

Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

Bethlehem Selectmen Office

October 20, 2014

Present: Selectman Laleme, Selectman Blanchard, Selectman Culver, Selectman Glavac (arrived late).

At 6:30 pm Chairperson Laleme opened the meeting.

Erin Hennessey who is running for State Representative for Littleton and Bethlehem came before the Board to introduce herself. She said she lives in Littleton and has a background in economics and accounting and is supporting a balanced budget, economic growth, skilled jobs, and reduced higher education costs for NH residents.

Jeff Winn came before the Board to discuss with the Board a title situation he has on a lot that he has owned for a long time. He said he purchased the lot in a tax sale in 1997 and there is a marketability issue with it because he can't sell it with a warranty deed and title insurance. He said there was an issue with the tax collector's deed and said the Town has assessed the lot as marketable. His attorney, Brien Ward, said it makes sense to clear the title and asked the Board for their help with that. Chairperson Laleme said they have communication from the Town's attorney to the Tax Collector that indicates there are still some facts that are not known on this. Chairperson Laleme suggested he get a quiet title and said the Board would do what they can to help but recommended he look into the quiet title. Chairperson Laleme also said the Board would not be able to sign off on it without having all the facts. Mr. Winn asked about an abatement and Chairperson Laleme told him he could certainly file for an abatement but told him to be sure to file by the deadline. Mr. Winn told the Board that he is still waiting on deeds for the 2 lots he purchased recently and said he would like to review them first before they are recorded.

The Board reviewed budgets:

Visitor Center: The Board discussed level funding this budget and using the money in the escrow. Chairperson Laleme asked the Board to consider paying for the heat and lights for the entire building out of Town funds because it is a Town building. Chairperson Laleme said the Heritage can no longer pay for the heat and electricity. Chairperson Laleme moved to pay all heat and electricity for the Visitor Center building out of Town funds. Selectman Blanchard seconded. Carried 4-0.

TAN: Frank Claffey is proposing \$10,000.00 for TAN interest for next year's budget. He explained the interest rate has been good and the tax bills have gone out sooner so it has kept the expense down.

Debt Service: Frank Claffey reviewed the Debt. Service budget with the Board.

Tax Collector: Mary Jackson reviewed her budget with the Board. She said most lines have remained the same or had little changes. She did say she increased her information systems line because of a BMSI software update. She also added a mileage line and a line for treasurer services.

Town Clerk: Mary Jackson reviewed her budget with the Board. Mrs. Jackson said most items have remained the same or had little changes except she is adding in for mileage in case the Town changes banks.

Mrs. Jackson discussed eb2gov with the Board. She explained there is no cost to the Town and we can sign up now to accept tax payments. Mrs. Jackson said people can do online car registrations and dog licensing. There was discussion about Interware and the privacy concerns. Mrs. Jackson said the Town would become a one check town and would need to transfer money to the state by ACH for their portion. She said all the costs are paid by the consumer. There was discussion about where Credit Card information would be stored and what level of auditing would that open us up to. There was also discussion about the cost associated with becoming PCI compliant. Selectman Culver will look into the CPI compliance.

The Board discussed needing two selectmen to be at the Town Building for Election Day.

Chairperson Laleme said on November 5th the Planning Board will be hearing the application for the landfill and on the conceptual there was a question of the landfill being in compliance with the agreement. Chairperson Laleme said they are doing the garbage pickup, the easement is in place, they are paying the quarterly host fee, and they are paying the yearly taxes. She also said DES has confirmed they are in compliance with everything they require and the height needs to be no higher than 1483 which a capacity report will give that height number. She said we don't have a copy of the report but the one for 2013 was done by a 3rd party engineer and they were in compliance with that. Chairperson Laleme said with everything she has checked into in they are in compliance. Selectman Culver said when DES granted their report and approval it was mentioned in those that they are under required elevation.

The Board discussed a request by Apple Hill Campground to put their sign up on the corner of Maple Street and Main Street where it was before it blew over. The Board said if it is on the state right of way they can provide a permit from the State that allows the sign to be put up.

Chairperson Laleme said there is also a noise ordinance in District 1 Main Street that says no business shall operate so that it can be heard, more than 20 feet from its property line between the hours of 10:00 PM and 9:00 AM. She said this affects all of Main Street and said these noise ordinances need to be addressed with warrant articles.

The Board reviewed an abatement for Society for the Protection of NH Forests because of the PILOT agreement. Chairperson Laleme moved to approve the abatement for \$9,172.23. Selectman Blanchard seconded. Carried 4-0.

The Board discussed a warrant article from 2010 about establishing an expendable trust fund to be known as the Cemetery Repair fund and appropriating \$100.00 to establish this fund. It was explained

the deliberative minutes show this article as being in favor of it but the ballot included the word "not". The Town did not establish this trust fund but recently found out the DRA considers the warrant article to have passed and recommended paying the \$100.00 to establish this as soon as possible. The Board wants to research this further.

Chairperson Laleme read a letter from the Bridge House asking for an exception to having to submit a petitioned warrant article for an appropriation request. The Board discussed whether or not to require petitioned warrant articles or not this year. The Board will research if the Board still needs to vote to support or not petitioned warrant articles.

Chairperson Laleme read an email from Connie Miville from the NH Food Bank commending Dawn Ferringo for the changes that have been made in the food pantry.

The Board reviewed an email from Davidson Ridge Associates saying the Town is obligated to pay dues because of the Town owned lot. The amount due at this time is \$1,060.00. Chairperson Laleme moved to pay dues for what we owe for the time that the Town has owned that lot. Selectman Glavac seconded. Carried 4-0.

The Board reviewed the minutes from 10/06/14. Selectman Blanchard moved to approve the minutes as written. Chairperson Laleme seconded. Carried 4-0.

The Board reviewed the minutes from 10/09/14. Selectman Blanchard moved to approve the minutes as written. Selectman Glavac seconded. Carried 3-0 (Chairperson Laleme abstained).

The Board reviewed the agreement for North Country Council and discussed the annual dues of \$2,657.48. Chairperson Laleme moved to pay the annual dues. Selectman Glavac seconded. Carried 4-0.

The Board discussed the minimum bid amount for the Cruft lot which they set at \$43,100.00 and discussed what happens if bidders don't want to pay that much. Chairperson Laleme explained that per a warrant article they have to set it at that amount. Selectman Blanchard said it is an attractive lot and feels it will sell. Dick Robie said if the lot sells for \$200,000.00 he thinks the lien holders are entitled to some of that money. He also said the Village District never received a letter notifying them of the sale. Selectman Culver said if it didn't get noticed properly then they need to remove the lot from the sale. There was discussion about how much is owed to the Town from this lot and it was explained that the Town can only keep what is owed to them and any other lien holders have to go to former owner for what is due them. Selectman Culver moved to waive attorney/client privilege advice from LGC and send it to Dick Robie. Selectman Glavac seconded. Mary Jackson said everyone has different recourses to get what it due and explained the Town's recourse was to deed the property. She asked Mr. Robie what his recourse was. Mr. Robie said there was a lien on the property.

At 8:30 Chairperson Laleme moved to go into non-public session per 91 A for personnel. Selectman Culver seconded. Chairperson Laleme did roll call with all members agreeing to go into non-public session.

The Board discussed personnel.

At 9:00 Selectman Blanchard moved to come out of non-public session. Chairperson Laleme seconded. Carried 4-0.

At 9:00 Chairperson Laleme moved to adjourn. Selectman Blanchard seconded. Carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

April Hibberd

Administrative Assistant