

Bethlehem Board of Selectmen  
Meeting Minutes  
Bethlehem Selectmen Office  
December 8, 2014

Present: Chairperson Laleme, Selectman Blanchard, Selectman Culver, Selectman Glavac.

At 6:00 pm Chairperson Laleme opened the meeting.

Rhienna Miscio came before the Board to discuss the cost analysis Selectman Glavac asked her to do. She explained to the Board the amounts she would have to charge to cover all the expenses with revenue. Mrs. Miscio explained that her numbers are estimates because it all depends on enrollment. She said her current prices are comparable to surrounding towns but if she increased the rates they would be significantly higher. Mrs. Miscio also discussed with the Board a proposal to have contracted rates because they have a lot of people that hold spots then do not come. She explained this is creating issues for her for staffing because she staffs for who is signed up. She suggested that families sign up for the days they need and if they don't come (except for excused absences) they still pay for that day. Mrs. Miscio would also like to charge a higher amount for drop in kids. The Board questioned if they could charge for a service that didn't happen. Mrs. Miscio said she would also like to charge a \$10.00 a week late fee for payments that are not paid after 2 weeks. Selectman Blanchard said he likes the idea of a late fee but feels \$10.00 is a little steep and the Board discussed charging \$5.00 instead. The Board also questioned legalities around charging late fees. The Board will look into the legalities on both these. Mrs. Miscio told the Board that she currently charges \$20.00 for sports and she would like to increase that to \$30.00. She said the \$30.00 is comparable to surrounding towns. There was discussion about the summer program and how to get more people to pay up front and they discussed different options to make it beneficial for families to pay up front. Mrs. Miscio said last year 8 families paid up front. Mrs. Miscio said her summer rates are comparable to area towns. Selectman Culver said he thinks there is room to raise the rates for summer a little. Selectman Glavac told Mrs. Miscio to try to fill the program with 25 children. He also said he wants to see the revenue impact on the budget and would like to see the #'s on the pool.

Brett Jackson came before the Board to discuss the cost analysis for plowing the elementary school. Mr. Jackson said the school budgeted \$3500.00 for plowing and he estimated for the Town to do it would be 1 hour of time, \$25.00/hour for one ton truck (per FEMA), average calls per year is 36, 1 yard of salt is \$75.33 ton x 36 = 2,722.88. The total of all those estimates is \$3,611.88 but that doesn't include a truck that he feels would be needed. Selectman Blanchard asked if he would need to hire someone an additional employee and Mr. Jackson told him yes he would.

Mr. Jackson discussed with the Board his interest in replacing the backhoe. He said he wants the salesman to talk with Frank Claffey about the lease and it was pointed out to him that the Insurance Company would also need to review the lease. Mr. Jackson estimated they spend 350-400 hours a year on the backhoe and would cost approx. \$50,000 to recondition the 1998 current one. It costs approx. \$130,000.00 to purchase a new one. Chairperson Laleme said it would be done as a Warrant Article. Chairperson Laleme moved to do a Warrant Article if we can assure the contract is valid and insurance company gives it the ok. Selectman Blanchard seconded. Carried 4-0.

The Board discussed the proposed legal budget and what amount they should budget for. Selectman Glavac said he would like to leave it at \$35,000.00. Selectman Blanchard suggested \$50,000.00. Selectman Culver said we would still be dealing with the Fairpoint lawsuit, deeding issues and the possibility of another issue. Chairperson Laleme said this year was out of the norm for lawsuits.

The Board discussed the letter from Jack Anderson requesting warrant articles for capital reserve amounts and the \$5,000.00 he estimated he would need for station maintenance. Selectman Blanchard said every other department has level funded or reduced but this budget went up and asked if Chief Anderson could not find \$5,000.00 in his budget. He also said he is not in favor of adding it to GGB.

The Board discussed the ambulance budget which is also up. There was discussion about whether or not there has been an increase in calls this year. It was also noted there was an increase in the proposed for the attendants salary line, training, and supplies. Frank Claffey said the training costs are going up and said it cost \$1000.00 per person for EMT training.

The Board discussed the Country Club and Selectman Culver said the restaurant has lost money for the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> year and how it is hampering the club's potential. He said the restaurant should be closed. Chairperson Laleme said if you close it you will lose golfers. She also said a lot of things were changed this year. Chairperson Laleme said the menu will be decreased more and there will be more focus on when it should be opened or closed and said she thinks we should give it a second year to see how it does. Selectman Glavac said the club was profitable this year and we should set a goal of \$45,000.00 to give back to taxpayers which is what we would get in tax revenue if it was private. Selectman Glavac agreed that we should give it another year. Selectman Culver said he hates to see the club suffer because of the restaurant.

The Board discussed the anticipated Warrant Articles which includes 3 for the Fire Dept, 2 for the Police Dept., one for GIS mapping, one for the water exemption on Old Franconia Road, and Selectman Glavac said he would like one to establish a capital reserve for Broadband. The Board discussed this and the fact that there is no plan yet on how to get in Broadband. Selectman Glavac said he would also like to change the % of fees collected in our agreement with Time Warner. He said currently the Town receives 0% and he would like the Town to receive 5%. Selectman Culver said if we collect this fee the customer will end up paying the fee

because Time Warner will pass it on to the customer. Selectman Glavac said North Conway is the closest Town that collects the 5% and Selectman Culver asked what their cable rates are compared to ours.

Frank Claffey asked if they would be doing a Warrant Article to put money into the distressed building capital reserve. The Board was not definitive if they needed to add money to this. The Board discussed whether or not to establish a capital reserve for assessing and will get more information about this. The Board discussed the Omni Ambulance billing contract that was sent. The fees increased to \$750.00 a month but Chief Anderson negotiated the contract down to \$4800.00 a year (up from \$3000.00 currently). Selectman Blanchard commented that they are raising their rates because there are not enough calls. The Board said they wanted to see the dispatch calls for the past 2 years broken out for Fire, Ambulance, and Police. The Board discussed putting the billing out to bid and decided to call around to other billing companies.

The Board discussed a letter from Bruce Johnson, Webster Selectman, asking Towns to do a Warrant Article on funding for education needs and reforming state funding. The Board decided this would confuse the matter and will not be doing a Warrant Article on this.

Chairperson Laleme read a notice of vacancies notice from the Conservation Commission.

The Board discussed the website renewal and how it is a great price. Selectman Glavac said he wants April to be able to also add documents to the website. There was also discussion about having a current recreation employee possibly do some of the work on the website.

The Board reviewed an abatement for the Town of Bethlehem to get the amount due off the books. Chairperson Laleme moved to approve the abatement. Selectman Blanchard seconded. Carried 4-0. Carried 4-0.

The Board reviewed an abatement for WREN due to being tax exempt. Chairperson Laleme moved to approve the abatement. Selectman Glavac seconded. Carried 4-0.

The Board reviewed the minutes from 11/10/14. Selectman Blanchard moved to approve the minutes. Chairperson Laleme seconded. Carried 3-0 (Selectman Glavac abstained).

Selectman Culver said there are some risks with EB2GOV but said we can do it. He did say we would need a security policy. Mary Jackson will be asked to come next week to discuss it.

Alan Jackson said he has Littleton Water and Lights and he pays 1/3 of what Bethlehem's costs and said he doesn't understand why one company can be so much cheaper.

At 8:34 Chairperson Laleme moved to go into non-public session per 91-A for matters of personnel. Selectman Culver seconded. Chairperson Laleme did roll call with all members agreeing to go into non-public session.

Selectman Blanchard moved to approve 2 pay increases for the newest Police Officers. Chairperson Laleme seconded. Carried 4-0.

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

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

Respectfully submitted,  
April Hibberd  
Administrative Assistant