

NORTH BERWICK BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES

APRIL 4, 2023

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

Also Present: Dwayne Morin

Chairman Galemmo opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

1. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
2. **REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MARCH 21, 2023**

Selectman Cowan motioned to approve the Minutes of March 21, 2023, as amended. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

3. **PUBLIC INPUT** N/A
4. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

A. BERWICK GUN RANGE: Discussion of Gun Range Activity

Dwayne indicated that the Berwick Gun Range has agreed to install a camera and a card system to track people using the range. They also had a safety review of the range performed by the Maine Game Warden and the range received a 9 out of 10 rating. He stated the Warden did make three recommendations; however, he was not aware of the status of the recommendations or whether the range owners will be implementing them. One recommendation was that all berms be at least 20 feet tall and side berms be at least 8 feet tall. Another recommendation was the removal of some trees in the firing range to prevent any ricochet from bullets. The last recommendation was putting rows of smaller trees per the noise abatement. The Berwick Town Manager has also found a sound barrier product that he is going to suggest to the range to assist with noise. It is called AcoustiFence, and it has been used successfully at a range in New York. Dwayne felt that this was all good news. Selectman Cowan stated that at a minimum, she would like to see one day per week where they were not firing out of that range.

B. PETITION: Petition Regarding Solar Project

Dwayne indicated that the Town has yet to receive the revised petition for a moratorium as was discussed at the last Board meeting. He was told that it might be submitted to the Planning Board and indicated that the Planning Board will not accept petitions. Selectman Hall

inquired if there was talk about voting down the question regarding solar. Dwayne indicated he did not know. Selectman Johnson, Sr. stated that if it is voted down, everything will be as it is now but less restrictive.

C. BUDGET: School Subsidy, State Revenue Sharing Updates

Dwayne indicated that some good news on the school front is that the school board has approved the school budget. It is a decrease in the overall budget of .4% so their budget went down by \$200,000 +/- . He stated that the State recalculated the school subsidy due to an error and SAD 60 will receive an additional \$978,740 +/- which will assist in the loss of revenues. He stated that he reached out to the Superintendent, and she stated that she is finalizing the budget with the school board and will be sending information to the towns once that is complete. More good news is that the new revenue sharing numbers were released by the State and we are estimated to receive \$430,500.00 in revenue sharing compared to his initial estimate of \$380,000. This will assist in setting the new tax rate. Dwayne also stated he has re-negotiated with our bank regarding interest, and he was able to bump the interest rate up on our savings account.

D. LD2003: Proposed Zoning Changes to Bring Town Ordinance Into Compliance.

Dwayne indicated that although there are many bills on LD2003, none have been decided. In order to get on the June referendum ballot, the changes would need to be received by the Town clerk by April 10, 2023, which will not happen as we have not yet advertised public hearings, etc. He stated he has begun to work on the Town's ordinance to bring it into compliance and he included the document along with the guidance rules (which have yet to become finalized), for the Board's review. This would have to go to the Planning Board for their review so we may either have to have a special town meeting or wait until November for the changes to be voted upon.

Dwayne stated there is not a lot we have to do and by going through our Town's ordinance, in order to be compliant, the first change would be on the affordable housing standards. Basically we would repeal what we currently have at 5.216 and create a new section which applies only to our designated growth zones. He feels it is highly unlikely that anyone would take advantage of this as they would have to deed restrict the property for 30 years. It does give significant density bonuses, which has become a state law. The second change would apply to the residential housing piece, and a property with zero dwellings on it as of July 1, you would be allowed up to 4 units and if you have property with one dwelling on it as of July 1, you are allowed two additional units and if you have a parcel with two existing dwellings as of July 1, you cannot have any more. The density requirements, set backs and frontages still all have to be complied with. Dwayne indicated that is not a huge change to what we have now, and it actually

becomes more restrictive than our current ordinance is because we have to meet the chart. He also indicated there will have to be definitions added to our ordinance as well.

E. ASSESSING: State Report of Assessment Review

The Board of Assessment Review for North Berwick's upcoming year will be 75 which will result in us doing a substantial value update this coming year. Dwayne stated we thought it would be between 75 and 78. He stated this was a big topic of discussion at the last meeting he attended in Augusta. It really relates to state aid and state revenue sharing. Southern Maine is seeing our values grow at a more rapid rate than other sections of the state, which means we are losing lots of state revenue because of it.

**Reminders: Next Board of Selectman's Meeting – April 18, 2023 – 6:30 P.M. - Room 212
Town Meeting – April 15, 2023**

5. NEW BUSINESS:

A. ROAD PROJECTS: Libby Scott Paving Quote

Dwayne stated he has received a quote from Libby Scott on the proposed paving projects for the ensuing year which he provided to the Board. Tonnage prices increased about \$2.60. He stated they basically only increased the cost of the asphalt since last year's contract. They held all the labor prices.

Selectman Hall motioned that the 2023 paving quote from Libby Scott be accepted; Selectman Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

B. TOWN MEETING: Discussion

Dwayne wanted to know if the Board had anything they wanted to discuss since the Town Meeting was fast approaching. He stated the Town Meeting was going to be held at the High School this year.

C. PLANNING BOARD: Jack Olea Application for Appointment

Dwayne indicated that there is an open seat for the Planning Board and Jack Olea has applied. This is an associate member position. Jack lives in North Berwick on Dillingham Road and this is his initial application. Dwayne indicated that Jack is very active in the current gravel extraction and that is his motivation for joining the Planning Board. Dwayne did tell Jack that if the Board is to appoint him, that he would have to recuse himself from that project and would not be able to take part in that process at all, which he said he would. He has been to several meetings and would like to give something back to the town. There are seven positions total for the Planning Board: 5 primary members and 2 associate members. Right now, there is only one

associate member position open. Selectman Cowan recommended that we invite him to the next meeting, as they have done with other members in the past. Dwayne stated he would reach out and have him attend the meeting on April 18, 2023.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Permits:

Selectman Hall stated he had someone ask him about the permit prices in one of the zoning changes. Selectman Hall stated the Board of Selectman set the price for the permit for the recreational vehicle and is there any precedent to prices that are fixed or are there prices that are voted on. Dwayne stated that the Board sets the prices every year as laid out on a fee schedule which is provided. The Town does not vote on prices, the Board does. Selectman Hall stated he does not want it to be cost prohibitive at all. Dwayne stated it is really just a tracking tool and all prices are Board driven and anything can change if they decide. Dwayne stated it takes a full year to change any figure and the fees were stripped out of the ordinances purposely so that the Board can access those fees and that was about 15 to 20 years ago. An example was the building permit fee which was once set at \$3.00 per thousand in the zoning ordinance and we were spending so much on code enforcement and generating very little in permit fees.

B. Hearing Assistance:

Dwayne met with a sound engineering company to look at installing a sound system today and he has meetings with two others to look at installation. He stated it would probably be a two-to-four-week turnaround to get quotes together and he is hoping that sometime in May he will have solutions to provide the Board.

7. REVIEW AND APPROVE WARRANTS AND CORRESPONDENCE:

Warrant:	March 28, 2023	- \$ 28,703.39
Warrant:	April 4, 2023	- \$110,151.73

Selectman Hall motioned to approve the warrant for March 28, 2023, in the amount of \$28,703.39 and the warrant for April 4, 2023, in the amount of \$110,151.73. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

10. ADJOURNMENT:

Selectman Cowan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 pm. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

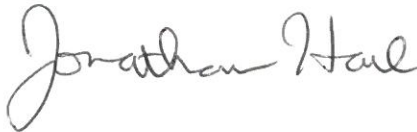
Respectively Submitted,
Jennifer Berard, Stenographer

Original to Town Clerk

Chairman: Charles Galemmo

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Galemmo', written in a cursive style.

Selectman: Jonathan Hall

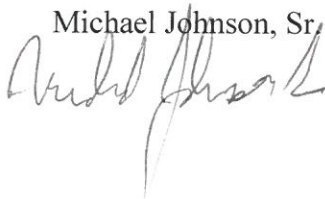
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jonathan Hall', written in a cursive style.

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Jr.

A handwritten signature in green ink, appearing to be 'Michael Johnson, Jr.', written in a cursive style.

Selectman: Wendy Cowan

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Sr.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Michael Johnson, Sr.', written in a cursive style.