Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

January 20th, 2025

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

Chairman Bruno expressed the boards gratitude to Chief Anderson as he prepares for retirement and thanked his family for hosting retirement party for Chief Anderson.

Budget Hearing Continued: Warrant Article Recommendations:

**Selectman Morris motioned to recommend article 4. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

Chairman Bruno explained article 5 Visitor’s Center roof was appropriated in 2024 however was not able to be completed. Paul Nandico asked for clarification regarding the statement of the amount is not enough and he wondered if the money is wasted. Chairman Bruno explained that the engineering report also included the foundation work, and the intent is to get more information on the foundation work before the roof work is completed. Chris Jensen asked if it was the boards intent to get the information regarding the foundation before the roof project is completed and Chairman Bruno confirmed.

**Selectman Morrison motioned the board to recommend article 5. Select Woman Strand seconded, and motion carried 3-1.**

Chris Jensen asked the board why the need for so many Police Cruiser. Select Woman Strand explained the age and rotation of the police cruisers. Chris McGrath agreed with Chris Jensen that the number of Police Cruisers could be reduced.

April Nandico noted the recent tax increase noting the school increase. Chairman Bruno agreed with Ms. Nandico noting the board is looking at different ways to reduce the tax rate. Selectman Morris suggested considering reducing the amount of the Police Cruiser Capital reserve this year because there is enough to purchase a cruiser. Select Woman Hibberd stated that the CIP Committee has looked at the capital reserve requests and at this point the recommended amounts should be voted on at Deliberative. Chris McGrath agreed with Select Woman Hibberd. Select Woman Strand explained that there is enough to purchase one cruiser put the point of a capital reserve is to ensure there is enough to cover future purchases as well. Chairman Bruno continued that he feels it’s the responsibility of the board to review critically the expenses of the town including capital reserves. Dick Robie supports funding capital reserves noting the cost increases.

**Selectman Morris motioned to recommend articles 6 through 9. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

Paul Nandico asked what the Cemetery Trust asked for in 2024. Chairman Bruno explained that they haven’t asked for funds for several years, but they have several projects slotted that require additional funding.

**Selectman Morris motioned to recommend articles 10 through 14. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

Chris Jensen noted all the efforts that have been made to get funding for the transfer station. Select Woman Strand continued there is still an EPA grant that was submitted but it is doubtful that it will be funded.

Chris McGrath asked the board if there was a plan in place to enact the building maintenance. Chairman Bruno noted that efforts are being made to complete building maintenance.

**Selectman Morris motioned to recommend articles 15 through 18. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

**Selectman Morris motioned to recommend articles 19. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

**Selectman Morris motioned to recommend articles 20. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

Chairman Bruno introduced Alder Brook Road questioning the way it written. The board discussed adding a clarifying sentence.

**Selectman Morris motioned to recommend articles 21. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

**Selectman Morris motioned to recommend articles 22. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

The board discussed requesting $20,000 for the Expendable Trust being formed for grant matches.

**Selectman Morris motioned to appropriate $20,000 to the Grant Match Expandable Trust. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

**Selectman Morris motion to recommend articles 23. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

**Selectman Morris stated consistent with prior Select Boards motioned to not recommend petition warrant articles 24 through 29. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

Chairman Bruno closed the Budget hearing at 8:03.

STR Committee Report out- Selectman Morris informed the board that the STR committee is revising the septic requirement that will be included as a zoning amendment for 2025 town meeting. In addition, the committee worked on an application and process for enforcement that will be shared with the board. The board will continue to discuss it during the February 10th meeting.

Maintenance/Software Agreement Dominion Voting Systems- **Selectman Morris motions to approve the software and service level agreement for the Dominion counting machine. Select Woman Strand seconded, and all were in favor.**

Proration Request- Chairman Bruno explained there was a fire and as a result the owner of the property is seeking a reduction in building value.

**Chairman Bruno motioned to accept the assessor recommendation for map 209 lot 74 and reduce the value to $87,924. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor. Selectman Morris abstained.**

Energy Commission Appointment Marni Hoyle- **Select Woman Strand motioned approve Marni Hoyle to the Energy Commission. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

Minutes 1/13- **Select Woman Strand motioned to approve the minutes from 1/13 with edits. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

Updates and other business- **Selectman Morris motions to approve the abatement for map 409 lot 31 for over payment. Select Woman Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

The board discussed a bid of $13,100 to bring the lower field up to the current code.

**Select Woman Strand motioned to accept the bid in the amount of $13,100 from Joslyn Sports to complete the ball field work. Selectman Morris seconded, and all were in favor.**

Chairman Bruno announced the new Fire Chief as John Galloway the current Fire Chief of Sunapee.

Non-public Session per RSA 91A-3 II (personnel, reputation, and legal) Select Woman Strand motioned to go into nonpublic per RSA 91A-3 II for reasons of personnel, and Legal. Selectman Caplain seconded and roll call followed.

The board discussed a personnel issue and legal.

Chairman Bruno made a motion to adjourn at 9:00. Selectman Strand seconded, and all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Moritz

Town Administrator