

**North Berwick Board of Selectmen Minutes October 6, 2015**

**NORTH BERWICK BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES  
OCTOBER 6, 2015**

**Present:** Chairman Galemmo, Selectman Cowan, Selectman Folsom, Selectman Johnson, Jr., Selectman Hall

**Also Present:** Dwayne Morin

Chairman Galemmo opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

**1. Pledge of Allegiance**

**2. Review and Approve Minutes of September 15, 2015**

Dwayne stated that he had made a couple of small changes. In the first paragraph under the Parks and Recreation section on Page 3, the 2,350 feet needs to be changed to 2,000 feet. The next sentence reads, "It is just under a mile." It should read, "It is just under a half mile. Selectman Cowan stated that on Page 4 in the paragraph before last, the word "tweet" should be "tweak".

Selectman Folsom motioned to accept the minutes of September 15, 2015 as amended. Selectman Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

**3. Public Input**

There was no public input at this time.

#### **4. Unfinished Business:**

##### **A. Roads:** Update on Road Projects

Dwayne Morin stated that Lower Main Street, Pleasant Street and Dyer Street are all completed. They should all be painted by the end of this week. He stated that there is one area that is collecting water so that will need to be fixed. This is located at the intersection of Dyer Street and Lower Main Street on the sidewalk. They did Gould's Bridge Road last week. The only thing they need to do is get out and do the shoulders which will hopefully be done next week.

They are also working on the Route 9 sidewalk. They were hoping to get all of the pavement removed this afternoon but unfortunately they hit some wires so they had to stop. They now need to wait for Time Warner to come and repair the cable wires.

Selectman Cowan asked if they were going to replace the sign in the medium at the Route 9 and Route 4 intersection. Dwayne stated that this is a state issue not a town one. He stated that these signs will always be hit because of the location that they put the sign. Dwayne said that they should not put it on the end of the island. They should put it about 5 feet or so back, but the State insists on putting it right on the end of the island. Dwayne stated that they are constantly being knocked down by tractor trailer trucks.

Dwayne stated that it looks like they came in under budget with the Lower Main Street, Dyer Street and Pleasant Street project. He is still waiting for a couple of Pike bills to come in but he said that when all is said and done we should be about \$2,000 under budget. He stated that they came in a little bit under budget on the Gould's Bridge Road project. We will probably be about \$1,000 under budget. Dwayne stated that they may be a little bit over budget on the sidewalk project.

Dwayne stated that they are going to start putting up winter sand in the first week of November. He stated that they still have a few little projects to complete around town.

##### **B. Town Hall:** Installation of TV in Conference Room

Dwayne stated that they had installed a TV in the conference room. He stated that they had instructions posted if anyone needed to use it.

##### **C. Fire Department:** Update on Bonding Process for New Tanker

Dwayne stated that the rates for the bonding of the new tanker came in really good. They came in at 2.284%. He stated that our yearly budget will go down. We had estimated that we would spend \$30,000 but we are actually going to hover around \$24,000. He said that it starts at \$26,000 and goes down to \$22,000.

**D. Parks and Recreation: Review Trail Proposal for Community Center**

Dwayne stated that they have been working on the trail proposal at the Community Center as well as the other items such as the rebound wall. He put together a proposal and it went to the Parks and Recreation Committee last night and they have changed some things. They had talked about putting some picnic tables with center pedestals by the playscapes. He said that these cost about \$1,500 so the Parks and Rec decided not to go with these. They decided to put some benches there as well as along the trail. These cost about \$500 apiece. The ones by the playscapes will be colored like the play equipment.

Dwayne stated that they also discussed the rebound wall. They found a vendor called Ralley Master Backboards. The walls are made of plastic and rubber and guaranteed for 20 years. They have sound dampeners that help cut down on the noise when they are hit. These panels are made for soccer, lacrosse, tennis and basketball. They are also vandal proof. They are looking at doing a 10 x 12 wall. He stated that just the panels are \$3,400. The total cost will be between \$7,500 and \$10,000. He said that they would extend the paving from the basketball court. He stated that the wall would be put so that if you are driving by, you can see both sides of the wall. This will help prevent any vandalism. He stated that he went to look at the one in Sanford to see what theirs was like. It is a pressure treated wall. He said that the boards are all twisted and they are always replacing the boards. The Parks and Rec Committee felt that the wall that we were looking at would be better. Selectman Hall asked if it was one 10 x 12 panel. Dwayne stated that it was 3 panels making it a total of 10 x 12. He said that the paved area will be 15 x 35. Chairman Galemme agreed that this would probably be better, especially since they have a 20 year warranty. It will probably save us money in the long run. Dwayne showed the Board members what they look like on the vendor's website. Dwayne stated that when everything on this project, including the trail, benches and rebound wall are complete, the total cost will probably be around the \$30,000 to \$35,000 range. We have \$80,000 sitting in impact fees. They are also looking at doing the Canal Street project which will be around \$30,000. Selectman Cowan stated that it was good that they would have some left as a cushion in case something unexpected happens.

Selectman Hall asked how much the firetruck playscape at the Community Center cost. Dwayne said it was \$15,000 and the big playscape is \$45,000. Dwayne stated that the vendor for the playscapes is actually having a sale right now so they are trying to lock in a price. He said that they found one for \$11,500 not installed. He stated that usually the cost of installation is about half the cost of the equipment cost. Selectman Hall asked what the playscape looked like, but Dwayne said that he had not seen it yet. The Parks and Rec Committee met last night and he just spoke with Kristie over the phone. He will be meeting with her on Wednesday. He did say that they aimed the playscape for little kids between the ages of 6 and 12. The vendor will be getting back to them within the next week to let them know what the cost of the install will be.

**Reminders: Next Board of Selectmen's Meeting** – October 20, 2015 – 6:30 pm Municipal Building

## **5. New Business:**

### **A. Commitment FY16: Municipal Valuation Report, State Valuation**

Dwayne stated that every year, we have to fill out a Municipal Valuation Report that we send back to the State. It triggers some of the reimbursements that we get such as the Tree Growth Reimbursement, Homestead Reimbursement and our BETE Reimbursement. The report needs to be sent in by the beginning of November. The Municipal Valuation Report starts on Page 16 of the packet. This describes the total tax valuation for the town. It shows our taxable real estate value is about \$500 million and our personal property value is about \$72 million. We will be collecting about \$7.2 million in taxes. It also goes over our exemptions. We have about 1,070 Homestead Exemptions which is about \$11 million. It then goes on to show our BETE exemption, which is the new equipment that we can't tax but we do get a percentage of it. We have about \$89 million worth of equipment and we realize about half of that. It shows our Tax Increment financing, which is the apartment building across the street. The next item shows how much Excise Tax we collected last year. The next item is the Electrical Generation and Distribution Property which is what CMP has within the town. This is about a \$12 million valuation. It then goes on to show how many properties we have in Tree Growth and our Farm and Open Space properties.

Selectman Hall asked how often the Town reassesses the properties. Dwayne said that it depends. He said that they review it every year and see where we are at for valuations. Typically, the rule of thumb is that you reassess every ten years unless your valuations are hovering around 100% and we are allowed a 10% variance. We are allowed to go up to 110% and go down to 69%. Once we go either above the 110% or below the 69% or our quality rating is above 20, we have to reassess. For example, this year we are at 103% and our quality rating is 7. Selectman Hall asked when the last time was that we had to do it and Dwayne said it was in 2006. Selectman Hall asked if they have to hire somebody to do the revaluations and Dwayne said that they would have to. Dwayne said that he doesn't foresee having to do it in the near future because we have a great quality rating and we are at 100%. If things would change, then they would have to look into hiring someone. Dwayne stated that in years past, they didn't have a full time assessor so our numbers used to get skewed very quickly. We only had someone here about 2 hours a week and it was basically just to take care of the paperwork. Now Craig is always tracking all real estate transactions going on in town on a weekly basis. Dwayne said that they got to 107% at one point and they were afraid that they were going to have to do something, but the market rebounded and we dropped down to 103%. He doesn't think that we are going to see markets like we saw in the late 90's or early 2000's. He feels that things have stabilized. Dwayne stated that to have a revaluation done would cost about \$250,000.

Chairman Galemme asked what would happen if a resident came in and said that they thought their valuation was off. Dwayne said that they would look at it immediately. Dwayne said that a lot of people will get an appraisal when they are refinancing. He stated that a refinance appraisal is not a full blown appraisal. People will bring in their refinance appraisal and it says that their property is appraised at \$300,000 but we have it appraised at \$400,000, so they ask for us to reduce the value. We will then tell them that if the appraiser will write a statement saying that this is a full blown appraisal, we will change the value. No appraiser will do that. With a

refinance appraisal, they are basically just checking what they need to satisfy the bank to close the loan. Dwayne said that if they do show something different such as they only have 2 bathrooms in the house but we show them as having 3, we would correct it.

Dwayne said that if they ever had to do a revaluation, it would be a lot easier because we already have all of the data in the system and Craig updates them monthly. Selectman Hall asked if they needed to hire someone to do a revaluation, would they have to come out and measure each house. Dwayne said that they wouldn't because we already have all of that information. He said that it usually takes 2-3 years to do revaluation. We would send somebody out to look at each and every house and then they would do a really in depth analysis of the market.

Dwayne went on reviewing the Municipal Valuation Report. The next section is our Exempt Property. We have about \$52 million in exempt properties in our town which includes all of the town properties and school properties. The school properties counts for \$39 million of this. The next section shows how we keep our records. It also shows what we did last year which shows that we built 9 houses.

Dwayne said that the Selectman need to sign this because they are the assessors. Craig is just the Assessing Agent.

Selectman Hall motioned to approve and sign the Municipal Valuation Return. Selectman Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Dwayne stated that the State valuation is set off of this Municipal Valuation Return as well as the audit that they do on us every year. He stated that this State Valuation is basically reflective of last year's Municipal Valuation Return and the sales in the past two years. They value every single municipality and they send each town within the County what the County is compared to for all of the towns. Dwayne said that he likes to track what is going on. Our valuation went up \$25 million last year and this is basically due to Pratt & Whitney and the new equipment they bought. The bad thing is that because our State valuation is part of the cost sharing for SAD 60, we have to look at what the other towns did. Although Berwick went up \$14 million and Lebanon went up \$13 million in valuation, they didn't go up as much as we did. Berwick increased 2.44%, Lebanon went up 2.81% and we went up 4.34%. We will see our portion of SAD 60 increase next year and it will be a pretty significant increase. Selectman Johnson, Jr. asked if it was the number of kids or the valuation that made our portion increase more. Dwayne said that it would be the valuation. He said that the kids and our valuation were ranked 50/50. If our kid number drops, then it will lower our percentage.

Dwayne stated that our County tax portion will go up again. He said that it wouldn't be as much because the other towns have also gone up. The valuation for this is on Pages 31 and 32 of the packet. Dwayne said that we will go from paying .01996 of the County budget to .02030 of the County budget. Selectman Hall asked what exactly is paid for with the County Budget. Dwayne stated that it paid for the operation of the County government which consists of Sheriff's, Jails, Courts, County Registrar of Deeds and the District Attorney. He said that there is some administration costs as well, but those costs are minimal. The Sheriff's and Jails make up about 75% of the County budget. Selectman Cowan asked what the towns pay that just go with the

Sheriff's instead of having their own department. Dwayne said that it depends. He said that some of them pay for the Sheriff's services but some of them do not. It just is incorporated into the County tax. If a town wants a dedicated County Sheriff, then they would pay around \$75,000 a year for one officer. Selectman Cowan asked what towns had the dedicated officer. Dwayne said that they were Waterboro and Arundel. He believes that Waterboro has 2 dedicated officers and Arundel currently has 1 but they are thinking of getting 1 and a half. Chairman Galembo asked if 1 officer was just 40 hours and Dwayne said that it was.

**B. Commitment FY16: Abatement and Supplemental Review**

Dwayne stated that the first abatement that they have is for Glenn & Jean Thompson, Map 3, Lot 35-2. They sold a piece of their property. The deed description that we got back was very ambiguous. It was not a good deed description. We tried to figure out how much they sold but we figured it out wrong. They brought in a survey and we could see that they actually only had 4.3 acres but we were taxing them for 7 acres so an abatement is in order. The abated value is \$6,300 for a tax abatement of \$79.38.

Selectman Cowan motioned to approve Abatement #1 for Glenn & Jean Thompson Acct #1813 for the amount of \$79.38. Selectman Folsom seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

The next abatement is for Michael Livingston, Map 18, Lot 2. Dwayne stated that there was a modular home on that property and they removed it in July of 2014 but didn't tell us. We confirmed that the home had been removed so we need to remove his building value. The abated value is \$55,900 for a tax abatement of \$704.34. Selectman Cowan is surprised that they didn't let us know when they removed the house. Dwayne stated that we are one of the few communities that do not require a demolition permit. He feels that they should look into this. He said that it can be a simple \$10 demolition permit. It can even be at no charge. The main reason for it is to notify us that something is gone. Chairman Galembo asked if this is something they could do or does it have to go to the town vote. Dwayne said that it would be an ordinance change so it would go to town vote. Chairman Galembo asked what type of things were considered demolition. Dwayne said that it would be if you remove a structure or part of a structure from the property. It is anything that reduces the footprint of your building. If you are doing inside work, that is not considered demolition. Selectman Cowan asked if it was any size structure. Dwayne said that it would be anything that we are taxing. He said that our CEO and our Assessor should have one. It would make sure that our records were correct.

Selectman Hall motioned to approve Abatement #2 for Michael Livingston Acct #2122 for the amount of \$704.34. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

The next item is a Supplemental Tax Certificate. Dwayne said that it was for Glenn Winslow on Morrells Mill Road. He is removing 11 acres out of Tree Growth and the Tree Growth penalty is \$2,578.40.

Selectman Hall motioned to approve the Supplemental Tax Certificate #2 for Glenn H. Winslow for the amount of \$2,578.40. Selectman Folsom seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

**C. Transfer Station: Capital Improvement Project Update**

Dwayne said that they installed a 1500 gallon tank. They were hoping to be able to use the same septic line that was there before but the line was in such poor condition that they needed to dig it all up and put a new line in. He said that the drainage was a problem. They had to redo some of the drainage to make everything work. He said it took longer than they thought because they hit a lot of garbage. They removed 30 tons of garbage. He hopes to have it paved within the next couple of weeks.

**D. Budget FY17: Begin Discussions on Budget Items for FY17**

Dwayne said that he wanted to start discussing the budget. He told the Board that they need to start thinking about what they want to be budgeting towards. Under the docket for our Capital Improvements plan is a Highway Truck, Computers for General Office, our Road Bond and our Road Reconstruction. He had Mill Field improvements, but we did this so he removed it from the CIP. It also includes our photocopier lease, SCBA lease, our Fire Department Truck lease and our Tanker Escrow. He also added the two Impact Fee items which are the Canal Street Playground and the Community Center improvements. This is what is currently scheduled but as the Department Heads turn in their requests, this will probably change. Dwayne stated that under Public Works, it will change from big truck to a one ton because we have been delaying a one ton. We will push the big truck back because they are still in good condition. We do need to replace one of our one ton trucks which will be about \$75,000. We will also need to replace our loader. He's not sure if that will be this year or next year. Selectman Johnson, Jr. asked about how much that would cost and Dwayne said that it would be about \$250,000.

Dwayne said that the roads to be worked on next year are Beech Ridge Road, Randall Road and Diamond Hill Road. Diamond Hill is a three year project which will cost about half million dollars. It needs to be complete rebuilt because it was built on a swamp. We are actually going to box cut the entire road, truck the gravel off and then truck it back in. He stated that there is a section in the middle of the road that they will not have to box cut and there are no houses there.

**E. General Assistance: Review Appendices for Ensuing Year, Establish Public Hearing**

Dwayne stated that every year we get new Appendices from the State that says what your Ordinance has to be. If we don't adopt it, we are in violation of our agreement with the State and they can take away the funding. The Appendices lays out what we are allowed to do for General Assistance. This year there are four changes to the Appendices. The first one is with the Maximum Assistance. Maximum Assistance says how much we are allowed to help individuals for the entire month. New Electric Hot Water Heater, Unheated Apartments and Heated Apartments are being changed. Everything else remains the same. If you are one person and you make more than \$695.00, you cannot get General Assistance.

Dwayne said that in order to approve these, we need to hold a Public Hearing so this will take place at the next meeting.

**7. Review and Approve Warrants and Correspondence:**

Warrant:	September 22, 2015	- \$ 20,070.15
Warrant:	September 29, 2015	- \$ 0.00
Warrant:	October 6, 2015	- \$ 167,509.61

Selectman Hall motioned to accept the Warrant from September 22, 2015 for the amount of \$20,070.15 and the Warrant from October 6, 2015 for the amount of \$167,509.61. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

**6. Other Business – Executive Session – Poverty Abatement**

Dwayne stated that he had included a copy of the cover for the Annual Report. It is a picture of the Elroy Day Canoe Launch.

Selectman Cowan motioned to go into Executive Session at 8:15 pm. Selectman Hall seconded the motion.

Chairman Galemmo came out of Executive Session at 8:39 pm.

Selectman Johnson, Jr. motioned to approve Poverty Abatement #2016-1. Selectman Folsom seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0



**8. Adjournment:**

Selectman Folsom motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Respectively submitted,  
Susan Niehoff, Stenographer

Original to Town Clerk

Chairman: Charles Galemmo

Selectman: Wendy Cowan

Selectman: Elaine Folsom

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Jr.

Selectman: Jonathan Hall