

North Berwick Board of Selectmen Minutes October 20, 2020

NORTH BERWICK BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES OCTOBER 20, 2020

Present: Chairman Cowan, Selectman Hall, Selectman Galemmo, Selectman Johnson, Jr., Selectman Johnson, Sr.

Also Present: Dwayne Morin, Josh Delay

Chairman Cowan opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Review and Approve Minutes of October 6, 2020

Dwayne stated that he added Road under the Linscott Road section. Chairman Cowan stated that on page 3 in the last paragraph, the 10th sentence currently reads, “It is his understanding that this is not going to be...”. It should read, “It is his understanding that this is going to be...”. She also stated that on page 4, the 1st sentence after the legal ad currently reads, “Dwayne stated that the yearly Public Hearing to approve the...”. It should read, “Dwayne stated that the yearly Public Hearing is held to approve the...”. Chairman Cowan also stated that on page 7, the 1st sentence under the Linscott Road Intersection section currently reads, “Dwayne stated that the house is supposed...”. It should read, “Dwayne stated that the Weaver’s house is supposed...”.

Selectman Hall motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Selectman Galemmo seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

3. Public Input

There was no public input at this time.

4. Unfinished Business:

A. COVID-19:

Dwayne stated that he is just giving them a quick update. They held the first Parent’s Date Night Out last week and it went well. He stated that all of their slots are full. He stated that they ended their registrations for the Halloween event on Sunday. They have 90 participants signed up. They will do three 30 car slots. They currently are set up to have 6 stations and Pratt will do an additional 7th station. They will make up some extra bags in case someone shows up that didn’t register and Pratt will make enough for 100 kids. He stated that Hannaford is donating candy, and someone has donated some gourds. He stated that they are still working on the tree lighting idea for Christmas.

B. Linscott Road Intersection: Discuss on Progress

Dwayne stated that the house has been delivered. Unfortunately, the house will not be done by Thanksgiving and may not be done by Christmas. He stated that there is still a lot to do and the contract does state that they have 75 days once they bring the house to us. The main criteria will be when they can get power. Dwayne stated that we have already sent our request to CMP and are just waiting to hear back. He stated that they were supposed to pave today but were not able to get it done. They hope to get it done tomorrow. We will be doing the sidewalk and a little bit of their driveway. He met with the Weaver's on the site and they were very happy with it. Dwayne stated that the goal is to now get them in by Christmas.

C. Website: Discuss on Progress

Dwayne stated that they will be starting Phase 3 tomorrow. This is the longest part of the process where they move the information from the old website to the new one.

D. Dangerous Building: Update on Dangerous Building Process

Dwayne stated that the site is all cleaned up now. He spoke with Mr. Hanchett who will be securing the site with some fencing. The costs spent on the property is \$35,094.78 which includes the demo and legal fees. The legal fees were about 7,150.00, engineering was \$677.50, demolition costs were \$25,839.00 and traffic control was \$1,430.00. We are not charging any administration costs. Dwayne stated that, on page 17 of their packet, is the motion that he needs the Board of Selectmen to make per our attorney.

Selectman Galemmo motioned to authorize the Town Manager, with assistance from the Town Attorney as needed, to demand payment of all expenses incurred by the Town related to a summary judgment order issued under Title 17, section 2859 concerning the building located at 3 Elm Street. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Chairman Cowan asked if he had 30 days from the date of the letter. Dwayne said that he had 30 days from the date of the letter to make payment. After that, it will turn into a lien and will be filed with the Registry of Deeds.

Reminders: Next Board of Selectmen's Meeting – November 3, 2020 – 6:360 pm

The Board discussed cancelling the meeting due to it being Election night. Dwayne stated that if something did come up that the Board needed to deal with, they could have one the following week on 11/10/20.

Selectman Galemmo motioned to cancel the November 3, 2020 Board of Selectmen's meeting. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the meeting. VOTE: 5-0

5. New Business:

A. Pratt and Whitney: \$10,000.00 Grant to Town

Dwayne stated that Pratt and Whitney gives us grants every year. We applied this year and received \$10,000.00 in grants. It breaks down into 4 different areas that they gave us money for. They gave us \$2,000.00 for the Farmers Market which allows people that use the EBT machine to market match. If they spend \$10.00, they get \$20.00 worth of food. They gave us \$20,000.00 for our Fuel Assistance Program. Chairman Cowan asked how many people take advantage of the Fuel Program. Dwayne said that it is not as many as he would like to see take advantage of it. Last year we had 10 to 12 families take advantage of it. We currently have about \$25,000.00 to \$27,000.00 in that account. This year with the price of heating oil it can go a long way into helping people. It is just a matter of people coming and asking for the help. We will do 2 \$100.00 fill ups. We do 125% above poverty level so it catches people that are in a gap because they don't qualify for LIHEAP. Selectman Hall asked what the 125% poverty level was. Dwayne stated that for 1 person it would be \$1,378.75. A family of four would be \$2,700.00 per month.

The grant also provided \$3,000.00 for the Police Department. They will use it for a generator for the repeater on the water tower. When there is bad weather and if something happens to the current setup, we would lose communications. They are looking at putting an on-demand generator there instead. This will cost us about \$4,500.00 so the money from the grant will go towards that. They also provided \$3,000.00 for the Fire Department. This will be used to continue upgrading our portable radios. They will purchase 6 this year and this will pay for 4 of them.

Selectman Hall asked if they could have the information regarding General Assistance on the new website. Dwayne stated that there will be a General Assistance tab and it will have all of the information needed regarding the requirements as well as the forms to complete.

B. Great Works Regional Land Trust: Bridge Across Negataquet, Bauneg Beg Hill

Dwayne stated that the bridge to get across Negataquet River is now constructed. They finished the bridge 2 weekends ago. The only thing left to do is the staircase on either side. They were meeting with the Parkers last week to discuss the trail and the Parkers contacted Dwayne to see if he could get some signage for them. They want some No Smoking signage. Dwayne has reached out to Maine Healthy Partners to try and get some, but he has not been successful yet. This will connect our 2 trail systems.

Dwayne stated that the Great Works Regional Land Trust will be coming in to meet with the Board on November 17th to talk about the purchase of the top of Bauneg Beg Hill. They have an agreement negotiated with the landowner to obtain 43 acres on top of Bauneg Beg Hill. They will be coming in to discuss using some of the Town's open space fund to help purchase it. They are crafting a Land for Maine's Futures grant application which is basically a one to one match. Whatever they give, the Trust would have to come up with the additional money. If the Land for Maine's Futures does grant it, the ownership of the land would have to be in the town's name. The town would own it, but we would have a Memorandum of Understanding with GWRLT. They would maintain it. He stated that the 43 acres actually ties into the property that the town obtained last year on the downside of the mountain. The only thing now would be to connect the

#1 hill to the #2 hill. There is still a piece of property between that. The GWRLT is working on that now to try and obtain an easement to cross that land to connect the two hills. He stated that they will try to get a grant for about \$500,000.00 from Land for Maine's Futures. He said that this is a small amount for them. They usually do million dollar grants to preserve property. Dwayne stated that we currently have about \$106,000.00 in the open space fund account. We don't want to drain it, but we can certainly use some to help with the purchase of the land. He stated that GWRLT will also be doing some fundraising for the project. He stated that between the Land Trust and the Town, we will own the entire peak of the mountain. The Town currently owns the #3 hill and GWRLT owns the #2 hill, but Dwayne stated that we have a Memorandum of Understanding for it because we helped to purchase it. Dwayne told them that we would be the last money to use to make the project work. Dwayne stated that they had started talking about purchasing that part of the mountain about 7 years ago. The good thing is that there is now actually an agreement in hand.

C. State Valuations: 2020 State Valuations

Dwayne stated that, starting on page 37 of their packet discusses the State Valuation. He stated that page 37 shows the State Valuation for all of the towns in York County. He said that all of the towns have grown. He stated that the next few pages show State Valuations for the towns for the past few years. He said that, page 40 shows where we stack up with the other towns. The average increase in York County was 7.23% and we were a little bit before average at 6.72% which is about \$52 million. We were 14th in value and 18th in percentage out of 29 towns. When you look at the other 2 towns that are in our District, Lebanon was at 7.17% and Berwick was at 8.15%.

Dwayne stated that on page 42, it shows where we are at this year regarding the school. This year our valuation dropped so, in theory our percentage of the overall budget will drop. For the past 3 years, ours was supposed to actually increase but we still decreased primarily because of our student population count. If our student population continues the way it is and our valuation drops, we will see an even bigger drop of the percentage of the overall school budget. Dwayne stated that he also shows our County valuations. We will be decreasing with that as well. Our percentage went from 2.156% down to 2.146%.

Dwayne stated that the next few pages starting on page 45 shows our individual valuation. Based on the State's audit of our assessments, this year, our combined ratio was 91%. This was after a 10% bump in our values and we still dropped from 93% to 91%. He hopes that the current bump that we just did will at least maintain it in the low 90% range. He doesn't believe that we will see some big increase in BETE from Pratt & Whitney. If either one of the 2 solar farms start building prior to April, it will help out. We won't get any real estate taxes from that, but we will get BETE reimbursement. Both of those projects are in the \$15 to \$18 million dollar range.

D. Fire Department: Authorize Red Light for Ryan Babcock

Dwayne stated that they have a request from the Fire Chief to allow Ryan Babcock to have a red light for his personal vehicle. He was a Junior Fireman but is now a full-fledged Fire Fighter.

Selectman Galemмо motioned to allow Ryan Babcock to have a red light in his personal vehicle. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

6. Other Business:

No other business at this time but there will be an Executive Session.

7. Review and Approve Warrants and Correspondence:

Warrant:	October 13, 2020	- \$	0.00
Warrant:	October 20, 2020	- \$	1,456,673.02

Selectman Galemмо motioned to approve the Warrant of October 20, 2020 for the amount of \$1,456,673.02. Selectman Hall seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

8. Adjournment:

Selectman Galemмо motioned to go into Executive Session at 7:06, come back out of Executive Session at 7:16 pm and adjourn the meeting at 7:17 pm. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Respectively Submitted,
Susan Niehoff, Stenographer

Original to Town Clerk

Chairman: Wendy Cowan

Selectman: Jonathan Hall

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Jr.

Selectman: Charles Galemмо

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Sr.