



Town of Bernardston Board of Selectmen

MEETING MINUTES: April 25, 2013

Select Board Members Present:

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

Others Present:

Jane Dutcher, Finance Committee
Peter Snow, 11 Burrows Tpk

Chairman Virginia Budness called the meeting to order at 2.02pm.

Charity Lot

Virginia asked the Board if the Charity Lot subject item could be moved to the top of the agenda. Agreed. Town Counsel Donna MacNicol's e-mail was discussed regarding the validity of the proposed project at the Charity Lot in relation to the original will bequest to the Town by Jobe Goodhall in 1833. Atty MacNicol's opinion is to seek a ruling from the Attorney General's Public Charities Division arguing that funds have been derived from activities at the Charity Lot over the years is consistent with the purpose of providing for the poor. The issue of maintenance of the lot and expenses related thereto are not addressed in the will. Atty MacNicol can argue on the Town's behalf that conducting a survey and or other activities that will preserve the area are consistent with the intentions of the Goodhall will. Revenues generated from activities at the lot have been co-mingled not separated in the Charity Lot account. Atty MacNicol suggests the Town attempt to determine a dollar figure that can be arrived as revenue that has been generated over the years.

Peter Snow stated he believes that Town Meeting has the final say on how funds are expended from the Charity Lot fund. Bob said the authority lies with the Selectmen. Mr. Snow said the Charity Lot belongs to the people and the citizens of Bernardston through Town Meeting action. Funds have been expended already without Town Meeting approval such as the forestry plan, design planning and now a survey. He feels a survey is absolutely necessary before any work is done at the Charity Lot location.

Motion by Bob to halt any and all work on the Charity Lot until the Attorney General's office can make a ruling the Town can proceed, second by Lou. Motion carried. Lou added that in today's very litigious society, the Board needs to proceed in strict compliance with the law or regulations regarding this matter.

The Board also agreed to present an oral report to Town Meeting on the status of the Charity Lot at the Annual Town Meeting.

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(cont.)

2012 Annual Report Proof

Bob received a first draft proof from the printer and shared the same with Board. Several minor typographical errors were found and a few more departmental photos could be useful. Hugh Campbell said all narrative texts can be fixed easily and sent down to the printer. Additional photos can be taken if time and circumstance will permit. So far, the Annual Report for 2012 is shaping up nicely. A total of 200 copies are on order with additional copies, if needed, can be ordered at cost.

FRCOG Accounting Program

The FRCOG is calling a meeting of all member towns with accounting help through the FRCOG to a meeting on May 16 at 7pm. No details are provided. Virginia volunteered to attend the meeting.

Employee Time-Off

The Board approved time-off for a Highway Dept employee. Motion by Bob to approve, second by Lou. Motion carried.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant 2012

The Board discussed the draft ATM warrant at length. Bob provided financial data from the Finance Committee for Article 4 & 5 for elected officials and departments. The Board discussed with Finance Committee Chair Jane Dutcher the implications of a 2.5%, 3% and 3.5% increase from the school district. A new draft will be provided for the Board's next meeting on May 1st.

King Information Systems

The Board reviewed the location on the second floor of Town Hall for future storage of documents and records. It was agreed to install the shelving on the back wall of the stage.

Adjourn With no further business to be discussed, Bob made a motion to declare the meeting adjourned at 4.10pm. Lou seconded. Motion carried.

Attest: Hugh Campbell, Administrative Assistant

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