



Town of Bernardston Board of Selectmen

MEETING MINUTES: February 5, 2013

Select Board Members Present:

Virginia M. Budness, Chairman
Louis J. Bordeaux
Robert R. Raymond

Others Present:

Mona Minor, Tax Collector
Judy Knight, Town Clerk
Melanie Lewis, Treasurer
Jane Dutcher, Finance Committee
Linda Raymond, Finance Committee

Chairman Virginia Budness called the meeting to order at 1.00pm.

Appointments

1.00pm – Meeting with Tax Collector, Town Clerk & Treasurer

Virginia opened discussion stating this meeting is being called to talk with the Tax Collector, Town Clerk and Treasurer about returning all fees to the General Fund. The officials now collect fees to augment their annual compensation. The Board and Finance Committee would then offset their income loss by adding an average amount based on fee collections to their base salary. The DOR report recommended all fees be returned to the General Fund. A handout was provided to all present showing base salary, an average of fees over the past 4 fiscal years and a 7.5% COLA factor. Mona, Judy and Melanie said they were comfortable with the proposed change. Bob asked Mona if this would diminish the ability to collect fees. Mona said no as the fees are required by law to be collected. Excise taxes are collected by Kelly & Ryan. Virginia asked if Mona's hours were adequate. She said it fluctuates throughout the year due to busy periods, but 15-hours is close to an accurate per week compared to the 10 hours posted for the public. Judy remarked that 20-hours would be ideal. However, increasing the weekly hours to 15 would be a good start. She does not take as much work home as in the past.

Discussion about more convenient public hours such as Saturday mornings or a weekday evening and a drop lock box for tax receipts followed. Mona said she would be alright with a lock box but she had to be the only person with access. The pay on-line option is now up and running, but the taxpayer would be charged a flat 3.50 fee if a debit card and 7% for a credit card.

Melanie said her hours vary and she is still learning the nuances of the position. She would like to see a standardized time sheet including compensatory time being tracked. Virginia said Highway Supt., Gary Wetherby is the only employee authorized to take comp time. Melanie will develop a time sheet and distribute to all departments by March 1st.

Mona deposits money directly to the bank rather than opting for check counter and bounced checks are subject to the \$25 surcharge. Virginia closed the discussion by stating the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee will review public official's compensation, change to the fee structure and offer a recommendation to Town Meeting.

BOS
Minutes
February 5, 2013 (cont.)

Judy Knight said she had decided to combine the special US Senate election and the Town election on April 30th. This will save the Town time and expense rather holding 2 separate elections within the space of 7-days. Bob motioned to combine the elections for April 30, 2013 with polling hours between 7am -8pm, second by Lou. Motion carried.

As a result of moving the Town election up a week, the Town caucus will be moved up a week from March 12 to March 4. Jane said this needs to be advertised though a news article, BNCTV, and a notice in the Town newsletter to get the word out.

Adjourn With no further business to be discussed, Bob made a motion to declare the meeting adjourned at 2.09pm. Lou seconded. Motion carried.

Attest: Hugh Campbell, Administrative Assistant

_____, Chairman _____, Member _____, Member
Virginia M. Budness Robert R. Raymond Louis J. Bordeaux