

North Berwick Board of Selectmen's Minutes: May 6, 2014

NORTH BERWICK BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES MAY 6, 2014

Present: Selectman Glemmo, Selectman Folsom, Selectman Cowan, Selectman Drew

Absent: Chairman Danforth

Also Present: Dwayne Morin, Steven Connolly

Vice Chairman Glemmo opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

Vice Chairman Glemmo will be Acting Chairman for tonight.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Review and Approve Minutes of April 15, 2014

Selectman Cowan stated that on Page 6, in Paragraph 1 the statement reads, "Selectman Cowan what are some of the topics...". It should read, "Selectman Cowan asked what some of the topics...". Also, on Page 6, in Paragraph 5 the first sentence reads, "Selectman Cowan asked if there was any work on Hannaford.", but it should read, "Selectman Cowan asked if there was any word on Hannaford.". Also on Page 6 in the last paragraph which reads, "The also feel that the gate...", but it should read "They also feel that the gate...".

Selectman Folsom motioned to accept the minutes of April 15, 2014 as amended. Selectman Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

3. Public Input

There was no public input at this time.

5. New Business:

A. SAD 60: Superintendent Review of SAD 60 Budget, Sign Budget Warrant

Superintendent Steven Connolly stepped forward to discuss the school budget. He stated that they sent out a booklet regarding the school budget to the citizens and they also put an electronic copy of it online. Mr. Connolly stated that the valuations they receive from the State do not really match up with the information that Dwayne would receive regarding property valuations. He said that they are looking at numbers that are similar but not identical. He stated that they are the only district in Maine that follows this formula based on percentage of state valuation and pupil count. They are now doing the pupil count differently. They are doing it as an average of a few years' worth of time instead of just doing it with one snapshot. Selectman Cowan asked why we were the only district that follows this formula. Mr. Connolly stated that it was something that was passed in State statutes in 1967. He states that as the District formed, there was a decision made that this was the way they would work this out and everyone was in agreement with it. Vice Chairman Galemme asked how the other districts calculate their formulas. Mr. Connolly stated that some just do a per student count. Mr. Connolly stated that some Superintendents deal with more than one district so they have different budgets to deal with and don't have a lot of cooperation at times. Also, there has been a lot of RSU's that were together and are not anymore and have gone with other districts. Our District has been fairly stable. Dwayne Morin stated it was not always the case. When the District was formed, they agreed to do it 50% student and 50% valuation. Then about 15 years ago, there was a large push by the town of Lebanon to make it all valuation and no student count. Because North Berwick was the smallest in the three town district, it appeared that we were going to lose. The town of Berwick stepped forth and stated that they had made an agreement back in 1969 and they were going to live by it. Dwayne stated that North Berwick has always felt that it should be a per pupil count because it is the pupils that generate the cost.

Mr. Connolly went on to discuss the local fiscal year costs. He stated that the revenue was a little over \$16 million. He stated that for a house value of \$200,000, the increase to North Berwick would be about \$8.58. Dwayne stated that it is actually \$10. Mr. Connolly stated that in FY 13/14, they put forth a zero budget and this year they put forth a .59 percent increase. He stated that when they received their EPS from the State, it noted that they would receive an extra \$400,000. He stated that this is based on property valuation that still has not turned around so it is still a slight decrease where other districts are increasing. He stated that it is a great thing to say that we are getting \$400,000, but when you look at it and realize why, it is not necessarily a good thing.

Mr. Connolly stated that they were also fortunate this year because the medical insurance came in at 2.5% increase because our loss ratio was tremendously below the State average. The State average was 100% and we were at 89%. He stated that most of the people that he spoke to in other areas were at increases of 5% or more. They are working with an independent group to

look at options with the insurance and see what is being used by people and what isn't being used. He would like to see a change in the provider in the next year or two.

Mr. Connolly stated that their Capital Improvement Plan is in there for \$252,000. He stated that the full list for their CIP is actually about \$1.1 million so they are looking to take care of about a quarter of that. He stated that they did use a little over \$500,000 in Undesignated Funds Balance to offset some of the costs this year.

Mr. Connolly stated that they have about 51 buses or vans in the fleet. Currently 17 of the large or small buses qualify with the State for replacement. This means that they are at least 10 years old with at least 100,000 miles on them. This year they did not receive any subsidy from the State. However, sometimes there are some Districts that receive subsidy but end up not needing it. They are hoping that by November 1st, before they end up disseminating the funds, we would qualify to get some of these subsidies. He stated that if they are not replacing about 4 buses a year, we are not going to do well in about 4 more years. They have several buses that are in the 14 years or more category so we need to maintain the work needed. Mr. Connolly stated that they put \$60,000 for subsidy of buses in place. If they didn't put that \$60,000 place holder in and the State comes back and says that they qualified in the second or third go around, then they couldn't use the money because it was not approved by the voters. They are hoping that they will get some of the subsidy so they can use some of that money for carryover and offset for next year. If they don't get the subsidy, they still need to continue to move ahead which is a plan for 3 buses right now.

Mr. Connolly went on to discuss some of the questions that some North Berwick residents had brought up. One of the questions was in regards to travel expenses that were new in some categories. For example, someone might say that it was a 0 in FY 13/14 but in FY 14/15 it might say \$1,500. Mr. Connolly stated that when he started, there were some places that he was wondering where money for certain things was coming out of. For example, the breakfast that the School Board puts on at the beginning of the year costs about \$3,000. When he asked where the line item was for it in the budget, he was told that they didn't have one and they just figure it out along the way. He said that there were a lot of these "figure it outs" and he is trying to do away with these. He stated that the budgets are so close that when somebody says that they pay this money and they are absorbing it in this place right now, he doesn't bank on that being there next year.

Another question that was asked was regarding special education and why there are so many students receiving special education. He stated that about 17.1% of our students receive Special Education services and the State average is 16.9%. He does not feel that it is a concern. He states that they just received their audit from the Special Education Department and they commended our District for exemplary paperwork and processes so he knows that when they identify a student, there is a reason for it. Dwayne Morin asked how the Mary Hurd Academy was doing. Mr. Connolly stated that they currently have 22 students enrolled. Out of those 22 students, 3 of them are not regular attendees. They are working with the families of these students because the goal is for them to graduate from our schools. He stated that they have two categories of students. They have students with high medical needs and special fragile ones and you cannot build a program in a school department to keep those students because of the huge

cost. He stated that in one case, they are paying as much as \$109,000 per year for a student and this is only half of the cost. In the other category, it is behavioral programming for students. He stated that at the time, there was an alternative program at the High School. It was a program that operated similar to trying to reduce dropout rates besides the Alt. Program. There was a gulf that when the school facility wasn't working for students, they would either have to not continue in school or they would have to outplace them. He stated that a year and a half ago, the out of district tuition was \$1.1 million. He stated that it was situational. One year you could have 25 students that would be outplaced and the next year could be 20. Those 5 students make a huge difference, especially when the average cost is \$43,000 per out of district placement. He stated that they currently have 22 students enrolled and out of those, 10 of them would have been students that would no longer go to school or would have had to be moved to out of district placement. Selectman Drew asked if they were all residents of our district and Mr. Connolly stated that they were. Mr. Connolly stated that they have the opportunity to fill 5 more seats. In order to minimize our costs, they have reached out to local schools. He stated that York may be interested in 2 seats, Marshwood is looking for 1, Massabesic is looking for 1 and Sacopee Valley is looking for 1. Selectman Cowan asked if they were now ready to take on students from other school districts. Mr. Connolly stated that they are ready and have had conversations with these schools and some of the students will be starting this summer. The great part about this, is that there are people that work in other schools that have talents that could supplement what they are doing. They are actually going to bring some of these people in but these other school systems are going to pay for it. He stated that if they had not opened this up at the time that they did, their out of district placement costs would have been \$1.6 million. The school is for middle school and high school students. Selectman Cowan asked if he had a sense of what it would do for the budget by bringing in these other students. He stated that some of these other schools pay more right now for out of district placements. They are looking to cut their costs to about \$25,000 instead of the \$43,000 to \$54,000 that they are paying now. It would work out to about \$125,000 in additional revenue to the district.

Selectman Drew asked why 25 is the maximum number that they have. Mr. Connolly stated that if they were beyond 30, then he would need to increase their staffing. What they did was to open up seats that they felt very confident would not put them in a situation where if this happened again next year, it would not require them obtain more staffing. Selectman Drew asked if the staffing was mostly new individuals or were they transferring in from the other schools. Mr. Connolly stated that there are 2 main teachers that are new to our district in the program plus others that spin into it from the other schools. They have a Social Worker and a couple of tech positions that are not new. Selectman Cowan asked what he thought about the facility itself and the ability to accommodate these students. He stated that they were in conversation with Child Development Services to possibly host a pre-school piece at a different level and a different access point. He stated that they are just listening to this right now and they would not need to provide the staffing. He stated that CDS is looking in York County for host sites for these types of programs. He stated that, five years from now, he could see this school having about 35 students.

Dwayne stated that the overall budget as a whole is a 4% increase. Dwayne stated that one of the concerns is reaching a fiscal cliff. He stated that this happened before and they saw their school portions go extremely high over the course of two years. He asked Mr. Connolly how he thought

it would play out in future years if our valuation grows and what kind of impact it would have. Mr. Connolly stated that the student counts look like they are going to remain fairly consistent. They are currently at 3,060 and within 3 more years it will be at 3,010. The population will remain pretty consistent. Regarding the property valuation, he thinks that it is going to be reflective of the changes that are going to happen everywhere in the State.

Mr. Connolly stated that someone has also inquired about what Fringe Benefits were. He stated that most companies have these but may call them something else. It includes Workers Comp, Unemployment Benefits, FICA and other things like this. Somebody also mentioned that they are putting aside money for supplies and books in Transportation and was wondering what this was for. Mr. Connolly stated that this is actually just the title for this line item and it includes things such as garage rags and international bus manuals. Dwayne stated that it is a generic title that they use.

Selectman Cowan asked how the attendance was at the Board meetings when they were discussing the budget. Mr. Connolly stated that for the first half of the budget discussions, Berwick TV was still coming over to televise the meetings. Berwick then pulled them from doing it because they wanted cost sharing to help cover the costs. He stated that after they stopped coming, the meetings were sparsely attended. The biggest night they had was 25 people and 21 of them were students from a particular government class that had to attend.

Selectman Cowan commended Mr. Connolly on the booklet. She stated that it was very well done. She also stated that she feels that he brought some clarity to the budget process and she appreciates his efforts. Dwayne stated that he has heard a lot of comments on how they like the fact that it is not just a book of numbers and it actually has something that people can read and understand.

4. Unfinished Business:

A. Canoe Launch: Update on Progress

Dwayne stated that Pratt has a lot of things that will be happening there within the next couple of years such as the major addition to the building. They invited Dwayne over and he met with the State's Department of Economic and Community Development leaders to discuss what was happening and how can the State and the Town be involved in assisting Pratt with this. During this meeting, Pratt officials stated that the Canoe Launch Project has now received all approvals from all levels of Pratt Corporate. Now they are just waiting for the paperwork to come in. He is meeting with the dock people on Thursday, May 8th. They are going to take a look at how it can be set up and location. He stated that some trees fell on a part of the fencing and did some damage to it. He said they can take down the parts around the damaged area. He is hoping to have the paperwork by the next meeting or the first meeting in June.

B. Foreclosures FY12: Update

Dwayne stated that the bank is going to pay the taxes on the property and they would like a payout date of May 15th. As of today, we have not received the payment.

C. Chair of Honor: May 21, 2014 Ceremony Update

Dwayne just wanted to remind them of the ceremony at the Hussey Auditorium at the High School at 10:40 am.

D. Goals: Begin Discussion on Goals for Ensuing Year

Dwayne just wanted to see if they had anything to discuss regarding any goals. He stated that he would like them to review their CIP plan from two years ago because he thinks they may have to do some reshuffling because of the bad weather and road conditions. He stated that they will be looking to start the road projects within the next month. He said that they have the letters out to residents on Beech Ridge Road for the tree cutting. Mike spoke with tree cutters to get pricing from them. They are going to grind Knight's Pond Road and once they are done working it they will pave it. Selectman Drew asked if he had taken a look to see if there was a lot of damage done by the trucks. Dwayne stated that there was very little damage done by them.

The Water District is working on setting up a date for the highway and water district workers to go to OSHA training. It is a 2 day course which needs to be done every few years. Dwayne stated that they will be starting to work on the Library parking lot on Monday. It will be a 2 day job to gravel the extension. Dwayne stated that the estimates for paving the parking lot are significantly higher than what we budgeted so he is putting it out to bid to try to get a better price.

Dwayne stated that we usually don't bid out our road construction. We typically just hire people to work with us because we G/C the project. We bid out certain things like tree cutting because we just have people go and do it and we are not involved in that. When it comes to excavation and dozer work, we typically go out and hire somebody. We have used Guy & Sons because he has worked with us and we know his work. If we call him and tell him we need him tomorrow, he will be there and do a great job. Some other contractors in town are asking why they are not being hired. He tells them that they are saving the Town money and not spending more money than they need to. The contractors are stating that they can do it for the same cost. Dwayne has told them that they could probably do it for the same price and do the job just as well, but it is the same cost. If we have the choice between the same cost and the same work, we will go with what we know. Dwayne told Mike to contact all the contractors within our Town and get a price list and then they will decide from there who they will use.

Reminders: Next Board of Selectmen's Meeting – May 20, 2014 – 6:30 pm Municipal Building

5. New Business:

A. SAD 60: Superintendent Review of SAD 60 Budget, Sign Budget Warrant

Dwayne stated that the Board still needed to sign the Warrants. He passed them around for them to sign.

B. Elections: Approve Ballot Clerks for SAD 60 Elections

Dwayne stated there are two things that they need to deal with and one is the open Town meeting to be held on Thursday, May 8th regarding the school budget and then the actual vote the following week. They will need two ballot clerks for the process and Chris Dudley is recommending Sharon Litvinchyk and Lorinda Hilton.

Selectman Drew motioned to accept Sharon Litvinchyk and Lorinda Hilton as Ballot Clerks for the school budget meeting and vote. Selectman Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

C. Dispatch: Approve Contract with Sanford Regional Communications

Dwayne stated that they have worked through all of the dispatch concerns and they are at the point now to sign the contracts. He stated that it worked out a little differently than what they had originally talked about. Originally, they were going to have a Board of Directors and a Fiduciary Committee made up of the four major towns in the County. After discussing this with the entire membership, it was decided not to do this. The towns wanted a strict contractual arrangement with the Town of Sanford. They have put together a five year contract similar to the original contract. It is based on CPIW increase on a yearly basis. So whatever the CPIW is will be what we pay for an increase. This year it is a 3% increase from last year. There is one thing that has changed. Before any big decisions are made, it will go to an overall committee made up of 30 members. It is basically one member for each agency that is in there so it will have a fire, rescue and police representative. They will also have subcommittees. There will be a subcommittee for fire, one for police and one for rescue. Before any of the subcommittee issues are implemented, it must go through some sort of fiduciary review and Sanford basically has the final say on whether this will happen or not. The contract also includes the Advisory Board Charter which includes what the process will be for the committees. Another big change with this contract is that before, either Sanford or we could get out of this contract within 6 months but that has now been expanded to a year.

Selectman Folsom motioned to accept the contract with Sanford Regional Communications Center and authorize the Town Manager to sign the contract. Selectman Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

Dwayne stated that the Board now has to appoint a representative to the new Charter Commission. He recommends that we appoint the Chiefs from the three departments.

Selectman Folsom motioned to appoint the Fire Chief, Rescue Chief and Police Chief to be the representatives for the Charter Commission. Selectman Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

D. Paving: Approve Paving Contract for FY15

Dwayne stated that for the past few years they have used FR Carroll as our pavers. Dwayne met with them to see if they would hold their price again this year but they were unable due to the increase in oil prices. Dwayne negotiated a price with FR Carroll for the Board to consider. The reason that he did this and did not go out to bid is because of Beech Ridge Road. The way that we budgeted for Beech Ridge Road is that we budgeted half this year and half next year. If they have two different pavers in there, it could be a problem. FR Carroll came back with a price of \$67 for base paving and \$69.40 for surface paving. Dwayne used the Greater Portland Council of Government paving bid results to see what other towns are paying. He stated that our prices are at or below all other towns. He stated that FR Carroll has agreed that they will hold the same price for next year for the surface of Beech Ridge Road. They are going to base it and let it sit over the winter and surface it in the spring so he will hold the \$67.40 price.

Selectman Folsom motioned to accept the paving quote by FR Carroll. Selectman Drew seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

6. Other Business:

Dwayne stated that they are currently getting pricing on gravel. He stated that they will be using significant amounts of gravel on Beech Ridge Road. They are getting prices from Brown Industrial Group, Quint and Pike Industries. He stated that if they can get a good price from Brown Industrial Group that would be great because it is a short haul. Selectman Drew asked what part of Beech Ridge Road needs that much gravel. Dwayne stated that they are rebuilding the entire road from Governor Goodwin Road to School House Road. They need to widen the road. They are going to grind the road and roll the grindings off to the side so this will build a base. They will then bring material in to shape up the road. He stated that all of the abutters have been sent letters explaining what the Town will be doing in regards to the tree cutting and paving on the road.

Vice Chairman Galemme asked if Dollar General had been approved. Dwayne stated that they had been approved two Thursdays ago. He stated that Recovery Maine had also been approved on that night. He said that they were given approval for only 10 residents and 2 staff members. He also stated that the Planning Board added a condition that the application will be reviewed in a year to make sure that everything is running well. He stated that some of the Planning Board members wanted to have the parking lot paved but they decided to hold off and see how the parking situation is for the year. Vice Chairman Galemme asked if they would still be able to stay afloat with only 10 residents versus the 16. Dwayne stated that they were fine with the ten. Dwayne stated that our Ordinance is pretty specific. It states that in a single family dwelling, two families are allowed to live in it. The single family is defined as a related family unit or 5 non related individuals. It is considered one residential unit so it will only allow 10 people. They have chosen to use the second use as a commercial unit. If they would have done just done residential uses then they could have had 20 people in the building. Because they want to use one of the uses as a commercial use so they can provide counseling during the day it only can have one residential use. Vice Chairman Galemme stated that he attended one of the meetings and listened to their presentation and they seemed like they were doing all of the right things.

Selectman Drew asked when they would be open and Dwayne stated that they had at least 6 months of work.

Dwayne stated that Dollar General is planning on coming to pull their permit the latter part of June. Hannaford is looking at the latter part of August to pull their permit. Pratt will be starting on their addition within the next few weeks. Dwayne stated that there have been quite a few inquiries from companies looking to build in town. Dwayne also stated that they have housing projects going on as well. There is an 8 lot subdivision on Bauneg Beg Hill Road before the Planning Board right now. There is also another one for a 6 home lot down at the end of Sunset Avenue. Mr. Mick is back regarding a condominium project located on the South Berwick/Berwick/North Berwick town line area around Knight's Pond Road and Route 4. This one was planned years ago but the economy went bad so it was put on hold.

Dwayne went over the assessment review that he included in the packets. He stated that we are at 106%. Vice Chairman Galemme asked what we were allowed to be at and Dwayne stated that it was 110%. They are looking at some areas in town that they can maybe do something to help with this. Dwayne stated that they may have to do something town wide if the it continues to go up. Dwayne stated that their quality rating went from a 10 to a 6. He stated that the lower the quality rating, the better. He stated that on the whole, it looks good. Selectman Drew asked if foreclosures affected this and Dwayne stated that to a certain extent, it did.

Dwayne stated that our BETE audit came in with all Excellent marks except for two Good which were for very miniscule issues.

7. Review and Approve Warrants and Correspondence

Warrant:	April 22, 2014	- \$ 16,779.19
Warrant:	April 29, 2014	- \$ 0.00
Warrant:	May 6, 2014	- \$ 78,714.41

Selectman Cowan motioned to approve the Warrant for April 22, 2014 for the amount of \$16,779.19 and the Warrant for May 6, 2014 for the amount of \$78,714.41. Selectman Folsom seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

8. Adjournment:

Selectman Folsom motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 pm. Selectman Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

Respectively submitted,
Susan Niehoff, Stenographer

Original to Town Clerk

Chairman: Paul Danforth

Selectman: Charles Glemmo

Selectman: Elaine Folsom

Selectman: Gregg Drew

Selectman: Wendy Cowan