

Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

Bethlehem Town Building Meeting Room

August 5, 2013

Present: Chairman Blanchard, Selectman Culver (arrived at 6:30), Selectman Laleme, Selectman Fiorentino, Selectman Glavac.

Chairman Blanchard opened the meeting at 6:01 pm at the Colonial Theatre. Steve Dignazio and Mary Lou Krambeer gave the Board a tour of the Colonial Theatre.

After the tour the Board arrived at the Town Hall and continued the meeting. Rob Tozier and Ken Rodgers from KRT Appraisal came before the Board to go over the Revaluation. They explained how they use sales in the valuation process. Rob explained that if they are at 100% than half the sales will be over. He said being at 97 or 98% gives a little buffer. Selectman Laleme asked how 98% relates to equalization ratio. Sam Greene from the Dept. of Revenue said it is a different mean and that it could be a different ratio by a couple of points. Sam and Rob both explained that DRA uses prorated mean. The Board said they were ok with the 97%. There was some discussion about the assessing computer and the need for a new one. Profile Technologies will be asked to give us a quote on a new computer. Rob explained that there was not any backup being done on the computer until recently. Rob said they will send out the letters within a few days explaining to homeowners their new value. He said they will have hearings and will also do phone hearings for people who live out of town. Sam said he will attend a couple of days of the hearings and interview some homeowners.

Cheryl Jensen asked Rob if all individuals are contacted and if everyone has a meeting with them. Rob explained that every homeowner will receive a letter and in the letter is a phone number to call if you wish to meet with them.

Sara Guild came before the Board with Phyllis Bellavance from the Conservation Commission to talk with the Board about the land on Mt. Cleveland Road that the town is selling. Sara asked the Board to take the Mt. Cleveland Road property out of the auction. She said the benefits are higher to keep the property. She said there are hiking trails and there are educational purposes to keep it. Phyllis said there is some old growth of hardwood, Maple, and Beech hardwood. She said there is high value in the trees. Phyllis also said there is a Moose nursery on the property. Sara said Rebecca Brown will help fundraise for the land.

There was discussion about the right of way to this property if there is one. There is a question of whether it is landlocked or not. Phyllis said she will be talking with White Mtn. School to see how they access their lot. Chairman Blanchard asked if they would allow timber harvesting and hunting. Phyllis said it would be public land. Selectman Culver said the Town does not know if there is a right of way and we are not saying either way. Sara mentioned a right of way with a ban for 50 years that has 10

more years to go. Selectman Laleme said if the land is put into a conservation easement it would have to be monitored yearly so that would be committing the Town to it yearly. Selectman Laleme also said old growth trees should not be cut.

Selectman Fiorentino asked Cheryl Jensen if this is something the Conservation Commission wants to take on. Cheryl said they haven't met but she also said if the land is sold at auction it will probably be logged. She suggested putting it on as a Warrant Article to become a Town Forest. Cheryl also said Rebecca Brown has raised a lot of money fundraising so is a possibility for this as well. She said she doesn't think anything will be lost by holding off because there will be other auctions in the future.

It was decided that the Board would do some more research and meet with Sara and Phyllis again in two weeks.

Chairman Blanchard opened the bids for Strawberry Hill paving. There was one bid from Central paving for \$20,802.50. Brett said there should be 2 bids and he thinks he might have the other one at the shop. He will get it to April and the Board will award the bid at the Aug. 12th meeting.

The Board reviewed the minutes from 07/29/13. Selectman Laleme said 3rd par. From bottom on page 2 to strike the sentence about reference to David and what he said. She said he wasn't mentioned. Chairman Blanchard moved to approve the minutes as amended. Selectman Fiorentino seconded. Carried 5-0.

Chairman Blanchard move to do research and do what we can and when we need legal will call them to do it. (in reference to Mt. Cleveland Land right of way). Selectman Laleme seconded. Carried 5-0.

Selectman Laleme said the North Country Council will be holding their quarterly meeting on the 21st and she would like to go. Selectman Glavac said he may also attend.

At 7:45 Chairman Blanchard moved to go into non-public session per 91a for matters of personnel. Selectman Fiorentino seconded. Chairman Blanchard did roll call with all members agreeing to go into non-public session.

The Board discussed personnel issues.

At 8:40 Chairman Blanchard moved to come out of non-public session. Selectman Fiorentino seconded. Carried 5-0.

At 8:40 Chairman Blanchard moved to adjourn. Selectman Glavac seconded. Carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

April Hibberd

Administrative Assistant