Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

October 16th, 2023

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

Minutes 9/25 and 10/2 **Selectman Bruno moved to accept the minutes from 9/25. Chairman Morris seconded and all were in favor.**

The minutes from 10/2 will be discussed on 10/30.

Food pantry fund raiser- Becky Dicristopher- Chairman Morris introduced Becky Dichristopher to discuss a fundraiser for the Food Pantry and the Little Free Pantry. Ms. Dicristopher explained that she has a business helping people clean out their homes and relocates the items to people who need them. She continued she would like to have a fund raiser in the parking lot by the Little Free Pantry Saturday 10/28 from 10:00-3:00. Chairman Morris motioned to approve the fundraiser for the Little Free Pantry and Food Pantry. Selectman Hibberd seconded and all were in favor.

Online Auction Dates- **Chairman Morris motions to test the first trial for the online auction from 11/1 until 11/18. Selectman Strand seconds and all are in favor.**

ARPA Funds- The board discussed the updated ARPA allocations.

250th Anniversary Celebration- Chairman Morris updated the board that it has been requested to have the 250th town anniversary celebration the weekend of August 9th in coordination with Summerfest. Selectman Bruno informed the board that he has been working with the Historical Society to ask the State for a historical marker honoring the grand hotels in Bethlehem.

**Selectman Hibberd made a motion to send a letter of support for the Grand Hotel historical marker to be placed on Main Street. Chairman Morris seconded and all were in favor.**

Energy Commission- Community Power- Chairman Morris introduced Mary Lou Krambeer from the Energy Commission to discuss Community Power. Mary Lou Krambeer explained the Energy Commission has started looking into what is required for the town to become a member of Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire. Ms. Krambeer continued the Energy Commission believes it is the right time to become a member because there is more knowledge from the towns who adopted earlier and the next step for Bethlehem if interested would be to sign the joint power agreement. Selectman Strand asked if the Energy Commission has considered more congregate energy companies. Ms. Krambeer responded that they had not spoken to other companies however they had favorable rate information from CPCNH and were confident that was the coalition to join. Chuck Philips, Energy Commission member, explained people would have to opt of joining the coalition with the town and residents with third party energy will have to opt in to joining. In addition, the joint powers agreement the town will have to have two public hearings to inform residents of the change if it was adopted at the 2024 town meeting. Selectman Bruno stated he liked the opportunity to join the coalition.

**Chairman Morris motioned to adopt the joint power agreement with Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire and designate the Energy Commission as the Community Power Committee. Selectman Hibberd seconded and all were in favor. Selectman Caplain abstained.**

Liaison/Committee Update- Selectman Bruno reminded the board the Historical Society is having a dedication party at Maplewood Country Club in celebration of the plaques that were installed on Sunday 10/15 from 2:00-4:00. Selectman Bruno continued that the planning board is working with Tara Bamford on the ordinances around the work that has been conducted by the NHHOP grant. The planning board will be putting forth a short-term rental ordinance making it a permittable use, and it is being recommended that any regulatory ordinance should come from the select board. Selectman Strand notified the board that the transfer station committee was having a meeting on Tuesday 10/24 to discuss the Mascoma Bank Foundation grant.

**Chairman Morris made a motion in support of the Transfer Station Committee applying for the Mascoma Foundation grant. Selectman Bruno seconded and all were in favor.**

Other- Selectman Bruno inquired about adding Odd Fellow’s signs at the location near the Welcome to Bethlehem signs like the Rotarian signs in other towns. Chairman Morris asked to postpone discussion until the sign ordinance can be updated.

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. Selectman Strand seconded and roll call followed.

The board discussed personnel.

**Chairman Morris motioned that employee background checks must be verified prior to starting employment. Selectman Strand seconded and the vote carried 4-1. Selectman Caplain was opposed.**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Moritz

Town Administrator

