

NORTH BERWICK BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES

JULY 12, 2022

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

Also Present: Dwayne Morin, Todd Smith, Mike Barker, Mark Reed, Rebecca Reed,
Elisabeth Glidden, Stanley Cowan, Gregg Drew, Maurice Dolbec, Julie
Ferneer

Chairman Galemmo opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF JUNE 28, 2022

Selectman Hall motioned to approve the minutes of June 28, 2022 as amended. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0-1

3. PUBLIC INPUT N/A

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. COMMUNICATION TOWER: Update on Plans

Dwayne stated the application was completed and submitted to the Planning Board today. He stated that the finalized plans are all done and they show that the Communications Tower will be at the side of the tank. There will be three antennas. Selectman Cowan inquired about the abutters and Dwayne stated the abutters will get notice now that we have presented it to the Planning Board. Dwayne stated July 28th Planning Board meeting will include the Communications Tower and a public hearing will be scheduled for sometime in August. He believes by the end of August, we should receive the approvals.

B. ROAD PROJECTS:

Dwayne stated that Clark Road has been resurfaced and the cost was around \$62,000.00 leaving approximately \$48,000.00 to be brought forward into this budget year. This will help defray the increased cost in pavement due to the high oil prices. Ford Quint Road was shimmed yesterday and if everything goes well, the surface will be put on Ford Quint Road on Thursday of this week. Dwayne stated it is about \$100.00 per ton for pavement right now which is about a \$30.00 increase from before.

**Reminders: Next Board of Selectman's Meeting – July 26, 2022 – 6:30 pm
Community Center - Special Town Meeting**

Dwayne indicated that the meeting originally scheduled for July 20th has been cancelled. Selectman Hall inquired as to why the meeting was cancelled. Dwayne indicated that a request was made to provide the Board of Selectman with issues they would like to discuss and no one submitted any issues.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

A. SPECIAL TOWN MEETING: Review Warrant with Budget Committee, Newsletter

Dwayne stated that we currently utilize per diem paramedics and EMT's for a twenty-four hour/two-person shift coverage. This past year, the goal was that if we increased the per hour wage for EMT's, that would help us keep those we had currently and maybe attract more. They were able to pick up one person but lost others. Dwayne stated there is a lack of EMT's and paramedics in the area and it is causing a strain and getting into bidding wars with other communities. He stated we are having to pay extreme amounts per hour to attract EMT's and paramedics to work for us. Our pay rates are typically \$24.00 and \$18.00 and we had to pay \$48 and \$36 for the months of May and June just to get our shifts covered. Dwayne stated that is just not sustainable. The other piece is that we were notified by some of our mutual aid partners, primarily York Rescue, who stated if they come to cover North Berwick because we do not have our ambulance staffed, they were going to start charging us \$2,000.00 per call plus keep revenue derived from that call. Dwayne stated that is also not sustainable. The Board and Mike have come up with an idea of how to solve this problem. He stated we have looked into private ambulance services but we are a victim of geography and population and most private entities are not interested in North Berwick due to revenue and location. If they were to be utilized, we would have a contract of about one million dollars and they would keep all of the revenue from the calls. Dwayne stated the other major concern by going that route would be response time which would be increased.

Mike Bartlett stated that 1,500 EMT's have left the profession in Maine. Dwayne stated that Mike came up with an idea of the Rescue putting on four full-time people and back-filling the rest of the shifts with per diem people. Selectman Johnson, Sr. asked if we would have a hard time getting per diem people to work full-time. Mike stated that everything is pretty much internal so far, have not yet selected who the full-time personnel. He stated that there are four full-time positions and he has seven resumes from people for those positions from within. Mike stated there would not be a problem and it will be a lot easier to schedule people and they will be able to get the shifts that they want.

Dwayne stated that by having four full-time people, it reduces the amount of per diem people by 50%. Normally, 384 hours need to be filled by per diem people, and now we would need to only fill 180 hours. The proposal also increases our per diem rates up to \$30.00 per hour instead of

\$24.00 for paramedics. Mike stated North Berwick has more of the advanced level providers than other towns and that we have more paramedics than EMT's.

Todd Smith asked how many staff members are on the Rescue now. Dwayne stated that we have 26 people on the roster who work part-time. There are twelve people who work regularly anywhere from 24 to 32 and even 40 hours per week coverage. Selectman Hall inquired about a salary scale and how would that play out. Mike stated those are things that they are working on right now using the top step paramedics. He stated that a top-step paramedic would be making \$30.00 per hour. The people that they have in mind to hire come with a lot of experience.

Rebecca Reed asked if full-timers will be able to respond to other towns when they have down time to offset costs. Dwayne stated because it would be mutual aid, that is not charged.

Dwayne stated the way the budget was built for this was based on worse case scenario. An example is hiring a paramedic with thirty years of experience, family insurance plans, taking the maximum retirement, etc. That may not be the case at all but we have to budget for spending that money. They are proposing to requesting an additional \$265,000, in addition to the \$361,000 that the town raised in April. We would utilize undesignated funds to keep our costs down. We would need to only raise \$185,000 which is about where Mike thinks they are going to be. The \$185,000.00 is about a \$90.00 increase on everyone's tax bill. He stated we are going to go from a budget of about \$600,000.00 to a budget of nearly \$900,000.00 for the rescue. All the revenue that the Rescue Squad makes from insurance claims goes right back into the budget so they are already offsetting that by \$200,000.00. The next two years, the Rescue is going to take \$70,000.00 to offset the budget as well. Dwayne stated in year three, we will see a bigger increase to the town.

Chairman Galemme stated how the cost of everything has gone up and the education is different than it was in years past. Selectman Hall indicated that a less than six-minute response time is awesome and he would like to see us move in this direction so that we can maintain that response time. To have a half hour response time for an ambulance from another town would not be good.

Dwayne referenced the Warrant for the Special Town Meeting and stated that \$265,000.00 is being requested and this appropriation is in addition to the \$361,290.00 appropriated at the Annual Town Meeting on April 9, 2022.

Gregg Drew motioned to approve the Warrant of July 26, 2022 for the amount of \$265,000.00. Maurice Dolbec seconded the motion. VOTE: 8-0

Selectman Cowan motioned to approve the Warrant presented to the Budget Committee of July 26, 2022 for the amount of \$265,000.00. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

B. EMA PLAN: ADOPT YORK COUNTY EMA PLAN, UPDATED NORTH BERWICK PLAN

Dwayne indicated that York County EMA has updated their Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Board will need to sign off on the plan. The Plan is quite large, 215 pages, so Dwayne has not copied it for the Board. The file size is also too large, 15 gb, to send via email. Mike Barker, Town's EMA director has reviewed the Plan and is recommending the Board approve the plan as presented. Mike has also updated the Town's EMA Plan to be consistent with the York County Plan and that also needs adoption by the Board. Every town in the State has to sign off on this plan and that opens it up for funding and grants.

Selectman Hall motioned that:

Whereas, natural and man-made disasters may occur at any time, we recognize that to lessen the impacts of these disasters we will save resources, property and lives in York County;

And whereas the creation of a Hazard Mitigation Plan is necessary for the development of a risk assessment and effective mitigation strategy;

And whereas, the 26 towns and 3 cities of York County are committed to the mitigation goals and measures as presented in this plan;

Therefore, **the Town of North Berwick** hereby adopts the 2022 York County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

and the Board adopt and sign the York County Hazard Mitigation Plan and the updated North Berwick EMA Plan. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

C. BUDGET COMMITTEE: RESIGNATION OF CHRISTINA BROWN

Dwayne stated that Christina Brown has submitted her letter of resignation from the Budget Committee. Dwayne stated that Christina and her family has moved out of Town.

Selectman Hall motioned to accept Christina Brown's resignation from the Budget Committee. Selectman Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Dwayne indicated that this leaves nine people on the Budget Committee and there are three open positions. Mark Reed was present and stated he would accept one of the open positions on the Budget Committee.

Selectman Hall motioned to appoint Mark Reed to the Budget Committee. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

D. COMMITMENT FY23: County Tax Assessment

Dwayne stated we are working on updates on the assessments and the goal is by next meeting we should have some draft numbers. Verna was finalizing all personal property today and she is going to be working on the updates of assessments tomorrow. He stated we are looking at a 10% increase on the building schedules which will end up being a 7-8% increase when all the factors are thrown in. We should have the preliminary figures for the July 26th meeting.

E. ALFOND FOUNDATION: RECEIVED TRAINING GRANT FOR EMPLOYEES

Dwayne stated that Town has entered into an agreement with the Alfond Foundation to fund 100% of training costs for Town employees up to \$1,200.00 per employee through December 31, 2022 and then 50% reimbursement up to \$600.00 per employee through December 31, 2025. This will assist with budgets this year and for the next few years and allow for some training that would have otherwise been diverted to future years. The Town was notified by Peg Wheeler as to the availability of the grant opportunity. This was put out by the York County Community College System and is for people who are already employed. Dwayne stated this is a great program. Dwayne stated he received a letter of approval yesterday.

F. APPOINTMENTS: APPOINTMENT OF OFFICIALS FOR FY23

Dwayne stated The Board will need to make the appointments for the non-elected officials for the ensuing year.

Selectman Cowan motioned that the appointments for the non-elected officials for the ensuing year be approved. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

G. GROWTH PERMITS: SET GROWTH PERMIT CAP PURSUANT TO ZONING ARTICLE 6.3.4

Dwayne stated that we are to look at our growth permits yearly. The Board will need to vote to increase the Growth Management permits cap pursuant to the 6.3.4 of the Zoning Ordinance. The number increases this year from 45 to 46 based on the number of dwelling units within the town. Dwayne stated that this year we did 28 permits out of the 45 permits. Subdivisions were 17 and non-sub-divisions were 11.

Selectman Johnson, Jr. motioned to increase the growth cap this year to 46 from 45. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

6. OTHER BUSINESS:

Selectman Cowan discussed the impact of the noise at the Firing Range on Randall Road residents. It goes on every day all day. Selectman Cowan stated that her neighbor indicated that he had been threaten after expressing a concern on Facebook about the range, which was simply to ask that the noise not be early or late. She also had a report that the vet clinic found bullets in their roof. She wanted to express how it is now becoming a safety issue. Dwayne stated there is literally nothing that we as the town can really do. The gun range is not in North Berwick, it is in Berwick. Selectman Cowan asked Dwayne if he would be willing to have a conversation with Berwick Town Manager to see if anything could be done. Dwayne stated he would make a phone call regarding this.

Selectman Cowan inquired about fireworks and asked if anyone setting off fireworks needs to have a permit. Dwayne indicated that we have a fireworks ordinance that states you are to supposed to have a permit and they can be obtained at the Town Hall.

7. REVIEW AND APPROVE WARRANTS AND CORRESPONDENCE:

Warrant:	July 5, 2022	- \$ 106,655.45
Warrant:	June 12, 2022	- \$ 125,501.98

Selectman Hall motioned to approve the Warrant of July 5, 2022 for the amount of \$106,655.45 and the Warrant of July 12, 2022 for the amount of \$125,501.98. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

8. Adjournment:

Selectman Cowan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 pm. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Respectively Submitted,
Jennifer Berard, Stenographer

Original to Town Clerk

Chairman: Charles Galemmo

Selectman: Jonathan Hall

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Jr.

Selectman: Wendy Cowan

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Sr.