

# **NORTH BERWICK BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES**

## **FEBRUARY 7, 2023**

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

**Absent:** Selectman Hall

**Also Present:** Dwayne Morin, Ron Smith

Chairman Galemmo opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

### **1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

### **2. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF JANUARY 10 & 23, 2023**

Selectman Cowan motioned to approve the Minutes of January 10<sup>th</sup> and January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 as amended. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

### **3. PUBLIC INPUT N/A**

### **4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

#### **A. PHONE SYSTEM: Update on New System**

Dwayne indicated that the new phone system was installed on Wednesday. After a few issues with install, Consolidated was able to get everything up and running. Dwayne indicated they were down for about 2 ½ hours or so. He stated that the staff is happy with the new phones and the functions. He also indicated that there is still a little more work to do to get the computer client up and running on everyone's pcs but hopefully that will be accomplished by next week. There is a small issue with the Rescue Squad, but that should hopefully be fixed this week. The phones can be controlled and utilized through a computer program that greatly enhances the features of the phone system such as sending voicemail through email, forwarding your phone to another phone such as a cell phone, recording your conversation, and many other features that the PD are very interested in. He also indicated the phones are Bluetooth compatible which is good.

**B. BERWICK GUN RANGE: Discussion on Meeting with Berwick Board of Selectman**

Dwayne indicated that there will be a meeting on February 9<sup>th</sup>, but the Gun Club would like to limit the meeting to two (2) selectman per town. He stated that the meeting is scheduled for this Thursday, February 9 at 4:00 p.m. He indicated that he is in Augusta on that date, so he unfortunately cannot attend. Selectman Johnson, Jr. and Selectman Cowan indicated they would attend that meeting on February 9, 2023. Dwayne indicated the main focus of the meeting is to look at the safety of the gun range.

**C. BUDGET: ATTORNEY RATE INCREASE, COMM CENTER GENERATOR**

Dwayne stated the Budget Committee started up last week and will start in full force this week when the Town Office Budget is reviewed. Dwayne did indicate that the Town's attorney's office contacted him last week to advise that the rates will be increased starting July 1<sup>st</sup>. The current rate is \$175.00 and will be increasing to \$200.00, however they will keep their paralegals at \$170.00. Dwayne indicated that special projects will be at their normal rates. Dwayne also stated he was going to keep the budget amount the same as we have not historically gone over the budgeted amount.

Dwayne indicated that during the extreme cold and power outages, the Town has been opening up the Fire Departments and Rescue Squad for warming centers which no one has taken advantage of. He stated that these buildings are not typically ideal for warming centers and has been thinking about installing a generator in the Community Center so that building could be used as a warming center. Dwayne stated we would not have to use taxation money because it is a capital improvement at the facility. Dwayne does not know the cost of this but will do some research and get back to the Board on that.

**Reminders:**                      **Next Board of Selectman's Meeting – February 21 - 6:30 P.M. – Room 212 Town Hall**  
   **Budget Committee – February 8 – 6:30 P.M. - Room 212 Town Hall**  
   **Budget Committee – February 15 – 6:30 P.M. – Room 212 Town Hall**

**5. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. AUDIT:                      Review of FY22 Audit with RHR Smith**

Dwayne indicated that Ron Smith is the owner from RHR Smith and is here tonight and will be presenting the FY22 Audit to the Board. Dwayne stated that typically Bill Hall attends the meeting. Dwayne also provided a copy of the audit for the Board's review.

Ron Smith stated that he will be going over the highlights of the Town's audit and stated that they perform audits on about half of the municipalities in the State of Maine. He indicated

that the Town's fund balance was about \$5 Million Dollars on June 30, 2022 and the Unassigned Fund Balance was about \$3.2 Million Dollars which is almost exactly where it was on June 30, 2021. Ron stated that there was about \$400,000.00 for tax relief that went to the FY23 Budget. Ron stated in North Berwick terms, based on an operating budget of about \$12 Million Dollars, the Town is at 2.3 and over 90 days which is exactly where the Town needs to land. He indicated there is about \$240,000 sitting in trust funds, the budget and revenues came in where they needed to be and the Town's expenses were underspent this year again. Ron indicated that financially speaking, North Berwick is Health A, which is great.

#### **B. ROADS: Sand Pond Bridge Engineer Estimate**

Dwayne had mentioned that following the MDOT review of the town's bridges, one of the bridges had a failing grade, which is the bridge on Sand Pond Road which is jointly owned by North Berwick and Sanford. We currently have the scheduled replacement slated for FY26. In talking with Sanford, they have a standing engineering agreement with Wright Pierce for their road projects, so they contacted Wright Pierce as to the cost to begin the preliminary assessment and engineering of the project. This estimate came in at \$33,700.00 which would be split 50-50 between the town municipalities, which would be \$16,850.00 per Town. Unfortunately, there really are not funds in the road budget this year due to overruns in the paving projects this past summer. Technically we have approximately \$18,000.00 in contingency but I think the Lower Main Street project will eat into most of that due to the price of pavement. Wright Pierce would like to begin this Spring so that we can start preplanning and they can observe all the water conditions of Spring and early summer. Dwayne has budgeted some funds in next year's budgets for this project and told Sanford that our funds would not be available until July 1, assuming the budget is approved at Town Meeting, specifically the \$1 million bond issue. Sanford stated they are willing to cover the costs and then bill us after July if that is acceptable to the Board. Dwayne included the Wright Pierce Quote, the Bridge report from the MDOT and current budget breakdown for the Board's review and discussion.

Selectman Johnson, Sr. motioned that they agree to the bridge repair on Sand Pond Road and pay Sanford back in July from the FY24 budget. Selectman Cowan seconded the motion.  
VOTE: 4-0

#### **C. PARKS AND REC: APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP WAYNE LEFRANCE**

Dwayne indicated that Wayne LeFrance has lived in North Berwick for quite a while and lives in Deerfield Estates. He indicated Wayne has been the Boy Scout Trooper Leader for a number of years and been involved in the Mill Field Festival and Tree Lighting ceremony. He has filled out an application to be involved in the North Berwick Parks and Rec Department. Dwayne indicated that there is an opening available on Parks and Rec.

Selectman Cowan motioned to approve the Application of Wayne LeFrance for the North Berwick Parks and Recreation Department. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

**6. OTHER BUSINESS – EXECUTIVE SESSION - LEGAL**

Selectman Cowan motioned to enter into Executive Session at 7:19 p.m. and close the Executive Session at 8:00 p.m. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

**7. REVIEW AND APPROVE WARRANTS AND CORRESPONDENCE:**

Warrant:	January 31, 2023	- \$ 145,937.98
Warrant:	February 7, 2023	- \$ 14,285.03

Selectman Johnson, Jr. motioned to approve the warrant for January 31, 2023, in the amount of \$145,937.98 and the warrant for February 7, 2023 in the amount of \$14,285.03. Selectman Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

**8. ADJOURNMENT:**

Selectman Cowan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

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.