Hibberd, Selectman Strand, Selectman Caplain, and Selectman Bruno.

250th Anniversary Committee – The select board discussed creating a 250th anniversary committee led by the Historic Society. Linda Moore, representing the Historic Society, explained that they would take the lead in the planning and development of the celebration as was done for the 200th anniversary.

**Chairman Morris made a motion to for the Historic Society to organize the 250th anniversary celebration. Selectman Hibberd seconded and all were in favor.**

Sand Bid- Chairman Morris opened the sealed sand bid from A& B Excavating which quoted $17.75 for 2 cubic yards of screened sand. Brett Jackson, Road agent, said the price went up .25 cents from last year which he felt was reasonable.

**Chairman Morris made a motion to accept the bid from A& B Excavating. Selectman Hibberd seconded and all were in favor.**

New Lawn Mower-Cemetery and town grounds- **Selectman Bruno made a motion to purchase a new John Deere Z530M Z Trac lawn mower. Selectman Hibberd seconded and all were in favor.**

Minutes 8/14- **Selectman Hibberd made a motion to accept the minutes from 8/14/2023. Selectman Caplain seconded and all were in favor.**

Sign Permit- Pam Newman- Pam Newman submitted an application for a sign permit for a temporary business.

**Selectman Bruno made a motion to accept Pam Newman’s sign permit. Chairman Morris seconded and all were in favor.**

**Solar Radar Feedback Sign- Chairman Morris made a motion to purchase 4 new solar radar signs from Tapco to be paid from ARPA funds. Selectman Caplain seconded and all were in favor.**

Paint Purchase for the Pool- Chairman Morris updated the board the rec department would be purchasing epoxy paint for the pool and completing the project this fall when it is emptied for the season.

Signature Authority for Town Administrator – Chairman Morris updated the board that she would provide a draft of a signature authority policy for the town administrator for the next meeting.

Knollwood Energy RECS- Chairman Morris opened discussion on selling the reusable energy credits from the three municiple solar arrays. Chairman Caplain explained that he is opposed to the legislation but recognizes if the town does not sell the renewable energy credits Eversource will automatically benefit and so he believes the town should enter into an agreement with Knollwood Energy.

**Chairman Morris made a motion to enter into an agreement with Knollwood Energy to sell our reusable energy credits. Selectman Strand seconded and all were in favor.**

DOT Safe Routes to School update- Selectman Caplain updated the board that the grant administered by DOT for Safe Routes to School is moving forward. The next step will be to finalize the agreement with DOT and sponsor and co-sponsor agreements with Franconia and Sugar Hill. Selectman Bruno wanted to go on record by stating he does not feel the majority of Bethlehem or Franconia residents will benefit from the grant but a limited number of bikers. Selectman Bruno continued that a better use of the funding would be to put a sidewalk in from Bethlehem Elementary to the library. Chairman Morris stated she heard Selectman Bruno’s concerns however disagreed and felt Profile students would utilize the bike path. Selectman Caplain stated anyone could apply for a Safe Routes to School grant to install a sidewalk from BES to the library. Selectman Caplain continued the grant that was awarded wouldn’t negate another organization for applying for a grant for the side walk.

Future Meeting Dates- The board decided on future meeting dates: 9/11, 9/25, 10/2, 10/16, 10/30, 11/13, 11/27, 12/4, 12/11, and 12/18.

Liaison/Committee Update:

Selectman Bruno updated the board that he had met with Laura Clerkin and the Bethlehem Library had a successful summer program focused on togetherness and how to promote community. Selectman Bruno continued that Kayela Tavares and Tara Bamford recently attended a planning board meeting to start working on the suggested ordinance changes based on the work they have been conducting for the NHHOP grant. He also mentioned that the new Public Safety committee toured the Franconia Fire/Police station. Selectman Caplain noted storage as a common issue for both facilities they visited and making changes to the plan without consulting the experts ended in additional costs for both towns.

Selectman Hibberd met with Dawn Ferringo, Direct Assistance, to discuss the food pantry, grants, and the new hours for the food pantry. Selectman Strand noted the difference between the Little Free Pantry, which is community sourced, versus the food pantry which is organized and supplied by ther towns Direct Assistance. Chris Jensen objected to Selectman Strand’s explanation explaining that the Little Free Pantry was supposed to be receiving food from the Food Pantry because during covid there was a surplus.

Chairman Morris updated the board that the rec department had received the new infant swing. Chairman Morris also updated the board that Abbie Sawyer, Rec Director would like to amend the code of conduct to include a provision that if the rec director is not present the coach will communicate any code of conduct violations to the rec director.

**Selectman Strand made a motion to amend the rec code of conduct. Selectman Caplain seconded and all were in favor.**

Selectman Strand updated the board that the Transfer Station Committee just completed their latest edition of *Just Be Greener*.

Selectman Caplain updated the board that the Sustainability Working Group in partnership with Ammonoosuc Conservation Trust is hosting a moving at the Colonial Theater on September 9th. Matt Koehler from Eversource will also be participating in the event.

Other

Non-public Session per RSA 91A-3 II (personnel, reputation, and legal) Chairman Morris made a motion to go into non-public for reasons of Legal, personnel, and reputation. Selectman Hibberd seconded and roll call followed.

**Chairman Morris made a motion to reinstate Chief Anderson effective September 1st. Selectman Hibberd seconded and all were in favor.**

**Chairman Morris made a motion to hire the two new rec candidates. Selectman Strand seconded and all were in favor.**

**Chairman Morris made a motion to adjourn at 8:30. Selectman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Moritz

Town Administrator