**Bethlehem Board of Selectmen**

**Meeting Minutes**

**December 5, 2022**

**In person –Chairman Caplain, Select person Hibberd, Select person Jensen, and Select person Morris**

**Chairman Caplain opened the meeting at 6:01 and thanked Chief Anderson for all the work he and his committee did to make Christmas in Bethlehem happen.**

**Public Input – There was no public input**

**Budget Overview (PD, Dispatch, Fire, Ambulance, Building Inspection, Insurance, Visitors Center, Wood Assessor)**

**Police Department Budget-** Chief DeMoranville introduced his budget that had a 1% increase over last year. Chairman Caplain asked Chief DeMoranville if he considered adding Police Bikes to the budget. Chief DeMoranville responded that he hadn’t yet, and Chairman Caplain offered to research cost. Chief DeMoranville introduced his proposed warrant article to create a revolving fund for Police Detail. The intent of the fund is to pay the officers for their detailed services and cover the expenses that arise as a result. There was discussion regarding approving authorized expenditures from the revolving fund and it was decided to that it did not make sense to have the Chief DeMoranville seek approval for payroll however it may make sense to have itemized expenses similar to how the rec department handles their revolving fund.

**Dispatch-** Chairman Caplain introduce Dispatch which remained the same to last year.

**Fire Department-** Chairman Caplain introduced Chief Anderson and thanked him again for everything he did to make Christmas in Bethlehem a successful event. The Fire Department budget had a 5% increase over last year which is based on pay increase. Chief Anderson explained his salary increase was the recommended 3% and there were over 100 call more in 2022 than 2021. Chief Anderson explained in addition to the increase in call volume the installation of the 911 markers is also included in the salary line item. Select person Morris asked when the next anticipated purchase is for a new fire truck would be. Chief Anderson stated he has started researching the new truck that will likely need to be purchased in 2024. Select person Morris asked what we have in the capitol reserve to cover the purchase and what we should recommend for 2023 to cover the expense. Frank Claffey, Treasurer, stated there is $181,020 in the capitol reserve for the fire truck. It was recommended that we request $100,000 for the next 3 years to increase the fire truck capitol reserve to cover the cost of the new truck.

**Ambulance-** Chairman Caplain moved to the Ambulance budget that had a 2% increase to last year. Chief Anderson explained there was a substantial increase in pay last year, so payroll was not increased for 2023. Chief Anderson noted that Jackie King won the North Country Public Safety award for EMT of the year and the Select board congratulated Jackie King for her accomplishment. It was discussed adding a line under emergency management budget for the 911 makers and asked Chief Anderson to recommend the amount that should be budgeted.

**Building Inspection-** Chairman Caplain continued with Building Inspection noting a 39% (from $20,454 to $28,364) increase to last year because of adding hours to the Code Officers availability. Select person Morris noted we were increasing to an estimated 20 hours a week. Bob Francis, Code Officer, explained that he wanted to be available for inspection during additional times of the building process for code enforcement. Select person Morris stated the code officer has been given positive feedback from the public regarding his inspections.

**Insurance-** Chairman Caplain introduced a 14% increase to the insurance budget base the increase of STD, LTD, and Life insurance and health insurance increase.

**Visitors Center-** Chairman Caplin introduced visitors center budget stating there was a 10% increase to last year because of increasing pay from $9 an hour to $15 which was approved last year. There was discussion regarding the marketing budget, and it was decided to leave it at $15,000.

**Wood Assessor-** Chairman Caplain introduced the wood assessing budget which remained the same as last year.

**Junk Yards-** Chairman Caplain moved to discuss the letter Bob Francis, Code Officer, recommends the town uses to notify residence that need to clean up their yards. He noted a case in Lincoln that the town was not able recover the legal fees because they had not adopted the statutory definition of junk yard under RSA 236:112. Mr. Francis noted that because Lincoln had not adopted RSA 236:112 in the town’s Zoning Ordinances they were not able to recoup the legal fees paid by the town. Chairman Caplain asked if Bethlehem had that in our zoning ordinances and Select person Morris replied probably not but she would confirm. Select person Morris said if the board agreed she would reach out to Tara Bamford to see what definitions could be adopted as the town is working on ordinances. There was discussion regarding moving forward with the proposed letter or waiting for additional legal approval and it was decided to move forward.

**Select person Jensen made a motion to adopt the proposed Junk Yard letter and have the Code Officer use it at his discretion. Select Person Hibberd seconded, and all were in favor.**

**Short Term Rental Update-** Chairman Caplain recommended moving forward with a warrant article making Short Term Rentals a permittable use. Select person Morris asked if there was a district that shouldn’t be included such as the district 6 the landfill. She also suggested having a second warrant regarding short-term rentals relating to the licensing process. Select person Hibberd noted concern with having two warrants regarding short term rentals because if voters are confused and deny short term rentals they would not be allowed in Bethlehem. Select person Jensen agreed with Select person Hibberd’s concern and went further stating the select board has adopted other ordinances such as the noise ordinance without going to town meeting. Chairman Caplain agreed with Select person Hibberd and Select person Jensen. Eddie Qi asked if the town was adding a permit and the board clarified that it a license similar to a dog license.

**Vincent Sorrentino- Food Truck-** Chairman Caplain introduced Vincent Sorrentino. Mr. Sorrentino is seeking a location for his donut truck. He was referred to Pam Sullivan because she was interested in offering the WREN lot located on Main St across from the Colonial Theater. Mr. Sorrentino stated that it was his preference to locate his truck in between the Heritage building and the Irving Gas Station on Main St. Chairman Caplain explained that wasn’t a good location because of the size of his truck and it wouldn’t fit on the sidewalk. Mr. Sorrentino asked what the difference between summer and winter for the Heritage spot and Select was person Morris clarified that the location would not work regardless of season. Select person Hibberd stated the town would not need to be involved if he located his truck on private property. Chairman Caplain stated the difference between the hot dog vendor that parks at the location is the size of the trailer. He continued that the location that Mr. Sorrentino is suggesting would not be appropriate for a large truck. Chairman Caplain noted the select board would prefer to work with Mr. Sorrentino to find a resolution that would work for both parties. Mr. Sorrentino stated he was asked to come before the select board as a curtesy and he believes the select board is playing favorites. Chairman Caplain responded that Mr. Sorrentino had an unfair characterization that the select board is not playing favorites and the board would entertain other town locations if Mr. Sorrentino would propose one.

**Minutes – 11/28/2022 Chairman Caplain made a motion to accept the 11/28 minutes. Select person Morris seconded and all were in favor.**

**Other- Select person Hibberd made a motion to appoint Select person Morris as the Ex Officio and Select person Jensen as the second. Chairman Caplain seconded, and all were in favor.**

**Non-public Session per RSA 91A-3 II (personnel, reputation, and legal)**

**Select person Morris made a motion to accept Deb Bayley resignation. Chairman Caplain seconded, and all were in favor.**

Select person Hibberd made a motion to adjourn 8:30 pm Select person Queiroga seconded, and all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Moritz

Administrative assistant