

Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

Bethlehem Town Building Meeting Room

August 27, 2012

Present: Chairman Jerry Blanchard, Selectman Mike Culver, Selectman Sandy Laleme, Selectman Mark Fiorentino, Selectman Martin Glavac.

At 6:30 Chairman Blanchard opened the meeting.

Chairman Blanchard called Carmen Menard and Mary Cote from Passumpsic Bank to come before the Board. Carmen and Mary gave the Board some literature about Passumpsic bank and explained the services they provide. Mary would like to do apples to apples comparison with our current bank. Selectman Laleme said the Treasurer would be the one to look at this information. Selectman Laleme said the Board will give all the information to the Treasurer and have him call them if he has any questions. Carmen asked the Board to encourage the Treasurer to have the apples to apples comparison done.

The Board discussed the minutes of July 30th when the Board voted to extend the Colonial Theater's BRLF loan by 15 years. The Board discussed how the loan is actually extended 16 years not 15. Chairman Blanchard moved to amend that the loan be extended for 16 years. Selectman Laleme seconded. Carried 5-0.

The Board reviewed the minutes from June 14, 2012. Chairman Blanchard moved to accept the minutes as amended (change Hebert to Trombley). Selectman Laleme seconded. Carried 4-0 (Selectman Glavac abstained).

The Board reviewed the minutes from 08/20/12. Chairman Blanchard moved to accept the minutes from 08/20/12. Selectman Culver seconded. Carried 5-0.

Peter Roy told the Board that he is disappointed with what the Board did on August 13th. He said he didn't appreciate the letter and said it should have been done face to face. Peter also asked why the AED is still not available for this building. He said we have had it for 3-4 weeks; the town has paid for it and he said it should be up and available to the townspeople.

Dick Robie asked about the new police cruiser and why we are going from 3 to 4. Chairman Blanchard said we will continue to have 3 cruisers. Dick Robie asked if a cruiser will continue going to Lyman every day. Chairman Blanchard said yes. Dick Robie asked if it will be the new

cruiser going to Lyman every day. Selectman Fiorentino said the chief would have to be asked that. Dick Robie said he would like to know which vehicle will be going to Lyman. Dick Robie was told by the Board that the chief would be either asked to come to the next meeting or the Board would ask the chief. Dick Robie said the oldest cruiser should be the one going to Lyman.

Rita Farrell brought in the information about Katherine Ferrier who organized the art walk. Chairman Blanchard will write a letter to Katherine acknowledging her efforts.

Julian Czarny asked about a pool update. Selectman Laleme referred the question to Dick Robie. Dick Robie said a lot of work has been done but there have also been some setbacks. Dick said it will not open this season. He said the skimmers will be installed in the next 2 weeks and the epoxy that they were told they could get for next to nothing was actually 119,000.00 so that will not happen. They have spent very little, about \$11,000.00 so far and Dick said they should be looking at a pool next year. Dick told the Board that he received a check last week for \$100.00. Chairman Blanchard said those who have donated time/effort/money are to be applauded.

Rita Farrell asked Dick Robie if there would be enough money for the project from the 60,000 warrant article. Dick Robie said the 10,000.00 that was donated will stay there and what is not spent out of the 60,000 this year will go away. Dick said he feels he can go to the voters to ask for more if need be.

Julian Czarny asked about assessments and procedures over the past few months. He said he tried to get copies of information and got one copy of a letter from Dept. of Revenue. He told the Board not to hide behind 91A and to keep taxpayers informed. Julian asked the Board to let the taxpayers know if mistakes were made and to keep people informed. Chairman Blanchard said it is not done behind closed doors and he mentioned the newspaper article about the assessing issue. Chairman Blanchard said it has been stated that the town is non compliant with our assessing and he said the Board doesn't have the answers yet but the people will know when the Board knows. Selectman Laleme said the meetings have been in public and the minutes and reports from the Dept. of revenue are available.

Alan Jackson asked about putting out to bid property that the town owns like the Dietrich property. Selectman Laleme said that property might be available for deeding.

Peter Roy asked if anyone is monitoring the status of 2323 Main Street and he asked if the bank owns it. Selectman Laleme said it is going up for absolute auction on September 20th. Peter Roy asked if the owner can be forced to clean it up. The Board told him no. Alan Jackson asked about the property on Pleasant Street that burned. Selectman Culver said there is a question of who owns it but might be available for deeding soon.

Dick Robie said the bill due to the Village District for 2323 Main Street was paid before the fire. He said the town doesn't want to end up with that building like the Maplehurst.

Bob O'Connor from Channel 2 asked Selectman Fiorentino if the Selectmen's meetings need to be put on the internet. Mr. O'Connor told Selectman Fiorentino it is time consuming and costly to put them on the internet. Julian Czarny said he never asked that they be on the internet. Selectman Glavac said he likes to have it on the internet because he doesn't have cable. The Board will review the old Time Warner contracts. Rita Farrell said having them on the internet gives people more access to them.

Rita Farrell asked the Board about when people use the town hall if it is closed can the elevator be accessed. Chairman Blanchard said people are asked if they need elevator access or not and if they say they do not need it then the elevator is locked. Selectman Culver will ask the Police Dept. if they have a key to the elevator so they could lock it in that situation.

Julian Czarny asked Selectman Fiorentino to see if he could find out from Channel 2 how many times the meetings are viewed via internet.

At 7:15 chairman Blanchard moved to go into non-public session per 91A. Selectman Laleme seconded. Carried 5-0.

Chairman Blanchard did roll call with all members agreeing to go into non-public session.

Mr. Fred Smith and Gary Fournier from Brett Purvis & Associates came before the Board. Fred told the board he just got word at 4:00pm about the letter from the town's attorney. Fred also told the Board that he wasn't aware of the previous letter that was sent from The Board to Brett Purvis & Associates. He said he also spoke with Allison and she said she didn't remember receiving the letter but Fred did say they were in the process of moving the office so perhaps the letter got misplaced. Fred said his intentions were still to have the values done by Sept. 1st but may be a little late and now he doesn't know where he stands. He asked the Board if he should finish it. Fred said he is more than happy to finish it and that he was under the impression that everything was all set. Selectman Culver said the last time DRA was here they were still looking for lists from him. Fred said he thought everyone had all the information that they needed. He is close to the end of the process. Chairman Blanchard said the correction plan from Brett Purvis & Associates did not address non-compliance issues. Chairman Blanchard also said there was a problem with a lack of documentation (cards) and that Fred's response was that he inherited this or that it was a problem with vision and now we are out of compliance; Purvis did not do what contract says. Chairman Blanchard said the Board just wants to get it right.

Selectman Fiorentino moved that we need to move beyond Purvis and terminate our contract with them. Chairman Blanchard seconded.

Selectman Laleme said Fred Smith is not the business; he is an employee of the business. Selectman Laleme said the Board needs to address this with the company. Chairman Blanchard withdrew his second, Selectman Fiorentino withdrew his motion.

Selectman Laleme said the night that Allison Purvis came before the Board she was told a letter would be coming requesting a plan of action. Fred Smith said they did submit a plan of action but DRA said it wasn't acceptable. Fred said the values were in compliance but DRA didn't like the documentation. Selectman Fiorentino said the values anew are one of the issues. Fred said he used to get copies of the DRA's action reports but he hasn't seen anything or heard from DRA since June 27th. Fred also said he felt he had the documentation even when DRA said he didn't. Selectman Laleme said she feels we have enough information from Fred and the Board now needs to discuss it.

The Board discussed the contract with Brett Purvis & Associates. Selectman Fiorentino moved that the contract with Brett Purvis & Associates as our assessors be terminated for breach of contract. Selectman Laleme seconded. Carried 3-2 (Jerry, Sandy, Mark – Mike, Martin).

The Board discussed a tax waiver. Chairman Blanchard moved to sign the letter approving the waiver. Selectman Laleme seconded. Carried 5-0.

Chairman Blanchard signed a new hire form for a new recreation employee.

At 8:30 Selectman Culver moved to come out of non-public session. Selectman Fiorentino seconded. Carried 5-0.

At 8:30 Selectman Culver moved to adjourn. Selectman Fiorentino seconded. Carried 5-0.

April Hibberd

Administrative Assistant

