



Town of Bernardston
Board of Selectmen

MEETING MINUTES: for the meeting of August 5, 2015

Select Board Members Present:
Robert R. Raymond, Chairman
Andrew Girard
Stanley Garland - absent

Others Present:
See attached

Chairman Bob Raymond called the meeting to order at 6.00pm.

Bob announced the meeting was being broadcast by BNCTV.

Warrants (*week ending 7/31/2015*)

Bob asked for a motion to approve the Payroll Warrant in the amount of \$46,558.85. Motion by Andrew, second by Bob. Motion carried.

Bob requested a motion to approve the Vendor Warrant in the amount of \$213,877.34. Motion by Andrew to approve, second by Bob. Motion carried. Bob noted a large CDBG disbursement of \$172,800 as part of the total vendor warrant.

Minutes

Regular Meeting of July 22, 2015. Deferred until the August 19th meeting due to the absence of Stan Garland. Andrew was not present at the July 22nd meeting.

Calendar & Announcements

Bob read aloud the calendar and announcements.

Building Permits

Bob read aloud the residential permits issued in July 2015 by the FCCIP.

Citizen's Concerns

Ruth Hanlon, Martindale Rd, spoke before the Board expressing her frustration at what she believes to be significant increases in her property tax over the past few years. She said her taxes have "tripled" since she purchased the house and there are 3 houses on her road up for sale. She works for the PVRSD and received a small COLA increase in her wage, but not enough to keep up with her rising tax burden.

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She does not feel that living in Bernardston is affordable or is becoming less affordable in recent years. Bob stated he would investigate her situation and call her back personally. Mrs. Hanlon provided her phone number.

Appointments

None.

New Business

1-Day Liquor License

The Bernardston Fireman's Association requested a 1-day liquor license for their annual Steak & Roast Dinner Dance at the Kiwanis Club Park on August 22nd. Serving hours are 5:00pm to 11:00pm. Lefty's Brewery will supply the alcohol and are listed on the ABCC approved list of 1-day liquor license vendors. Motion by Andrew to approve the issuance of a 1-day liquor license to the Bernardston Fireman's Association for August 22, 2015, second by Bob. Motion carried.

Time-Off Request

Motion to approve a time-off request from a Town employee by Andrew, second by Bob. Motion carried.

Cushman Library

Karen Stinchfield, Library Director, requested the furniture for the outdoor patio be assembled and sealed in the Town Hall August 7-9. The furniture is currently stored in the Town Hall unassembled in boxes. A telephone conference call was made to Karen and a conversation ensued during the meeting. The Board had concerns about sealing outdoor furniture emitting fumes and the protecting the wooden floor. As a result, the Board declined the request of the Library. Motion by Andrew to decline the request of Cushman Library to use Town Hall to assemble and seal the proposed outdoor patio furniture. Second by Bob. Motion carried.

Perambulation – Town of Gill

The Town of Gill through their Town Clerk issued a formal notice to the Selectmen and Town Clerk they had completed perambulation of the Town of Gill boundaries with Bernardston and Northfield in accordance with MGL Chapter 42, section 2. Bob noted the effort and thanked those in the Town of Gill accordingly.

Rabid Animals

Stan Garland in absentia noted to Bob and Andrew that 4 cases of rabid animals had been recently reported by local veterinarians to the Town Clerk and Board of Health. The animals included a bat,

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fox, beaver and a skunk. Bob announced that residents should be mindful of possible wild rabid animals while outside near wooded areas or while walking dogs within town.

Old Business

River Maple Farms

Bob followed up on the letter sent to Butch & Donna Grover at 250 Brattleboro Rd (River Maple Farm) by the Board in June informing them to repair or replace their fences by no later than July 31st. Stray livestock was consistently escaping onto Brattleboro Rd (Rt 5) posing a hazard to public safety. In addition, animals would trespass onto neighboring properties. Timothy Deneault, 888 Brattleboro Rd presented photographic evidence the fences were still in a state of disrepair or had been hurriedly erected. The photos are included in the minutes herein. No livestock had been reported loose since the Board discussed the problem in June. Erik Van Natta, Board of Health, asked if the Town had a fence inspector or similar capacity. Bob stated Peter Shedd is the appointed Inspector of Barns & Animals but his role does not include inspection of fences. Jane Dutcher, Finance Committee, said the USDA may be able to provide guidance for fencing standards for farm animals. The Board agreed any further incidents would be referred to the Police Department. In the meantime, Hugh Campbell will investigate fencing standards through state or federal agencies. A letter to the Grover's will also be sent informing them of this evening's discussion and deference to the Police Department for future incidents.

Hampshire Council of Govts – Electric Aggregation

The HCOG is seeking the Board's consent to access consumer data for the past 12-months from public utilities as part of the Town's membership in the electric aggregate program. Motion to sign the consent by Andrew, second by Bob. Motion carried.

BES Gym Roof

Bob commented on the BES gym roof north side rear entrance roof membrane which was not included in the replacement project. The roof membrane is in reasonable condition compared to the gym roof since it does not nearly get the exposure to the elements. As a result he is not in hurry to replace the entrance roof if at all. Andrew said it would be useful to obtain a quote from MDM to finish the entrance roof since the Town has borrowed enough money to cover the cost. MDM has stated they would not be able to do the work for another month if the Board desires the work. Other BES maintenance issued was discussed such as the HVAC system, gym bleachers and gym ceiling fan.

Jane asked what came of the 4-town administrators meeting to determine capital vs maintenance cost definitions. Hugh Campbell said a second meeting has not been called by Brian Noble of Northfield. The desired feeling was that each town would be comfortable maintaining their own buildings.

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However, there was also a feeling that a corresponding reduction in PVRSD maintenance costs related to the Town's assessment would be minimal if at all.

Town Coordinator Report

Hugh Campbell reported on the following:

Freyenhagen Property, Martindale Rd – Town Counsel has advised regarding a procedure for the Town through the Selectmen to gain legal access to the property to conduct soil testing for contaminants. Step 1 includes issuing a notice to clean up the site through a) a declaration by the Board, b) publishing a notice in a local newspaper for 3 consecutive days, c) sending certified notices to any known heirs through the mail and d) have a notice served on the premises by the Sheriff's department. A public hearing will be scheduled for August 19th. If no action is taken by the heirs by the 19th, the Board may opt to order clean-up with a 21-day period after a public hearing. If no action is taken, the Board can access the land to conduct preliminary testing procedures to determine the level of contamination at the site. Authority is granted to the Selectmen in accordance with MGL Chapter 139, section 1 and Chapter 111, sections 123-124. Motion by Andrew to sign the notice and publish as outlined by Town Counsel, second by Bob. Motion carried.

Master Plan update – The Master Plan Steering Committee continues to meet on a monthly basis until students from The Conway School are reassigned for the 2nd half of the project next January 2016. The committee focused on the development of a community survey to be published in the next newsletter, dissemination at the Transfer Station on September 12th and at community meeting scheduled for October 21st.

Selectmen's Office – The office has been reorganized, files purged, space created, minutes from Selectmen's meeting dating back to FY2004 bound in binder complete with electronic back-up copies, personnel files organized and office supplies neatly arranged for ease of availability.

Town Hall Custodian – The Town Hall Custodian is on vacation August 15th – August 22nd. Town Hall staff will be encouraged to clean up after themselves more than usual in the Custodian's absence.

Adjourn With no further business to be discussed, Andrew made a motion to declare the meeting adjourned at 7.04pm, Bob seconded. Motion carried.

Attest: Hugh Campbell, Town Coordinator

_____, Chairman
Robert R. Raymond

_____, Member
Andrew I. Girard

_____, Member
Stanley D. Garland