

Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

Bethlehem Town Building Meeting Room

November 5, 2012

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

At 6:30 Chairman Blanchard opened the meeting.

Chairman Blanchard said he wanted to make a statement to address the rumors going around about the tax deeding. He said the RSA's state very clearly that once a property is liened you have 2 years and 1 day to deed the property. He said the Board fully supports our tax collector who is doing the right thing. He also explained that the Board is not on a witch hunt and is not the intention of the board to evict people. Chairman Blanchard said he hopes to work with people to keep them in their homes and now that the deeding has happened the Board has some flexibility to work with people. He said the Board is blessed with a tax collector who brought this to the Board's attention and again said it is not the intention of the Board to victimize anyone. He stated there is 977 + thousand in owed taxes including interest. He said he is not going to talk about how things did not get done in the past but he knows taxpayers expect this Board to do this.

Michele Moren from North Country Council came in to talk to the Board about the Brownsfield Grant. She explained that they applied for the grant last year and didn't get it but would like to apply again this year with Bethlehem as its focus. Ms. Moren spoke of the many abandoned properties and of the properties that were recently deeded. Ms. Moren would like to talk to the Police Chief, Tax Collector and Welfare Director to get some statistical information to include in the application. She said the added welfare burden, uncollected taxes etc. will help show the need for this in Bethlehem. She asked the Board to write a letter supporting this application. Ms. Moren is researching whether or not the town has to have ownership of the property to get the assessment on it. Jack Anderson said after the assessment is done it is another year before you can apply for clean up funds. He also said a property owner can use BRLF for cleanup projects. Selectman Culver moved to have the Board write a letter supporting the application. Chairman Blanchard seconded. Carried 4-0.

The Board reviewed the budgets for Tax, Assessing, Town Clerk, Executive, Legal, Ins. TAN, GGB, Building Inspection, Wood Assessor and Debt service.

I submitted to the Board different insurance options for the Board to review. The Board will meet next Tuesday to decide on which plan and percentages to offer the employees.

The Board reviewed the Mileage Reimbursement policy. Chairman Blanchard moved to accept the policy as written. Selectman Fiorentino seconded. Selectman Culver said the last paragraph is too vague. Selectman Fiorentino withdrew his second. Chairman Blanchard withdrew his motion. The Board discussed how to amend the wording of the last paragraph. The Board decided to table this until next week.

The Board reviewed the minutes from 10/29/12. Chairman Blanchard moved to approve the minutes from 10/29/12. Selectman Glavac seconded. Carried 4-0.

At 7:58 Chairman Blanchard moved to go into non-public per 91A for reasons of personnel. Selectman Culver seconded. Carried 4-0. Chairman Blanchard did roll call with all members agreeing to go into non-public session.

Respectfully submitted,

April Hibberd

Administrative Assistant