

North Berwick Board of Selectmen Minutes November 16, 2021

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

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

Absent: Selectman Cowan

Also Present: Brian Gosselin, Kaylyn Bell

Chairman Galemmo opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Review and Approve Minutes of November 2, 2021

Selectman Hall stated that on page 4, the 5th sentence in the 2nd paragraph currently states, "...School Budget..." but it should read, "...School Bond...".

Selectman Johnson, Sr. motioned to approve the minutes of November 2, 2021 as amended. Selectman Hall seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

3. Public Input

Brian Gosselin, the Fire Chief, stated that he was here to request to take money out of his equipment budget for a sealed bid for a Cascade Filling Station. He said that they sort of have part ownership to it along with 13 other towns that are in the organization. This is going away. He said that the air van has already gone to Lee. They also own a compressor Cascade system and a fill system to fill the SCBA bottles. He stated that they are going to lose that. A few years back, he priced one out and they were very expensive.

Dwayne stated that when they were told that they were going to dissolve the association, they sold the air van and they were going to see which towns would be interested in the Cascade Filling System. Somersworth told us last week that we had until the 10th to make a decision and it would cost us a buck so Dwayne said we should take it. It is an older system and parts are hard to come by. Even if we junked it, we would get more than a buck. As soon as we showed interest in it, Somersworth now wants it so there will be a sealed bid process to purchase it.

Mr. Gosselin said that when everything is said and done and the association goes away, there is a bank account with money in it and North Berwick will be getting a portion of that money. If we put in a \$1,000 bid, we will probably get back \$500 once the association is dissolved. Selectman Johnson, Sr. stated that if it costs \$280,000 brand new, then this one must be worth quite a bit as a used one. Dwayne said that it is, but it is antiquated and some of the parts are hard to come by.

We would need to order the parts from Germany. Mr. Gosselin said that it has a 3-phase motor so Dwayne said that we will need to buy a 3-phase converter to make it run. Dwayne thinks that we may need to go higher than \$1,000. Mr. Gosselin said that they have an older compressor up at the substation that is a single phase 280. He said that they may be able to covert that one over.

Mr. Gosselin said that Somersworth wants the cascade bottles and the fill station, but they don't want the compressor. Dwayne said that we would want the fill station too because if we don't get it, we will need to find another alternative to fill our bottles. Selectman Hall asked how much money was in the Fire Department Equipment Fund. Dwayne said that this year, they budgeted \$24,000 in that fund and we have spent some of it. Dwayne said that they still had about \$20,000 in the fund.

Selectman Johnson, Jr. asked Mr. Gosselin if he knew how much this equipment would cost if it was sold out right? Mr. Gosselin stated that he did not know. He said that they are rebuilding that station right now which is why they are disbanding because nobody wanted the air van. It ended up going to the Seacoast Chief's Association. The compressor and everything else is just sitting in the Somersworth station. They are remodeling half of the station so they can move it. Selectman Johnson, Jr. asked what will happen for us when we need to fill our bottles if we don't get this equipment? Mr. Gosselin said that they currently bring their Cascade system to Wells. They have 4 bottles on the utility truck but there is no compressor. Selectman Johnson, Sr. asked how much it cost to fill the bottles. Mr. Gosselin said that Wells does it for free. Selectman Johnson, Sr. asked if they wanted to purchase this because of convenience. Dwayne said that there is a convenience factor but there is also the factor that if they are fighting fires and their bottles go dry, they need air. If they get the equipment, they would just need to run back to our fire station instead of to Wells.

Selectman Johnson, Sr. stated that they should probably offer a higher amount for the bid. Dwayne thinks they should do \$2,500 and that may assure that we get it. Mr. Gosselin said that the bid will be sealed so he has no clue what Somersworth is going to bid. Dwayne said that the bottles themselves are worth more than \$2,500. Mr. Gosselin agreed.

Selectman Hall motioned to authorize the Fire Chief to spend \$2,500 in a sealed bid for the Cascade Filling Station Compressor and bottles. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion.
VOTE: 4-0

5. New Business:

A. Parks and Rec: Introduce Kaylyn Bell

Dwayne said that he asked Kaylyn Bell to come in to meet the Selectman. She is the new Parks and Recreation Director and she started on 11/1/21. Ms. Bell thanked the Selectmen for allowing her the opportunity in this new position. Dwayne said that they are working on is the Tree Lighting that will occur on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. It will be about a 2-hour event and will have 2 food trucks there. Ms. Bell said that there will be one serving barbecue style food and another selling everything else. Selectman Johnson, Sr. asked if the trucks were self-contained and had their own power. Ms. Bell said that they did.

Dwayne said that she also has 2 Kids Nite Out events set up. They have room for 20 kids for 2 Friday nights and the sessions are almost full. He said that they will work into putting together more events especially as they go into the next year. They will look to team up with the PTO and other agencies in the area to see what they can offer for all age groups. Selectman Johnson, Jr. asked if there was still a Parks and Rec Committee. Ms. Bell said that there was, and they are meeting in December. Dwayne said that they haven't met in 2 years so he told her to set up a meeting in December so they could meet her. He said that most of them already know her because she has been involved in Parks and Recreation activities. Ms. Bell said that she has already been approached by people about how some things have worked in the past and given her ideas on improvements.

Selectman Hall asked Ms. Bell if she had any ideas on changing some things for the Summer Camp. She stated that she is looking to do 1 field trip a week instead of 2. This would cut down on some costs. She said that in running the Summer Camp this year, she found that bringing people to them was better. They had the Reptile guy come in. They also had the Channel 8 weatherman come in and they did a weather day. She finds that having people come to us would be very beneficial. Dwayne said that they are hoping to go back to a full time Summer Camp. Selectman Hall asked if the camp would run for 8 weeks. Ms. Bell said that it would be for 6 weeks. She said they did 8 weeks this past summer and it was way too much. Selectman Hall asked if she thought that she will have enough staff for a full camp. Ms. Bell said that she could find them. Dwayne said that they will start looking in January to fill the positions. He said that they may have to pay a little more. Ms. Bell said that she worked for a school department for a long time, and she knows a lot of staff that would work in the summertime.

4. Unfinished Business:

A. COVID-19: ARPA Funding

Dwayne said that they did get a determination from the State CDC that said that the Fire Department was not under the mandate for COVID vaccinations. However, he said that they only have 2 firefighters that are not vaccinated so this will allow them to still stay on the squad. The ones that are not vaccinated will not be allowed to do rescue calls so it will not put us in any precarious situations. Dwayne said that President Biden's 100 employee vaccine mandate, as of today, has been postponed. Regardless of the postponement, we do not meet the new guidance definitions. We are at 84 employees. Originally, when they put the information out, they said that it was going to be the number of employees that you have over the course of the year. They are now saying that it is only the ones that are active. For example, summertime employees go off the payroll, ballot clerks go off the payroll after the election and winter employees get hired on but then go off in the summer so our average is about 84 employees. The other thing is that committee members do not count unless they get a stipend so the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen would be the only ones counted. It doesn't look like it will become a law anyway because 26 States have sued OSHA trying to understand how a virus can be considered an occupational hazard because it is not a direct result of the occupation that they are doing.

Dwayne said that there is 1 Police Officer that is not vaccinated. There are about 6 employees town-wide that are not vaccinated. Rescue lost 3 employees to the vaccine, and they lost 4 employees to New Hampshire because they do not have a mandate.

Dwayne said that they did finally receive a project list from both the Sanitary District and the Water District. The Sanitary District did not put prices on a lot of the projects because they haven't priced them out yet. The Water District is looking to do some line improvements on some of the roads. They are looking at Brewer Road, Lower Main Street, Portland Street, Pleasant Street, and Somersworth Road. They are also looking to do a tie in so that South Berwick Water District and North Berwick Water District could share water in the event that it was necessary. They also are looking into finding a new well and a new water main well to pump. They also want to bore a line under Route 4 to their office. Selectman Johnson, Sr. asked where they would do the tie in with South Berwick. Dwayne said it would be at Hooper Sands Road. They would need about a mile pipe to connect and have all the check valves and shut off valves. It would not be free flowing unless there was an emergency.

Dwayne said that there were a few projects that piqued his interest on the Water District side where we could match up a road project with them. Brewer Road is one of the roads that they are looking into adding for the next 10-year CIP for the roads. Unfortunately, we have already done significant improvements to some of the roads such as Pleasant Street and Portland Street. Selectman Johnson, Sr. asked if the lines were bad. Dwayne said that on Brewer Road they are old lines and on Lower Main Street he believes that they just want to make it a bigger pipe size. On Portland Street, he knows that it is a larger pipe size. From Main Street to about halfway down Portland Street, it is only a 6-inch line, and they would like it to go to an 8-inch line. He said that the 6-inch line has significant narrowing of the pipe. On Somersworth Road, they want to extend the pipe and they would like to find a new well on their property. They also would like to put in a 12-inch pipe for about ½ a mile on Route 4. Dwayne said that now that he has some ideas, he can try and figure out what we would be able to assist with.

Dwayne said that the Sanitary District gave more generic projects instead of specific ones. The one that piqued his interest is the first one that they mention. He said that they have a storm drain repair issue that is going on at the Sanitary cross-country line. From Canal Street to Madison Street, we have a cross country pipe that is above ground. It is on concrete stanchions, and we have drainage that drains Madison Street and part of Market Street. That drainage has started to undermine the concrete pillars that the Sanitary District's sewer line is on. This is happening mainly because it is clay pipe. They don't know exactly what is going on but there is definitely some collapsing of the clay pipes. There is a big ditch that runs from Old Mill Road over to the river in the vicinity of the bridge. There is clay piping in there and they know that it is not working as efficiently and effectively as it should, and it is causing some concerns to the cross-country line support system. Dwayne said that it is a main line, and this might be a good project that fixes and secures this area. It would help fix our town drainage while it secures that line that sends a lot of our waste down to the lagoon system.

Dwayne said that they are also have some replacement ideas. One of the items is a Muffin Monster Cutter which is a cutting system that cuts up for the lagoon treatment system. The want to replace some Pump Stations on Wells Street and Madison Street but they don't have a cost on

that. They also need an Aerator Membrane replacement. They also have a large project for sludge removal that would cost about \$220,000. Also, if we do work on any roads, they would like us to assist in the payment for the manhole repair. Dwayne said that this gives us some ideas to look at to assist in some projects.

Dwayne said that we are getting about \$500,000. We are going to spend about \$50,000 for the communications that includes backup power and adding a repeater for Rescue. He also would like to talk to the Board at some point about some increased payroll for people that served during the COVID time. He is waiting to see what other towns are going to do. Selectman Johnson, Jr. said that he thought that there was a cap limitation. Dwayne said that there is a cap without justification but there is no cap with justification. The concern is will the justification be enough to satisfy the Federal Government. He said that there are some interesting projects that will benefit the town.

B. LWCF: Grant Funding of Bauneg Beg Hill Project

Dwayne said that the Land Trust has been looking at other grant opportunities. One of the ones that they are looking at is the Land for Maine Futures Funding. We have to have the initial application in by December 6, 2021. It is just an inquiry form that says that we are interested in applying for Land for Maine Future Funds. Dwayne stated that the Land Trust met and said that this is a priority for them, but Land for Maine Future has to run through the town. Starting on page 17 of the Selectmen's packet is the email that Tom Gilmore sent to Dwayne that states what they are looking to do. Dwayne said that they already sent some letters off to the Inland fisheries and Wildlife or DHCF because we need to get some support from them in order to submit the form. On page 19 is the inquiry form that is all filled out, so they just need to submit it.

Selectman Hall motioned to allow Dwayne Morin, the Town Manager to submit the Inquiry Form for the Bauneg Beg Mountain Recreation Area in coordination with the Great Works Regional Land Trust in accordance with our Memorandum of Understanding that we sign for the overall project. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

C. FY23 Budget: Continued Budget Discussions

Dwayne stated that he drafted a letter to Justin Dowling regarding his participation in the Budget Committee. He read the letter into the minutes:

In 2019, you were elected to the Budget Committee for a 3 year term, which will expire in 2022. Since being elected to the Budget Committee, you have not participated in any of the hearings or meetings nor have you picked up the Budget Books and materials prepared for you as a Budget Committee member.

The Board of Selectmen understand that attending meetings can be difficult, especially since you own and operate your own small business and that must take priority.

To that end, the Board would like you to consider resigning from your position so that the Board of Selectmen could appoint a member who would be willing to participate in the Budget

Committee process this coming year. Included with this letter is a sample resignation letter that can be sent to the Town Hall in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope. If you do not wish to resign from the position, it is the hope of the Board that you will participate in the upcoming year's budget process which will begin in February.

If you wish to discuss the situation, please feel free to attend a Selectmen's meeting held on the first and third Tuesdays or contact Dwayne Morin, Town Manager, at 676-3353 x 4.

Selectman Hall motioned to send the letter to Justin Dowling. Michael Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

Dwayne stated that all the budget forms went out to all of the Department heads as well as to all of the outside agencies. He is starting to look at some of the things that are up on the CIP this year. One of the things is a new firetruck so the Chief has been working on that. The truck that they are looking to replace failed inspection last week. It is 32 years old. They are waiting to find out if it is worth fixing or just wait. They are working the truck specs and getting pricing so they can go to the Budget Committee. A new highway vehicle is due this year. They need to replace one of the 6-wheel dump trucks that is a 1989 truck. Mike is working on getting costs for this. Dwayne said that vehicle sales are up and not plentiful. They will look to get an automatic again to make it easier to find people to drive it.

D. Verizon: Final Project Plans

Dwayne said that he finally received complete plans. He showed the Board what the new plan looks like on the computer. Verizon told him that once they approve the plan, they will be pulling their permit. The biggest change is the addition of a dormer. It is not too obtrusive. Selectman Johnson, Sr. asked how long it will take them to complete. Dwayne said it will probably take about 6 months. There will be a lot of equipment in the room upstairs. The Board stated that the plan looked good.

Reminders: Next Board of Selectmen's Meeting – December 7, 2021 – 6:30 pm

5. New Business:

B. Rescue: Concern About Recruitment and Retention

Dwayne stated that there is a lot of concerns with EMS services both locally and nationwide about retaining and recruiting EMT's. A lot of people are not going into the field. EMT workers are working 70 to 80 hours a week in some areas because they are covering a lot of towns. They are looking to do some legislation and they would like support from the town on some of the Legislation. Mike Barker asked Dwayne to give the Board some of the talking points about some of the concerns that they have as an EMS service. Dwayne said that it is not necessarily North Berwick EMS service but EMS as a whole. Selectman Johnson, Jr. asked if this was statewide or nationwide. Dwayne said that it was nationwide.

Dwayne said that there are 2 bills before the State right now that will be looked at in the upcoming session. He asked Mike for a copy of them, but they are not finalized yet, so no copy is available. Dwayne said that they have some interesting ideas that they have come up with to see if it might attract some people. For example, if they work so many hours as an EMT, they would get so much off of their tax bill. Another example is if they work so many hours, they would get so many dollars of credit towards a college education. Chairman Galemmo said that YCCC does have an EMT course now. They were in talks with York County to provide a lot of the education. A person can go there and not just get an EMT, Firefighter and stuff. You can actually get an Associate Degree.

Mike Barker is willing to come in to talk to the Board about it if they would like to know more about it. Selectman Hall asked if our Rescue was currently short on staff. Dwayne said we could always use more. Selectman Hall asked how many employees there were right now. Dwayne said that he believes that they had about 26 or 27 covering and Mike told him that they lost 7 so they have about 20 currently. Selectman Johnson, Jr. stated that they had 2 on per shift. Dwayne said that the same 2 employees that work shifts for us also work for other towns like Sanford, Wells and Arundel. He said that we do not have any Rescue employees that are just for North Berwick. Selectman Hall asked if ARPA funding could be used to have signing bonuses to recruit new employees. Dwayne said that they could not. He said that we can give them premium pay for work that they did while COVID was in place, but we can't attract new prospects with that money.

6. Other Business:

Dwayne said that he found someone to replace the current stenographer. Her name is Jennifer Berard, but some people may know her as Jennifer Cole. She has lived her pretty much her whole life. She is currently a stenographer for a law firm and is very interested in doing it. He said that she will come in and sit in on the December meetings to observe the current stenographer.

7. Review and Approve Warrants and Correspondence:

Warrant:	November 9, 2021	- \$ 161,154.86
Warrant:	November 16, 2021	- \$ 580,755.89

Selectman Hall motioned to approve the Warrant of November 9, 2021 for the amount of \$161,154.86 and the Warrant of November 16, 2021 for the amount of \$580,755.89. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

8. Adjournment:

Selectman Johnson, Sr. motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 pm. Selectman Hall seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

Respectively Submitted,
Susan Niehoff, Stenographer

Original to Town Clerk

Chairman: Charles Galemmo

Selectman: Jonathan Hall

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Jr.

Selectman: Wendy Cowan

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Sr.