

NORTH BERWICK SELECT BOARD MINUTES

MAY 2, 2023

Present: Chair Galemmo, Selectperson Johnson, Jr., Selectperson Cowan, Selectperson Johnson, Sr., Selectperson Hall

Also Present: Dwayne Morin, Todd Smith, Skip Powell, Kathy Paradis, Wendy Guptill

Chair Galemmo opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. ELECT CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR ENSUING YEAR

Selectperson Hall motioned that Charlie Galemmo be appointed as Chair for the upcoming year. Selectperson Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Selectperson Hall motioned that Michael Johnson, Sr. be appointed as Vice Chair for the upcoming year. Selectperson Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

3. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF APRIL 18, 2023

Selectperson Hall motioned to approve the Minutes of April 18, 2023, as amended. Selectperson Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0-1

4. PUBLIC INPUT

Kathy Paradis appeared to talk about the Gun Range. She stated that she wanted to provide the Board an update since she last appeared before the Board in December. She wrote and read a letter as follows:

May 2, 2023

Dear Board of Selectpersons,

Since our last meeting with you, in December of 2022, when we complained about bullets hitting our homes and increased noise levels, we have learned much and are continuing to try to plead for improvements to be made for our neighborhoods surrounding SSFGPA's gun range, including a bill, LD-1000, proposed by Rep. Tiffany Roberts. Sadly, after speaking with her last week, it looks like this bill, a gun range workshop bill, might be killed before it even has a chance to begin. Our frustration continues. By simply Googling the intranet, we have learned of several shocking revelations about SSFGPA, including a busy summer and fall weekend schedule of various shooting competitions. When we last spoke with you, we knew the range

membership had ballooned. We were NOT aware that they were holding these shooting competitions, with links to hotels and links to forms to fill and send in, along with the participants' money! Within the last three years, shooting has significantly increased its operations, with substantial change due to the use by the Cowboy Action Shooting, Steel Challenge, Maine Marshalls, Wild Bunch Championships, and Master Blasters who are all associated with the Sanford-Springvale Fish & Game Protective Association (SSFGPA) Shooting Range. If you google each of these groups, individually, your search will bring you directly to 10 Meter Lane in Berwick. Apparently, these groups do not use the other SSFGPA Range in Sanford on Rubb Lane, near the airport, in Sanford, ME – WHY? We found out that in April of 2019, SSFGPA held their first Master Blaster's Event in Berwick. They "rented or loaned" out the range, and continue to do so, with more of these large events planned. If I am reading it correctly, 2019 April's report showed that as many as 80 people (many non members) from outside of the club responded. As far as we know, no permits were required and no oversight was done by the town of Berwick. It was worse than fireworks on the 4th of July! These are extremely loud, money making events, running all weekend, 8:00 to sunset, with pinging metal targets and constant gunfire of many different caliber guns. This range has enlarged its operations with no regard for its neighbors. Is this expansion even legal? Who will help us find out? Perhaps we can consult with Rebecca Graham, Legislative Advocate State & Federal Regulations, EMAIL: rgraham@memun.org? Some of our Concerned Citizens met her at the hearing in Augusta, during our LD-1000 testimony. Rebecca represents the Maine Municipal Association. Her phone: 207-623-8428. Perhaps she can give the Town of Berwick some guidance on how to oversee the shooting range in their town. Help IS out there. Even the Fish & Game of Maine offers grants; and the NRA offers advice and help, as well. For many years, neighbors surrounding what is now Sanford-Springvale Fish & Game Shooting Range, have lived harmoniously, when the General Electric Employee Association owned it. Once the transfer of ownership changed, almost 20 years ago, life sadly changed for this residential area of around 80 houses. This grandfathered shooting range is operating like a brand new range and needs to be treated as such. They have gone unchecked for too long! A recent inspection was done by Maine Fish & Game. They can only suggest and not enforce changes. There is no follow up by qualified surveyors, EPA inspectors, Noise Experts, etc.. Improvements are only optional. THIS IS WHY WE NEED LD-1000. Rep. Tiffany Roberts has convinced the committee, in Augusta, to table it for now. Here is hoping they will change their minds? The average citizen needs something to fall back on. We are powerless right now. Gun Ranges are holding all the cards, because they only need to listen & ask for advice — then can choose to follow it or not. So much more can be done, to ensure we can have it both ways. A safe place for people to shoot. Improved living conditions for all.

*Respectfully submitted,
Kathryn L. Paradis for Concerned Citizens*

Kathy indicated that herself, Wendy and Steve Guptill went up to testify regarding the Bill that Representative Tiffany Roberts presented about a gun workshop. She believes they are trying to kill that bill already and she is very disappointed. She was happy that Steve and Wendy Guptill came up and gave up their time to support this. Also, Skip Powell has put a lot of effort into this.

Dwayne stated that the LD-1000 Bill was a concept bill that would create a working group to look at gun ranges throughout the State. He indicated that the NRA came out against it and feels that it has been tabled. He stated that what it did do is generate some discussion which is good. It also generated a meeting sometime in the future. This bill has caused enough concern that the NRA's lobbyist and IF&W want to meet with the Springvale Gun Club.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. BERWICK GUN RANGE: Ongoing Discussion

See Public Input above.

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

Dwayne stated that the Housing Bill went before the Legislature two weeks ago and a significant amount of people spoke on behalf of the municipalities. They have not seen final guidance on this.

C. COMMUNICATIONS TOWER: Update on Progress

Dwayne stated the pre-construction meeting was held this past week and the schedule was changed a bit due to weather and availability issues. Dwayne provided the revised schedule as follows:

- May 8, 2023 – Excavation to begin by Guy and Sons Excavating. Anticipated to be a day or 2 for this to be completed
- May 11 and 12, 2023 – Foundation to be installed by Morse Foundations along with bonding ring and communications shed pad. Anticipated to take 2 days. May go into the following week (May 15)
- Week of May 29, 2023 – Erection of the tower. (This is tentative at this time and will be finetuned.) Tower will actually be constructed at the Public Works garage down the street and then brought up in sections to be craned onto foundation. It is anticipated that the tower erection at the site will take less than a day to erect. There will be subsequent work to be performed as the equipment is installed and he will inform the Board when that is scheduled.
- May 31, 2023 – Delivery of the Communication Shed by Hill View Mini Barns
- Late May beginning of June – Electrical, generator. (TBD at this time as some of the materials i.e. generator, for this part of project have yet to arrive.) The heat pumps did arrive.

D. BAUNEG BEG MOUNTAIN: Update on Progress

Dwayne indicated that the state performed their site visit last Monday. The closing will probably be held in the late summer to early fall as the land owner requires surgery and will be out of commission for a few months. He stated he is hoping to have all the pieces in place once he is available for closing. The state has approved all the licenses.

Reminders: Next Board of Selectman's Meeting – May 16, 2023– 6:30 P.M. - Room 212

6. NEW BUSINESS:

A. ZBA: Todd Smith Membership Application

Dwayne stated that Todd Smith was present to discuss his application with the Board for the open ZBA spot. Dwayne stated he submitted his application to be appointed to the Planning Board and/or the ZBA but since the Planning Board opening was filled, he is applying for the ZBA open position.

Todd Smith stated he wanted to be involved in the community he lives in and he feels it is important. He stated he did have some background in city government.

Selectperson Cowan motioned to appoint Todd Smith to the Zoning Board of Appeals until December 31, 2024. Selectperson Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

B. BOARD: Discuss Change to Selectboard

Dwayne indicated that at the last meeting, Jonathan Hall requested that an agenda item be added to discuss changing the name of the board from North Berwick Board of Selectmen to North Berwick Selectboard. Jonathan Hall also indicated he wanted to change the name of Selectman to Selectperson.

Selectperson Hall motioned that name of the North Berwick Board of Selectman be changed to North Berwick Selectboard and the name Selectman be changed to Selectperson. Selectperson Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

C. MEETING ROOM: Discuss Assistive Listening System Proposal

Dwayne stated that the Board asked to have a proposal for the installation of an Assistive Listening System be installed in the meeting room to comply with the ADA regulations. Dwayne stated he has provided a proposal from PRO AV Systems. As part of the design it was

discovered that it would not appear that the Town is required to have this system as 219.2 of the regulations required them when “an audible communication is integral to the use of the space.” He indicated that since we do not have a sound system installed currently, it can be concluded that audio communication is not integral to the space. However, Dwayne thinks that the installation of the system would be an asset to the community and those who attend meetings at the Town Hall. Dwayne stated that the cost to install the system is around \$11,021.00.

Dwayne stated he has another company coming in on Monday and they have also recommended a portable system. He stated once he gets the other company in, he will provide their feedback to the Board.

D. WILLIAM HILL FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION: Donation of Equipment to Fire Department

Dwayne stated he has received a donation letter from the Association on the equipment donated to the Fire Department totaling \$8,042.00.

Selectperson Johnson, Sr. motioned that the Board accept the gifts from the William Hill Firefighters Association totaling \$8,042.00 on behalf of the Town. Selectperson Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

E. COMMITTEES: Determine Membership of Selectmen Committees for Ensuing Year

Selectperson Hall motioned that the Committees remain the same for the ensuing year as the previous year. Selectperson Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

F. RESCUE: Authorize Town Manager to Order New Ambulance

Dwayne stated that at the Town Meeting, it was voted that the Town secure a contract to purchase a new ambulance knowing that it will take two years to receive the ambulance.

Selectperson Hall motioned that Dwayne Morin, Town Manager enter into a contract for the purchase of a new ambulance. Selectperson Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

G. HEAT PUMPS: Community Center

Dwayne stated that they received the heat pumps for the Community Center. He also indicated that the summer camp was full as well as fully staffed. The heat pumps will provide air conditioning in the Community Center for summer camp. The heat pumps will be installed tomorrow.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Selectperson Cowan voiced concern about the home at the end of Madison Street. Dwayne stated they currently have three properties the Town is dealing with regarding junk yards. He stated he will have Matt go over to take a look.

Dwayne also indicated that Oscar Houle has signed the documents required and has moved nine vehicles off the property without the Town's assistance. He stated that three more vehicles should be removed by the end of the week.

8. REVIEW AND APPROVE WARRANTS AND CORRESPONDENCE:

Warrant:	April 25, 2023	- \$ 21,267.79
Warrant:	May 2, 2023	- \$171,293.05

Selectperson Hall motioned to approve the warrant for April 25, 2023, in the amount of \$21,267.79 and the warrant for May 2, 2023, in the amount of \$171,293.05. Selectperson Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

9. ADJOURNMENT:

Selectperson Cowan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:52 pm. Selectperson Johnson, Jr. 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.

