Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

 Meeting Minutes

December 7, 2020

Via Zoom – Chairman Boisseau, Selectman Moore, Selectman Moritz, Selectman Caplain, Selectman Jensen.

Chairman Boisseau opened the meeting at 6:00 and reminded people to leave their microphones on mute.

Chairman Boisseau started with the positive news for the week. Selectman Moore presented about the Memory tree ceremony. She had spoken with Clare Brown and found out that it was the 32nd year of the ceremony. Muriel Brown and Ruth Miller started in the 1980’s and there is now typically 200+ names on the tree. It is a wonderful tradition in town that should continue for many years.

**PUBLIC INPUT:**

**Chairman Boisseau**: reminded public what the “follow up” section of the meeting is for.

**Rita Farrell**: Ms. Farrell asked questions regarding the use of revenue by the town specifically for legal issues. She wanted to raise the issue but can follow up at another time.

**Chairman Boisseau** gave a brief overview of our legal process. The town has sought legal opinion in the past regarding a variety of issues including landfill issues. We have an efficient legal counsel, and he trusts their opinion on when to use legal strategies.

**Selectman Moritz**: Legal matters are discussed in non-public and she is hesitant to talk about specific legal issues in a public meeting. Trust that our elected officials are doing all they can and working with a good group of lawyers.

**Chris McGrath**: 2 items. Mr. McGrath invited the board and town to Christmas decorating contest this week and inquired about the future for the rec department. He inquired if the afterschool program will be running when the school reopens for in-person instruction. Selectman Moritz stated the town fully expects to continue rec programming and they are looking at options to fill the vacant position.

**UPDATE FROM SANSOUCY ASSOCIATES:**

**Chairman Boisseau:** Update from Skip Sansoucy assessing unique properties in town.

**Skip Sansoucy** – first phase finished. The Bretton Woods properties and various public services.

Mr. Sansoucy explained the various methodologies in determining the new values of the properties and utilities. PSNH went up approximately $2mil in 2020. Pinetree Power went down approximately $150k. Consolidated communications went down approximately $41k. They are evaluated on the poles and conduit only per DRA policies. The cell tower on Mt. Agassiz went up approximately $674k. Cell towers are vertical real estate. They are not built by the cell companies but are leased space to them. Bretton Woods property in the town of Bethlehem went up approximately $11mil. Ski area evaluation is based on NH RSA 72:12-c.

Total assessments by Sansoucy Associates are up approximately $13.9mil.

Mr. Sansoucy suggested the town take a look at the evaluation of the Casella properties. Selectman Moritz informed Mr. Sansoucy that any evaluations of Casella property is covered under the 2018 agreement.

**Selectman Moritz:** Asked Mr. Sansoucyhis opinion on overlay amounts.Mr. Sansoucy gave his opinion.

**Selectman Caplain**: $28k expenses for Sansoucy conservatively will bring in $200k in additional revenue to town.

Public:

**Rita Farrell**: Name of company? Sansoucy Associates – Skip Sansoucy – thank you.

**Chris McGrath:** Are people notified prior? Mr. Sansoucy – state rules mandates telling owners of new evaluations. Sansoucy Associates makes contact to tell new evaluations of properties to owners.

**BUDGETS:**

**Police:**

**Chief DeMoranville**: on the call – **Chairman Boisseau-** 2020 - $562,498 proposed 2021 - $557,916 – decrease of $4582 – prosecutor line item reduced $10k – new prosecutor has lower salary – no board questions.

Public: none

**Dispatch:**

**Chief Jack Anderson** – **Chairman Boisseau**: $85k to $60k – Chief Anderson – The county has assessed their means of charging towns and has changed their procedure. – new amount $11,825 quarterly – no board questions. – it would be approximately $200k if town ran dispatch themselves

**Fire:**

**Chairman Boisseau**: $154, 915 to $163,31 - $8000 increase – mostly fire personnel – call numbers are going up – 911 marker project still ongoing – extra maintenance on trucks as they are aging – chief’s vehicle $3000 budgeted – The board and Chief Anderson discussed options of evaluating the expenses on the chief’s vehicle. No other board questions.

**Ambulance**:

**Chairman Boisseau:** $42,274 to $48,657 – Chief Anderson - 2-3 personnel doing 90% of calls – over on budget already. The maintenance budget is over as well. Our vehicle is 4 years old and with age there is an increase in maintenance. Selectman Caplain: how does the income side of the ambulance service work? Chief Anderson: It is listed in the town report as ambulance revenue. –no further board questions

Chief Anderson – emergency management budget item –His recommendation is that it should stay as is. We have recovered a lot for pandemic funding and are still tracking COVID expenses.

**Building Inspection: -**

**Chairman Boisseau** - $17,793 stayed flat. No questions.

**Visitor Center:**

**Selectman Moore** – $10,410 to $11,127. The staff has been working since 2007 with no raise at $9 an hour. She suggested a merit increase to $10/hr. – no questions from board.

**Wood Assessor:**

**Chairman Boisseau**- $2200 to $2200 – no questions.

**FOLLOW UP: from board**

**Selectman Moore**: looking into electric car chargers. She spoke with BW general manager. They are looking to upgrade to superchargers. Tesla maps locations directly to vehicles and does the marketing themselves. She sent info to Tesla via their website to have them approach the town. Selectman Moritz: – supercharging station brings people to town and Tesla markets it.

**OTHER**

**Selectman Caplain**: solar projects – The company comes to select board next week to present information and the energy commission will be presenting to talk about a possible grant. Selectman Moritz: Asked if this was for the highway dept building and where we are in the process. Selectman Caplain: Yes, panels on or near building. Selectman Moritz had questions regarding the ROI on a solar project. Selectman Caplain: The company will be at the select board meeting next week to go over details. Selectman Jensen: attended the Profile briefing. The company went over ROI but there were large range of ballpark figures presented. Chairman Boisseau: company coming to board with ideas, no commitment at this point. Board only applied for grant.

**Tim Fleury** – Anonymous donation mailed to the town office in the amount of $500.

Selectman Moritz – Made motion to accept donations in the amount of $500. Selectman Caplain, seconded – roll call – all - motion passed.

Town bank requested the board mention in the minutes removing April Hibberd from town account and adding Tim Fleury in her place. Additionally, removing Matt Courchaine from account. New cards will be issued for Tim Fleury and Mary Jackson. The board recommends all. No motion needed.

**MINUTES (11/30/2020)**

Selectman Jensen – typo on public info – corrected.

Chairman Boisseau made a motion to accept minutes as amended from 11/30 – Selectman Moritz seconded – roll call – all – motion carries.

**At 7:28 Chairman Boisseau moved to go into non-public session per RSA 91A:3 II (b,l) for matters of personnel and legal. Selectman Moritz seconded – roll call – all – motioned carried.**

Board discussed remaining PTO time.

Selectman Moritz made a motion to pay out 2020 vacation time for town employees as the final year of such payouts. Selectman Caplain seconded - roll call – all - motion passed.

Consultant questions

Selectman Moritz made a motion to hire April Hibberd as a contractor for $25/hr, up to 10 hours a week through March 31st, 2021 – Chairman Boisseau seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.

Personnel discussion.

Legal discussion.

At 7:53 Chairman Boisseau made a motion to adjourn. Selectman Moritz seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Fleury

Administrative Assistant