

NORTH BERWICK SELECT BOARD MINUTES

AUGUST 1, 2023

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

Also Present: Dwayne Morin, Steve Peasley

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF JULY 18, 2023

Selectperson Cowan motioned to approve the Minutes of July 18, 2023, as written.
Selectperson Johnson Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0

3. PUBLIC INPUT N/A

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. COMMUNICATIONS TOWER: Update on Progress

Dwayne indicated that the everything is progressing nicely regarding the communications tower. The generator and propane tank have been installed. He was just informed that it will be August 21st before electricians can hook up generator and next Monday the tower will go up unless it is raining. He stated it should only take about 4 hours to put up and then they can move forward with re-licensing.

B. 2023 BONDING: Review Application for Bonding

Dwayne stated that the Application has been submitted to the Maine Bond Bank. It has been accepted and it will now go to Bond Council. It will go out to bid the beginning of October and they will be told what the rates are at the end of October and they will close on November 1st or 3rd.

D. CEMETERY TRUSTEES: Replacement for Dale Clock Position

Selectperson Johnson, Sr. stated that he did talk to Melissa and she is an Assistant Superintendent.

Selectperson Johnson, Sr. motioned that Bob Glidden be appointed to the Cemetery Trustees. Selectperson Hall seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

E. ROADS: Update on Road Projects

Dwayne stated that Linscott Hill and Little River Road have been paved and the good news is that they both come in under budget of the pavement estimate. He indicated that the price per ton is actually lower and they have been getting a credit and they are saving about \$2.00 per ton which is good news. He is hoping that Morrells Mill will be paved this week and the sidewalk will be paved on Thursday. He indicated that they ground Lower Main Street on Monday. The Water District will then complete their water main project and the Town will have the street paved once that is completed. He stated that he has been in contact with Hussey so that they are aware of the project. We are still waiting on a date for Governor Goodwin Road to be milled and then paved. The sidewalk on Varney Street is still on hold waiting for a hand work crew. Libby Scott has indicated that it could be as early as next week to have that completed.

Dwayne also indicated that it also looks like the Water District may complete Brewer Road this summer/fall which would allow us to pave that road once the water project is completed instead of waiting for Spring.

F. BAUNEG BEG: Update on Closing on Bauneg Beg Property

Dwayne indicated that the closing is scheduled for September 6, 2023 at 3:00 pm at the Town Hall. He will send an invite out to the Board with the details if anyone would like to attend.

G. ELROY DAY CANOE LAUNCH: Continued Discussion on Launch Concerns

Dwayne indicated that following up from the last meeting, there was a long discussion about the Canoe Launch and there were a couple questions asked of him regarding what the police could or could not do. Dwayne invited Chief Peasley here tonight to address the Board regarding this subject.

Dwayne also talked about cameras being installed at the Canoe Launch and indicated that the Brekaz's did not give the Town permission to utilize their wi-fi. Dwayne stated that really would not have made a difference anyway due to the fact that the wi-fi connection could not be found from the docks as it was too far away. Dwayne also stated that Pam Brezak has thanked the Board for their consideration in this matter. Dwayne also indicated that both boats mentioned at the last meeting, have now been removed.

Chief Peasley and Dwayne both indicated that over the past two weeks, there really have not been any issues at the launch. There has been a continued police presence which has helped deter any problems.

There was a question from Selectperson Hall relating to video evidence being enough to ticket someone for vaping and the Chief indicated that video evidence is used often but the problem is that the law changed regarding tobacco and vaping. He stated it is illegal to possess

vapes or tobacco under the age of 21, however there is no real penalty for it other than seizing it. The Chief stated in the past, the first offense was a monetary fine and progressively would go up if caught again. The Chief stated that a lot of the vapes are marijuana vapes and there can be a charge for that but as far as video goes, it would be very hard to differentiate what is actually in the vape pen.

The Chief indicated there has been one complaint over the past two weeks and there was a girl swimming at the canoe launch on a hot day and she was warned for trespassing. The Chief stated he visits the area on a semi-regular basis and he has found no trash. Dwayne also indicated that he visited the area the day after the last meeting and walked the entire property and found one lotion bottle, one gum wrapper and one potato chip bag. That was all that was found on the entire 3 acres of land. He stated that the garbage can is being utilized and the Town is picking it up on a regular basis.

Dwayne indicated that he and the Chief have spoken in length about this issues being raised and there was some discussion about installing game cameras across the river. Dwayne stated that the police department are going to the property a couple times per day. The Chief stated that he has not seen any criminal mischief or graffiti which is a positive.

Reminders: Next Select Board's Meeting – August 15, 2023– 6:30 P.M. - Room 212

5. NEW BUSINESS:

A. BAUNEG BEG: Sign Deed Restricting Town Owned Property Pursuant to Grant

Dwayne indicated that as part of the Land and Water Conservation Grant and the Town utilizing the Town land as grant match, the State and Federal government are requiring the property to be deed restricted as to use pursuant the grant program. Dwayne has created a deed from the Town to the Town with the requirements and the Forest Service has accepted the language in the deed. The Board will need to sign the deed to be recorded after the September 6, 2023 closing on the property being purchased from the Thompsons. The Thompson deed will also have the same language pursuant to the grant requirements.

Selectperson Hall motioned that the Board sign the Bauneg Beg Deed restricting the town owned property pursuant to the Grant. Selectperson Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

B. COMMITMENT: Review Commitment and Potential Tax Rates

Dwayne indicted that he has provided a summary for setting the commitment for next year. The good news is that they gained about \$120 million dollars for taxable property. There was \$15 million in brand new buildable property and after the valuation increases, we picked up another \$100 million dollars in value. Verna took all the sales data and she broke it up into 8 neighborhoods and used those neighborhoods to create value. He stated that the lake properties

will see a significant increase in taxes. He indicated that across the entire town, it is about an average of \$390 increase in taxes and for just residential property is \$360. The minimum tax rate they could set is 10.40 and the maximum tax rate they could set is 10.92. Dwayne stated that they have tried to be at 3% and that would be a 10.75 rate. This will not be set tonight but he is recommending 10.75. They are at 11.15 now and our tax rate will drop by .40. The taxes will go up because the budgets went down and there is no way around it. Dwayne stated the town did lose \$16 million from Pratt & Whitney. Dwayne stated that Verna is very particular in her numbers and everything is based on sale values. Verna's goal is, starting next year, there will be a full assessment of all residential properties. Dwayne indicated her numbers are very solid.

C. POLICE: Appointment of Crossing Guard

Dwayne indicated that the Chief has recommended Jean Bond to fill the open Crossing Guard position. Jean resides in Berwick and has ties to North Berwick.

Selectperson Cowan motioned that Jean Bond be appointed for the vacant Crossing Guard position. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

6. OTHER BUSINESS

N/A

7. REVIEW AND APPROVE WARRANTS AND CORRESPONDENCE:

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| Warrant: | July 25, 2023 | - \$ 12,082.21 |
| Warrant: | August 1, 2023 | - \$187,159.49 |

Selectperson Hall motioned to approve the warrant for July 25, 2023 in the amount of \$12,082.21 and the warrant for August 1, 2023, in the amount of \$187,159.49. Selectperson Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

8. ADJOURNMENT:

Selectperson Cowan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 pm. Selectperson Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Respectively Submitted,
Jennifer Berard, Stenographer

Original to Town Clerk

Chairperson: Charles Galemmo

Selectperson: Jonathan Hall

Selectperson: Michael Johnson, Jr.

Selectperson: Wendy Cowan

Selectperson: Michael Johnson, Sr.