

North Berwick Board of Selectmen Minutes March 16, 2021

**NORTH BERWICK BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES
MARCH 16, 2021**

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

Also Present: Dwayne Morin, Rebecca Reed, Mark Reed

Chairman Cowan called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Review and Approve Minutes of March 2, 2021

Dwayne Morin stated that under the Audit section, he changed all of the "PAYP" to "PAYT".

Selectman Glemmo motioned to approve the minutes of March 2, 2021 as amended. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

3. Public Input

There was no public input at this time.

4. Unfinished Business:

A. COVID-19: Updates, York County EMA Agreement Amendment

Dwayne stated that, through our Rescue Department, the town is participating with the vaccination clinic that is being held at the old Marshall's location in Sanford. He stated that the County will reimburse the town for all of the costs that we incur. When we send our paramedics up there to do the clinic, they reimburse us. In order to do that, we need to sign a Memorandum of Understanding. Dwayne stated that it was in their packet starting on page 11. All of the towns that have agreed to participate will be included in this agreement. It is the same agreement for all of the towns, but each town has their own signature page. Dwayne stated that the Board just has to agree to allow the town to do this so we can get reimbursement for our paramedics and EMT's that are working at the clinic.

Selectman Glemmo motioned to approve the Disaster Mutual Aid Agreement for York County. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion.

Dwayne stated that the way the clinic is working is that it is funded by FEMA. FEMA does not hire anybody, but they reimburse. They are using the towns to get the necessary personnel. They are also looking for volunteers to help out. All paid staff are town staff. The County

cannot go out and hire somebody, but they can reimburse through the FEMA process. He stated that their goal is to do 1,000 shots per day. Right now, they are doing about 500 primarily due to a lack of staff. He stated that he had a conversation with Art Cleaves, the head of the York County EMA today. He said that the town has additional staff that can go there to help on an interim basis. Dwayne said that he also put him in touch with Pratt & Whitney because they have a huge United Way volunteer staff. He said that he heard from Pratt & Whitney today and they are interested in helping out with volunteer effort. Selectman Johnson, Jr. asked if they were just looking for medical staff. Dwayne stated that they are looking for anybody to go and help out. Dwayne said that they keep track of the hours they work but they don't get paid until we get reimbursed. They have been sending us checks on a weekly basis, so the people are getting paid about a week later.

VOTE: 5-0

Dwayne stated that with the Relief Act, it includes \$350 billion to be sent to the Towns and States. Our town is slated to get about \$471,000. He stated that they were told it would come in 2 payments. One will be within 60 days of the passing of the Bill which was last Thursday and the other one will be by the end of the year. He stated that there will be some strings attached but we haven't been told what those strings will be yet. The State is getting about \$1.5 billion total. There are 5 cities within our State that are considered metro areas. These are Portland, Bangor, Lewiston, Auburn and Biddeford. They are getting a combined \$115 million between the 5 communities. The counties are getting \$261 million to spread between the 16 counties. The towns will be sharing in the \$115 million.

Dwayne stated that for every place other than New England, the County governments actually run the government system. New England is the anomaly. They decided to fund according to the majority of the States and not how New England is done. For example, Aroostook County is getting \$13 million. Their entire budget for the year is \$12 million. York County is getting \$40 million and their entire budget for the year is \$22 million. Dwayne stated that they have reached out to the County to see if some of that funding can come back to the towns as well. He said that, for the most part it is the towns that are funding the costs not the County. He is waiting to hear back from the County. Once we get word at how that money can be spent and receive the money, we will have to see what we can spend those funds on. Chairman Cowan asked if he knew if there were going to be any stipulations. Dwayne said that he knows that they cannot just put it in their savings account. It has to be spent. From what he has heard, they are looking at the towns spending it on Capital projects, and you can reimburse lost revenue that COVID caused us to lose. If it is lost revenue, that can be put back in the savings. Selectman Johnson, Jr. asked how spending on Capital projects is COVID related. Dwayne stated that the idea is to employ people in the area. Dwayne stated that he is sure that they can find things to spend it on. He stated that we have been losing a lot of shingles off the roof of the Town Hall, so they really need to replace them.

Chairman Cowan asked if they could use the funds to hire people that we need to hire. Dwayne stated that one of the things that it can be used for is giving bonuses to people who worked through the pandemic. He stated that there may be other things but not everything has been released yet. The information is coming out in bits and pieces. Selectman Galemme said that

they could move up some things like buying a police cruiser this year which they weren't planning on doing. Dwayne said that he would like to focus on roads because we could always use more funding on the roads. There are more roads that need to be fixed than there is funding for. He said that there are also some little projects that they can do that would bring a benefit to the community and not just spend for the sake of spending. Selectman Galemme figured that it would help us in future budget years.

Selectman Hall asked if they could move the Fire Department project up along quicker by using some of the funds. Dwayne said that they could use some of the money for that. He doesn't think it would move the project up quicker though because we are getting only \$400,000 and the estimated cost of the new station is \$4 million. Dwayne said that it could help with the engineering and architectural design. He said that we currently have enough to do that but only a 2 bidding phase.

Dwayne stated that what we can spend it on will come more into focus within the next few weeks. He stated that the funds will go to the State first and then the State will send it to the towns. Dwayne stated that the \$471,000 will be a benefit to our community.

B. Linscott Road Intersection: Discussion on Progress

Dwayne stated they will start tearing down the building towards the end of April. The reason is because the Fire Department has asked if they can utilize the building for training. He stated that they are going to use it on April 3rd, 10th, and 17th for training days. Each training day, they are going to try and bring in 2 other towns to train with them. They are going to smoke the building with their smoke machine, go in and do some search and rescue and get people to learn how to climb on ladders and roofs without getting too close to the fire. Dwayne thinks that this is a good use for that building. He would have loved to burn it down, but they couldn't because of the lead paint, and we are giving that property to the State of Maine. They could burn it but before giving it to the State they would have to do an entire environmental assessment.

C. Budget FY22: Continued Discussion on FY22 Budget

Dwayne stated that the Budget books were almost all done. The only thing missing is his Budget message. He will be sending out a notice to the Budget Committee by the end of the week. They will start their meetings on April 7th and hold them at the Community Center so they can get some social distancing.

Dwayne said that there are 2 budgets that they will need to amend. The one for the Rescue Department will need to be changed because we received some revised insurance numbers. The numbers went up so we will have to add about \$1,000 to the Rescue Budget. The same thing will need to be done on the Fire Department. We just received the retirement numbers, and we will have to add an additional \$4,000 to the Fire Budget. This will increase the total budget by about \$5,000. He stated that we are still below -3% for an increase and it still won't impact the tax rate. It will still be a budget of about \$4.8 million which is down 3.4% from last year's budget.

Dwayne said that when Chris figured out the Budget process, she miscounted the days. In the Selectmen's packet is the revised Budget Process. All of the caucuses have to be done by April 12th. All the head of the Caucuses have been notified.

D. Town Report: Dedication/Cover

Dwayne stated that they need to decide what they want to do for the Town Report cover. Selectman Galemme asked if he knew how many people we lost to COVID in North Berwick. Dwayne said that they tell them how many people in North Berwick were infected but will not tell us the death rate. It is still listed by County only. The draft cover that Dwayne proposed to the Board is about COVID-19. Chairman Cowan said that it was very well done but she is wondering if people are tired of COVID-19. Dwayne agrees but he was looking at it from a futuristic perspective when people look back to the Town Reports. Even though our Town Reports are current, their value is really in the history. He said that when they write the Town Reports, they are almost done the year. He said that he has always looked at the Town Reports as more of an historical document than a relevant document. He said that our relevant stuff is our Newsletters.

Dwayne stated that they also need to discuss the Dedication. He said that they could do a general one thanking all of the essential personnel or do they want to do it more with a specific person or persons. Selectman Galemme stated that they could do it for all of the first responders and office personnel that worked through the pandemic. The Board agreed with doing a general dedication. Dwayne will draft something up and bring it to the next meeting for the Board to review. It doesn't go to print until sometime in May, so they still have time.

E. Maple Street Forest: Review Trail Change Related to Parker Lands

Dwayne stated that they had discussed this issue a couple of meetings ago. At the time, the Parkers wanted a warning added to the kiosks that there would be no dogs allowed on the Parker Trail. They have also been working with GWRLT on moving the trails that are on their property so that it is moved away from their tree cutting operation. Right now, the way the trail goes through from the town to Maple Street, it goes down a logging road and they are actively logging that piece of property. When it crosses Maple Street, it basically runs the tree line, and it goes very close to one of their neighbors. They have asked for it to be moved because there have been some users of the trail that have utilized their back lawn as a toilet.

The Parker's and the Land Trust walked the properties a couple of Saturdays ago and they have reestablished a trail area. The Parker's are going to clear all of trails for the Land Trust. Now, instead of the trail running down the logging road, they have moved it away from there and it now only goes to the logging road towards the end of the trail. Dwayne showed the Board on the projector what the new trail will look like. The Parker's have agreed to do all of the cutting and widening of the new trail.

Selectman Galemme motioned to approve the change in the trail network on the Parker Trail. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Reminders: **Next Board of Selectmen's Meeting** – April 6, 2021 – 6:30 pm
Budget Committee Meeting – April 7, 2021 – 6:30 pm – Comm. Center

5. New Business:

A. Tax Maps: Convert Tax Maps from AutoCAD to GIS

Dwayne stated that we do our Tax Maps every year. We used to do hand drawn Tax Maps. About 15 years ago, we moved from hand drawn Tax Maps to AutoCAD Tax Maps, so we were able to produce nice Tax Maps. About the same time that we switched to AutoCAD, GIS was starting to come into being. The State picked our town along with 3 other towns in the State to create a GIS system in the towns. The system takes our Tax Maps and creates a GIS layer so we can see all of the parcels and where everything is within our community. One of the criteria that was used to be chosen was that the town had to have strong zoning and we have one of the stronger zoning in Southern Maine.

Dwayne stated that the GIS system creates a rubber sheet that allows us to see all of the parcels. These sheets are very costly. He said that when Dave Parker was on the Fire Department, he had taken the sheets and added more to them. He had access to surveys that we don't have access to and fixed the rubber sheet even further. Dwayne said that the problem is the last time we made changes to the GIS layer was back in 2014. Every year that we get further from 2014, the less valuable this tool becomes.

Dwayne stated that, in talking to the company that does our Tax Maps, they recommended that we consider going to GIS. They have a company that they utilize that does GIS and they do a lot of the towns around us. They are called CAI Technologies and are located in Littleton, NH. He stated that they are an AutoCAD company as well as a GIS company. They suggested that we switch our Tax Maps from an AutoCAD basis to an ESRI basis which is a GIS layer. This way we can continue to have our Tax Maps and we can create them in PDF like we do now. The benefit to doing it in a GIS system, our GIS system will always be automatically updated.

Dwayne stated that they had looked into it a few years ago and the price at the time was over \$20,000. He has started to look around to see if there are other options. He stated that CAI Technologies has given us a price. He said that he can give the Board reasons why we should go with them. The big benefits are that they currently work closely with our current engineering firm and our engineering firm has recommended them to us. They also do all of the larger towns around us. He stated that Wells also puts their GIS online but that is very costly. Dwayne showed them what the system looks like on the computer. He said that we utilize Google Earth as our base photo because it goes over our town about every 2 years. The last pictures were taken in October of last year.

Dwayne stated that he would like to move our Tax Maps over to GIS. The estimate to do it is between \$10,000 and \$15,000. Our Code Enforcement Officer has basically been out of work since November, so we have some excess money in the Code Enforcement Office line item. There is about \$30,000 in excess money because the Code Enforcement Officer has not been paid in about 5 months. He is being paid through short term disability. Chairman Cowan said

that she likes the idea of it staying updated. Dwayne stated that the yearly maintenance will run about \$3,000. We currently spend about \$3,500 a year on AutoCAD. He stated that he would like to stick with CAI because our engineering company has recommended them. The Board agreed that they should go with CAI to transfer to GIS mapping.

Selectman Galemme motioned to approve the conversion of the Tax Maps to GIS and use CAI Technologies at a cost of \$12,000 to come from the Code Enforcement budget. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Dwayne stated that they can have it done by June.

B. Tax Acquired Property: Review Tax Acquired Property from FY19

Dwayne said that every year they go through and see who hasn't paid their taxes. This year there was one property. Dwayne brought the property up on the computer for the Board to see. He stated that the property is owned by Janet Chappell and Janice Lord and both of them are now deceased. To our knowledge there are no direct descendants. They owned another piece of property with their house. The house had a mortgage on it, so the bank is still taking care of the taxes on that property. A few years ago, they bought this property in question in fee from Albert Sesin. This property is primarily wet. Ms. Chappell and Ms. Lord had bought it because it gave them more of a back yard.

They paid for the property in full so there is no bank involved so no taxes were ever paid. It is a separate lot and there is no access from the road to the property. Their access was through their front property. The amount owed is only a couple hundred dollars and it is an unbuildable lot. There are a bunch of properties that abut it. Dwayne said that the best thing to do is to put it out to bid to the abutting neighbors to see if one of them wants to buy it. We are owed \$353.04 so we could set the minimum bid price at \$500.00. He stated that we need to do a 30 day Right of Redemption. We send it to the women that are deceased because that is what he has to do.

Selectman Galemme motioned to put Map Lot 014-015-2 out to bid with a minimum price of \$500.00. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion.

Selectman Hall asked how big the piece of land was. Dwayne stated that it is 1.83 acres. He said that the problem is that it is mostly wetlands and land locked. Our assessment value is \$6,700.00 on it.

VOTE: 5-0

C. Fire Department: Red Light Authorization Request

Dwayne stated that they have a request from one of our new firefighters, Joe Perron, for a Red-Light Authorization. The Fire Chief agrees with this request to allow him to utilize a red light in his personal vehicle.

Selectman Galemmo motioned to approve the request for a Red-Light Authorization for Joe Perron. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

6. Other Business:

Dwayne stated that he has included information on the York County Budget Caucus in their packet in case any of them were interested. It will be held on April 14, 2021. He stated that there are 2 vacancies in our District for elected officials in case any of them want to partake in it.

Dwayne stated that they have received all of the contracts now for Verizon. He will be sending them out tomorrow. They told Dwayne that their goal is to be up and running by August. The engineers are supposed to release the drawings to construction by April.

Selectman Hall asked if it was a short-term leave for Jonny Koelker as the SRO officer at the High School. Dwayne stated that it was. One of our Police Officers is pregnant, and she is no longer able to be on the road. She is a certified School Resource Officer. Another issue is that they started up the Academy, so they had to send the officer that is now beyond the 1-year mark for getting his license. We had to send him now, so we are down an officer. Officer Koelker came up with the idea to have Ashley become the SRO officer. She can still wear plain clothes there which is good because the uniforms no longer fit her. Her due date is the first week of July and she will probably be back on patrol in August. Officer Koelker will be the SRO officer for the next school year again. He stated that it worked out well because we are also down one Reserve Officer.

Dwayne stated that they did send over the agreement and the COVID forms to the NBAA. They have also been approached by Noble Travel Soccer to use the fields at the Community Center. He stated that they will utilize the same forms that were used for Fall ball.

Selectman Hall asked Dwayne if he had heard anything about the School Budget. Dwayne said that he reached out to the school by emailing the Superintendent. He has not heard back yet. Dwayne stated that there may be a potential problem. He said that they notified the school to let them know what our plans are for voting. The response he got back was, "Our kids utilize the cafeteria for lunch.". He sent an email to the Superintendent stating that we need to discuss this issue sooner than later. He gave them 4 possible solutions to the issue. They are:

1. The kids could eat at their desk on that day.
2. Instead of doing Wednesday remote learning, they switch that day to Tuesday for that week. We are still 4 months away, so it gives us plenty of opportunity for us to notify parents and teachers to schedule.
3. They can do 2 more days that week on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

4. Give the kids that day off.

He stated that he is not considering it a problem yet but at some point, the Board may be asked to get involved. He thought they had moved past it. When he met with the Superintendent in the summer, she said that everything was going to be fine. He hopes that they will be able to come to some sort of arrangement. He also asked the Superintendent for a date when she can meet with us to discuss the School Budget.

7. Review and Approve Warrants and Correspondence:

Warrant:	March 9, 2021	- \$ 16,889.86
Warrant:	March 16, 2021	- \$ 587,799.81

Selectman Galemme motioned to approve the Warrant of March 9, 2021 for the amount of \$16,889.86 and the Warrant of March 16, 2021 for the amount of \$587,799.81. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

8. Adjournment:

Selectman Glemmo motioned to adjourn at 7:41 pm. Selectman Johnson, Sr. 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 Glemmo

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Sr.