**Bethlehem Board of Selectmen**

**Meeting Minutes**

**February 13, 2023**

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

**Public Input-** Cheryl Jensen thanked the board for their contributions, especially the two members who will be leaving the board after the March election: Select person Queiroga and Select person Jensen. Allegra Wright also thanked the board.

**Sustainability-** Chairman Caplain at a prior meeting sought the board’s approval looking into sustainability and has done considerable research. Chairman Caplain reached out to other municipalities that have adopted a sustainable approach and to the Energy Commission, Conservation Commission and the Transfer Station Committee and there is considerable interest in working together towards sustainability. Chairman Caplain said he had volunteers from every committee including a couple of students interested in participating from Profile High School. Select Hibberd asked if it was a specific committee and Chairman Caplain said no it could be a working group. Select person Morris asked if the group would post meeting and publish minutes and Chairman Caplain said that the group would.

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to establish the Sustainability Working Group. Select person Morris seconded and all were in favor.**

**Proposed Food Pantry Transition WREN to Bethlehem Cares-** Chairman Caplain explained Bethlehem Cares is willing to be the fiscal agent for the Bethlehem Food Pantry and the Bethlehem Hebrew Congregation is willing to be the non-profit to access the New Hampshire Food Bank.

**Select person Morris made a motion to transition the management of Food Pantry funds from WREN to Bethlehem Cares and Bethlehem Hebrew Congregation for the New Hampshire Food Bank. Chairman Caplain seconded and were in favor.**

**Town Building Capital Reserve- plumbing bill** Chairman Caplain explained the plumbing bill to fix the cause of the flood that occurred in October 2022. Select person Queiroga asked if we only sought one estimate. Mary Moritz, Town Administrator, explained she did seek one proposal because we have hired Dave the Plumber for several plumbing jobs at the town building. Select person Hibberd stated that there was precedence in only seeking one bid for emergencies and felt it could be considered an emergency because it was the cause of the flood. Select person Morris stated that the one bid could be justified as the town has not received bids the last several times they were requested. Select person Queiroga clarified she is not opposed to the estimate however the one bid should be noted. The board agreed to move forward with Dave the Plumber’s estimate. Chairman Caplain continued that the money was suggested to come from the capital reserve for Town Buildings explaining that the capital reserve was originally written to have a limit at $15,000 and we had a warrant for $20,000. Select person Queiroga noted the plumbing bill was appropriate to use from the capital reserve and recommended amending the capital reserve to increase the amount that can be added in 2024. Select person Morris recommended seeking legal counsel on how to proceed with the 2023 warrant amount being higher than the maximum amount of the capital reserve.

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to use money from the Government Buildings capital reserve to pay for the plumbing bill. Select person Hibberd seconded all were in favor.**

**Food Pantry Volunteers-** Select person Jensen updated the board that the Littleton Food Coop would be donating to the food pantry and he recommended seeking volunteers to help manage the work.

**Conservation Commission Appointments- Betsy Philips and Margret Gale**

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to nominate Betsy Philips and renominate Margret Gale to the Conservation Commission. Select person Jensen seconded and all were in favor.**

**Annual Report Cover- The board was in agreement that Marylin Johnson should be on the cover of the 2023 annual report.**

**Chairman Caplain made a motion to have Marylin Johnson on the cover the annual report and have a dedication to her. Select person Morris seconded and all were in favor. Select person Jensen recused himself.**

There was discussion by the board to recognize the volunteers of Community Meals and the pained benches that are located around the Bethlehem Village.

**GIS Tax Map Maintenance Agreement- Chairman**

**Select person Hibberd made a motion to approve the GIS tax map agreement. Chairman Caplain seconded and all were in favor.**

**Minutes –1/24/2023- Chairman Caplain noted that the minutes from 1/24/2023 required a change: Safe Rides to School was awarded the grant from DOT not Profile School.**

**Chairman Caplain voted to approve the minutes from 1/24/2023 with the said amendment. Select person Hibberd seconded and all were in favor.**

**Other** Chairman Caplain recommended having the next meetings 2/27/2023 and 3/13/2023.

Select person Morris explained the Planning Board NH HOP grant required an agreement with both Tara Bamford and North Country Council. The Planning Board recommended that the select board move forward with the agreement with North Country Council and the agreement was signed.

**Non-public Session per RSA 91A-3 II (personnel, reputation, and legal)** **Non-public Session per RSA 91A-3 II (personnel, reputation, and legal) Chairman Caplain made a motion to go into non-public per RSA-91A-3 for reasons of personnel, reputation and legal. Select person Queiroga seconded and roll call followed.**

**Select person Hibberd made a motion to adjourn 8:00 pm Select person Queiroga seconded, and all were in favor.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Mary Moritz**

**Town Administrator**