Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

June 27, 2022

In person – Chairman Caplain, Selectman Jensen, Selectman Morris, Selectman Hibberd, and Selectman Queiroga

Chairman Caplain opened the meeting at 6:00pm and reminded zoom participants to keep their microphones on mute and in-person public members to use podium to speak.

**Public Input –**

**Barry Zitser** – reason Columbus Day first established was to quell national incident – Mr. Zitser gave history of the founding of Columbus Day – He can see many reasons to honor Native Americans and American immigrants and no reason to honor someone who participated in genocide.

**Dick Robie –** lots of people say things online that they won’t say in person at meetings – landfill issues – Governor Sununu disappointed Bethlehem and Dalton residents with vote on landfill issues – opinions voiced online do not represent town of Bethlehem – concerns on Facebook opinions stated – want apology to Sununu family and politics – Selectman Queiroga – unknown what he is referring to? – Mr. Robie – shocked board does not know what he is referring to – whether they like or don’t like what Sununu is doing, he doesn’t deserve that – Chairman Caplain – appreciate comments and bringing issue to board – can’t control what is online – Dick Robie – believes Bethlehem is better than that –

**Ayla Queiroga** – removed herself from select board and speaking as a resident – addressing community, not select board – Town has input in what happens in larger realm in state and country – speak out to community to open conversations on how town may be impactful – on own regard as individual, not select board member.

**Skate Park Presentation**

**Chairman Caplain –** earmarks from state – not 501c so can’t get earmark – town agreed on supporting – came to represent skate park to go over how money would be spent if awarded – Nick Storella, Ed Shanshalla – resident since 2005 – watched ebb and flow of Bethlehem for a few years – looking for outlet for kids in town to recreate – brought pool back to town with volunteers in town – met Nick Storella a few years ago – talked about terrain park for skateboards and other wheeled conveyances – worked in health care for years in north country – proposal for park - $100,000 in proposal for entire park - $80,000 for earmark – needs to go to federal approval – earliest money would be in May – organization builds in North Country concrete parks – Tony Hawk foundation could add more funds – Nick Storella – park design – Artisan Skate Parks – high density concrete skate parks – build throughout New England and world – human powered parks – roughly 1/3 of existing skating rink would be used – remove old material and spray in new material in park – similar to building a pool – one in Berlin they built – applying for more grants – builder in Amesbury Mass – questions – Selectman Morris – issue without having organization – Nick Storella – not official organization – Bethlehem Skate Park Assoc – not non-profit org – park would be handed over to town as rec property – Ed Shanshalla – saw not for profits consolidated in past – too much overhead and not enough funds – discouraged them to not form non-profit – too small to be financially sustainable – good group to get kids together and get volunteers together - engage in psycho social element of mental health for youth – Nick Storella – group seeks money, builds facility, hands over to town – volunteer group to maintain area - Selectman Morris – useful information – fundraising for town recreation property – Selectman Jensen – wonderful project and thanks for effort – great that it is on town property – easy to support as it will be a town facility – Ed Shanshalla – goal to add it to town recreation facilities to add to overall town appeal – Nick Storella – concrete great smooth area – roll better – solo sports with low cost to participate -

**Indigenous People days follow up –** Chairman Caplain – asked to remove – Abenaki tribe asked to talk to board about it – notified last night -

**Water Access at Community Garden –**

**Chairman Caplain –** school asked for help to run line to community garden – summer use only – donation of machine and labor – roughly $400 – Selectman Jensen – why can’t school pay $400? – Selectman Morris – community garden, not just school property – Chairman Caplain – school would like to add greenhouse to garden – Selectman Queiroga – school maintains community garden now – Selectman Morris – questioning spending money on lots of programs – ARPA funds are good use – budget can come from other line items – Chairman Caplain – payroll is in budget already – Selectman Morris – takes away from current jobs – small jobs add up over time – putting on fiscal responsibility hat – Selectman Hibberd – can absorb $400 in budget – talked with Tim Fleury – talked with Brett and offered an out and Brett agreed that they could do it without taking away from projects – Selectman Queiroga – good community involvement – Selectman Jensen – making sure 3 work days aren’t lost – Selectman Hibberd – good to have Tim Fleury be in between so Brett Jackson is not on spot

**Selectman Morris made a motion to use highway department to run water to community gardens for up to $500 – Selectman Jensen seconded – roll call all – motion passed.**

**Cross NH Adventure Trail**

**Chairman Caplain –** Woodsville to Bethel Maine – want to extend into Whitefield – asking for letter of support from board to include in 10-year plan to – Selectman Jensen – nonmotorized? – Selectman Morris – goes through wildlife areas and not allowed – Chairman Caplain in summer, no, winter snowmobile – Selectman Morris – can stay off roads until Whitefield and Littleton – section with disused railbed and forced to use major roads - Chairman Caplain – letter by June 30th – drafted letter already

**Selectman Hibberd made a motion to send letter in support of Cross NH Adventure Trail – Selectman Queiroga seconded – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Heritage Center roof assessment**

**Chairman Caplain –** possible structural issue with roof – estimate from HEB to assess roof - $2950 for assessment – one site visit – roof structure assesses – may be bigger issues with foundation – will have to look at entire building, not just roof – Selectman Queiroga – prepare structural assessment and general structural repair advisement – would like it clarified to full building and not just roof – Selectman Morris – want to make sure scope of assessment isn’t full structural assessment – larger project than what is wanted – Selectman Queiroga – want to get underlying roof issues and not just surface issues

**Selectman Queiroga made a motion to approve HEB quote subject to satisfactory wording with structural integrity in entire building, not to exceed contracted amount – Selectman Jensen – seconded – roll call all – motion passed**

**Bank approval –**

**Frank Claffey –** board already signed agreement – bank requesting minute approval for records –

**Selectman Queiroga made a motion to approve new repayment agreement – Selectman Hibberd seconded – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Town Mileage Rate –**

**Chairman Caplain –** has not changed at $.40 – current federal rate $.65 ½ - Selectman Morris – can keep it general to IRS rate

**Selectman Morris made a motion to set town mileage reimbursement rate to equal IRS reimbursement rate – Selectman Hibberd seconded – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Raffle Approval**

Chairman Caplain -Elks lodge to host raffle

**Selectman Queiroga made a motion to approve raffle – Selectman Hibberd seconded – roll call all – motion passed.**

**Abatement – overpayment refund 205-228**

**Chairman Caplain -** $1363.70 – bank double paid taxes in error – asking for refund

**Selectman Morris made a motion to refund overpayment - Selectman Queiroga seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

**Building Inspector/Code Officer**

**Chairman Caplain –** Selectman Hibberd – asked to look at certain properties on “radar” – Selectman Morris – have discussion on priorities and expectations with new inspector and all are on same page – Selectman Jensen – has been doing research into junk yards and what can and can’t be done – Selectman Queiroga – does the board know what they want to have him focus on? – Selectman Hibberd – follow IIBC code and he’ll follow that – Selectman Queiroga – how he spends his time and what to focus on – compile with Tim to get info before meeting – Selectman Hibberd – have been talking about properties in past – Selectman Jensen – would like to touch bases and offer support if having issues with properties – Selectman Morris – has abilities and authority to ticket properties – process needs to be clarified – warning, letter, ticket, etc. in past – make sure we don’t go straight to heavy handed enforcement – Selectman Hibberd – have had attorneys in past write letters regarding enforcement - Selectman Morris – when does he need to come to board in process so all in agreement – Selectman Hibberd – do we want to give building inspector more authority? – give him authority to sign off on permits – Chairman Caplain – lots of authority right off bat – Selectman Morris – longer discussion needed to set future board and inspectors up - warning letters part of job and have been doing for a while – does he go to point of warning or tickets? – Selectman Hibberd - technically works under Tim Fleury – not individual department head – Chairman Caplain – send thoughts to Tim to compile and have ready for next meeting

**Minutes 6/13/2022**

**Chairman Caplain –** comments or changes on minutes? **–**

**Selectman Morris made a motion to approve 6/13/2022 minutes as presented – Selectman Jensen seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

**Other:**

**Selectman Morris** – Conservation Commission met last week – make sure Select Board and Planning Board is informed make it clear that there are outstanding issues with Adair and PMR project with wetlands permits and have not been finalized yet – communication breakdown between boards and Conservation Commission – keep all parties in the loop with outstanding issues

**Selectman Hibberd** – electric rates increasing – have contract with town direct to supplier – now offering towns ability to do that for residents – would like to research more – Selectman Morris – rates increased and shopping for new suppliers – welfare office electricity assistance cannot switch providers because could harm subsidies paid to individuals.

**Frank Claffey** – skate park – asking town to front money and wait for reimbursement – would like it in writing for what town has to do for project – what does town have to do? – can’t use taxpayer’s money without approval – Chairman Caplain – typically earmarks require putting 2-3% aside to cover admin costs – Frank Claffey – past history, applicant paid bill and sent information to town – sent check to town and town sent it out – town fronted the money - Chairman Caplain – town not fronting money – Selectman Morris essentially town project with residents seeking grants – Frank Claffey – no taxpayer approval to use money – Selectman Hibberd - would have to have public hearing to accept money – Selectman Queiroga – will touch bases with treasurer – Selectman Jensen -would you (Frank Claffey) be more comfortable if they were official committee? – Frank Claffey comfortable if Selectman Queiroga met with group to make sure town is protected - Selectman Queiroga happy to do that and go over what all grants will go town and processes – happy to meet with Frank as well – Frank Claffey – looking out for town.

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to go to Non-public Session per RSA 91A-3 II (personnel) @ 7:12 – Selectman Morris seconded – roll call – all – motion passed**

**Board discussed personnel issue.**

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**Chairman Caplain made a motion to adjourn @ 7:38pm - Selectman Hibberd seconded – roll call – all – motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Fleury

Administrative assistant