

# Town of Berwick



## BOARD OF SELECTMEN/BOARD OF ASSESSORS MINUTES

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Tuesday, March 7, 2017

6:30pm

Selectmen's Room  
11 Sullivan Street  
Berwick, ME 03901

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### 1. Call to Order

Chair Wright called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

### 2. Roll Call

Board Members Present: Chair Thomas Wright, Selectman Rebecca England, and Selectman Joshua Plante.

Staff Members Present: Town Manager Stephen Eldridge, Maureen Finger, Finance Director, Transfer Station Supervisor Neil Hokinson, Recreation Director Kim Taylor and Town Clerk Patricia Murray.

### 3. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Wright led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### 4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- February 21, 2017

**Motion:** Selectman Plante moved to accept the February 21, 2017 minutes as written. Selectman England seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously: 3-0**

### 5. First Public Comment

Chair Wright opened the first public comment.

There being no comments, Chair Wright closed the first public comment.

## 6. Public Hearing

None.

## 7. Reports of Committees

- BCTV Committee

Town Manager Eldridge noted the Committee is still searching for a committee member. If interested, please see the Town Clerk for an application. He also reported he received the first draft of the franchise agreement.

- Envision Berwick

No report.

## 8. Appointments/Presentations/Other Guests

- Appointment of Kathy Sheedy to the Berwick Farmers Market Committee.

Ms. Kathy Sheedy was present. She stated she attends the Farmers Market every month and is interested in seeing it move forward. She would also like to see the Market happen more often. She stepped up to volunteer to help initiate these matters.

**Motion:** Selectman Plante moved to appoint Kathy Sheedy to the Farmers Market Committee. Selectman England seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously: 3-0**

- Casella/Pine Tree Waste presentation

Karen McNaughton and Nate Chapman, Pine Tree Waste, were present. This is the third presentation to date from waste companies who will be bidding on the Town's waste management contract. She and Mr. Chapman have 25 years' experience in the waste management industry. Ms. McNaughton presented a [handout](#). The company has 8 collection facilities, 5 recycling facilities, 9 universal and e-waste consolidation facilities, 13 transfer stations, 2 landfills, 1 composting facility and 1 landfill gas to energy site. They have 200 collection vehicles. They offer an automated curbside collection option for trash and zero sort recycling. This program will divert more recycling out of the trash. Communities with this program include Biddeford, Saco, Scarborough, Kennebunk, Westbrook and South Portland. The company offers marketing support and educational and training support. Ms. McNaughton stated Casella is committed to the State of Maine and is proud and excited to provide a bid to the Town of Berwick. A Pay as You Throw option will be included in the bid package to look at a possible automated collection program. Each resident will be provided two carts; one for trash and one for recycling. Whatever trash will not fit into the trash cart will need to be in PAYT bags. She noted the Town was looking for a way to reduce cost of disposal and the best way to do that is to supply a friendly and convenient program to residents.

Chair Wright noted that the curbside collection list is really cities and inquired if Casella contracts with any smaller towns. Ms. McNaughton replied that Kennebunk is the smaller of communities they service now. She stated she will provide names and contact information in the bid packet of communities that can speak to the success of the program. She stated that they are reaching out to many small communities because PAYT is not always palatable in every community. Automated collection supplies residents with an additional service.

Chair Wright stated that if the Town switched to curbside collection the Transfer Station would still be needed. Ms. McNaughton stated the Town would need something to provide a bulky waste clean-up system. She also stated the Town is operating on a small footprint which will continue to be a problem as

the community grows. She would keep the transfer station as way to dispose of bulky waste, metal, and other items not included in curbside.

Discussion regarding curbside and PAYT ensued.

Mr. Neil Hokinson, Transfer Station Supervisor, asked about hours of operation. Mr. Chapman replied they were a 24/7 operation.

Mr. Adam Bowie, resident, spoke. He asked if they are a Maine owned company. Mr. Chapman replied their corporate office is in Rutland, Vermont. The company is primarily New England based. Mr. Bowie also asked if new people would be hired for a curbside program and if it would be local people hired. Mr. Chapman affirmed and stated they would take employment however they can get it; they struggle getting qualified mechanics and CDL drivers. He also asked if the town would get rid of the Transfer Station. Ms. McNaughton replied that she would recommend keeping the Transfer Station.

Ms. Eleanor Murphy, resident, spoke. She asked if separated recycling payed more versus single stream. Ms. McNaughton replied that the separation commodities market went down. The big drive is single stream.

- Recreation Master Plan presentation

Rick Vandenberg presented the survey results.

### **Summary of Results Recreation Master Plan Survey**

The *ad hoc* Recreation Master Planning Group, which was formed from members of Envision Berwick, the Recreation Commission, and community members, developed a survey (using Google Forms) to understand what Berwick citizens want and need for recreation perspective. The survey was made available online in early October 2016 through the Town website. Hard copies were made available on Election Day at Town Hall and the library. In an attempt to reach even more residents a town-wide postcard mailer was distributed in early January 2017. Group members promoted the survey at the Town Transfer Station on two weekends in January.

By mid-February, 450 paper and electronic responses were received, representing approximately 6% of Berwick residents. The demographic profile of survey respondents mirrored the demographic makeup of the Town, so survey results are considered representative of Berwick's population.

These are some key observations:

- 95% of respondents favor a community center.
- Most respondents favor of a variety of uses within the community center including art facilities, function room or meeting space, game room, fitness room, dancing space, a stage, basketball/volleyball space, shuffleboard, yoga studio, toddler play space, head start program and a variety of others.
- Survey respondents participate in a multitude of active and passive recreational activities in Berwick (see attached Demand Table). However, certain activities like: Outdoor concerts, hiking, watching fireworks, walking and swimming scored the highest in our demand analysis.
- Most respondents that have used or use Memorial Field and are in favor of upgrading the location with improved parking, permanent bathrooms, a walking circuit, community center, improved playground equipment, improved connectivity with the downtown (i.e. paths and sidewalks), an art center, improved security, expanded storage for sports and recreation programs, a larger baseball field (i.e., a 90-foot field), and a softball field.

- A lot respondents have never used Memorial Field, the canoe/kayak launch, Hatfield Pond, Penny Pond Trail, or Horne Mill Trail (i.e. the “Never Used” response ranged from 155 to 326 for these). Of these, Memorial Field, the launch, and Hatfield received the most use responses (i.e. frequently used or occasionally used).
- Survey respondents favored (49.3%) the idea of better access to MSAD60 facilities in Town. However, a lot of respondents were against (9.9%) the idea or unsure (40.8%) if better access would benefit them.
- A majority of the respondents (61%) were not aware of the following Great Works Land Trust facilities: Brooks Farm, Grant’s Meadow, Keay Brook Reserve, and Tuckahoe Preserve.
- There is broad interest in more community events/festivals; intergenerational and family-oriented activities, lectures, and classes.
- Maintenance, cleanliness and security of current and future facilities was an area of concern with many respondents.
- Numerous respondent comments were directed toward the need for more information on recreation events and programing at various locations.

The next steps now that they have heard what community wants/needs include: working with a planner; GIS work to show facilities with layers; outreach to various sports organizations; Master Plan summit in spring; an evening event with the community; clicker system to drill deeper into questions/answers. Mr. Vandenberg estimates an early fall rough draft.

Chair Wright noted a lot of excellent work and volunteer hours from the Recreation Master Plan Committee.

## **9. Unfinished Business**

- Pay as You Throw Program/Recycle Committee

Town Manager Eldridge stated there will be a workshop in April. This will be a workshop to go over all the information gathered from each waste management company with associated costs. There is one more presentation scheduled.

- Budget Committee recommendations for the FY18 budget

Eleanor Murphy and Ken Raine were present from the Budget Committee. Ms. Murphy stated the Finance Director and Town Manager did a great job with the FY18 budget. She stated the Budget Committee met with Department Heads, the Finance Director, Maureen Finger, and the Town Manager, Stephen Eldridge. All Department Heads agreed the Town Manager’s recommended budget was satisfactory. One discrepancy was Envision Berwick who asked for \$30,000 for seed money. The Town Manager recommended \$15,000. The Budget Committee concurred. The Library requested an extra \$5,000. The Budget Committee supports the request. Mr. Raine added the budget was very well prepared and commended Maureen Finger and Steve Eldridge and the Department Heads.

Chair Wright thanked the budget committee and all Town employees. The Board will make final recommendation at the March 21<sup>st</sup> meeting.

## **10. Town Manager Report**

- The clock tower installation will begin next week.
- A meeting was held with Credere Associates, Tom House, Architect and Cheri Ruane, Landscape Architect with Weston and Sampson regarding the Prime Tanning site. Project demolition should be complete by April 30. Once this phase is complete the property will revert back to Fund of Jupiter and the property will be taxed.
- Still waiting for TIF to be completed.

- Town Planner John Stoll has accepted a new job. His last day is March 10<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Eldridge has been working with Kathy Connor of Southern Maine Planning who will contract to finish out this fiscal year for any planning needs.
- Town Manager Eldridge and the Board of Selectmen thanked Mr. Stoll for his service and hard work while in Berwick.

**11. Selectmen Communications**

None.

**12. Approval of Warrants**

02-23-2017	A/P Warrant #1734	\$ 84,540.15
02-23-2017	Water Warrant #0734	\$ 43,550.54
03-02-2017	Payroll Warrant #1735	\$ 50,958.08
03-02-2017	A/P Warrant #1735	\$ 703,979.23
03-02-2017	Water Warrant #0735	\$ 12,347.56
03-09-2017	Payroll Warrant #1736	\$ 45,811.45

**Motion:** Chair Wright made a motion to accept the Accounts Payable Warrants as presented. Selectman Plante seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously: 3– 0.**

**13. New Business**

- 2015 Tax Liens Foreclosure Listing

Maureen Finger, Finance Director, presented the 2015 Tax Lien Foreclosure Listing. On February 17, 2017 the 2015 tax liens automatically foreclosed. There are 10 properties that the Town foreclosed on for unpaid 2015 taxes. Four of the properties are single family homes; four are properties previously foreclosed on by the Town; and two are under current repurchase agreements and are making their required monthly payments. Ms. Finger is seeking guidance from the BOS for the remaining properties.

**Motion:** Chair Wright made a motion to notice, by certified mail and regular mail, the properties at Map/Lot R050-010, U004-070, R006-012-A and R015-002-003 offering repurchase agreements.

Selectman Plante seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously: 3– 0.**

**Motion:** Chair Wright made a motion to move properties at map/lot R007-001-A-004, R054-008-B-002, R054-008-B-001 and R017-032 to tax acquired and put in the name of The Town of Berwick starting with the April 1, 2017 assessment date. Selectman Plante seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously: 3– 0.**

- Bad Debt Policy

Maureen Finger, Finance Director, spoke to the policy. During the Town’s annual audit, one discussion with the auditors was about the accounts receivable balances and whether the Town had a bad debt policy. The auditors recommended that the Town consider implementing one so that older outstanding accounts receivable balances can be dealt with on an annual basis. Currently Personal Property accounts go back to 2006. In 2015, the BOS gave authority to turn over outstanding accounts to collections which has been done. The collection agency has made some progress on the accounts. The proposed policy covers different kinds of receivables; personal property, water charges, returned checks for motor vehicles, and general accounts receivable, and how each category of those receivables would be handled and when a write off request would be appropriate.

Chair Wright asked how much money is in bad debt. Ms. Finger replied approximately \$12,000 in personal property. Selectman Plante asked which collection agency has been used. Ms. Finger replied The Thomas Agency. Ms. Finger also noted that motor vehicle returned checks are generally received because the State gets involved and suspends driver's licenses. In some cases the person may move out of state and would not be affected by a license suspension. Selectman England asked how long water charges are left. Ms. Finger replied water service would be turned off after three billing cycles, payment arrangement options and disconnect notices.

The BOS expressed some hesitancy about going to a third party for collection and asked Ms. Finger to return to the Board with information regarding fees, examples of letters, credit reporting burden, and rate of return.

- Polling Hours for Town Meeting May 9, 2017 (TC recommends 8am – 8pm)

Town Clerk Patricia Murray requested polling hours from 8:00am to 8:00pm on May 9<sup>th</sup> for Town election.

**Motion:** Selectman Plante made a motion to accept the Town Meeting polling hours from 8am to 8pm on May 9, 2017. Selectman England seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously: 3– 0.**

- Open Town Meeting; request to have all articles on secret ballot

Town Manager Eldridge requested that all warrant articles be voted on by secret ballot on May 9<sup>th</sup> which would eliminate the need for an Open Town Meeting on May 10<sup>th</sup>. This will give better representation of voters since more voters turn out for the secret ballot voting than for open town meeting.

**Motion:** Chair Wright made a motion to have all 2017 warrant articles on the secret ballot held on May 9, 2017 and to eliminate Open Town Meeting on May 10, 2017. Selectman Plante seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously: 3– 0.**

- Bids for Town Report printing

Town Clerk Murray stated she sent three invites to bid for the printing of the 2016-17 Annual Town Report and received one bid from The Snowman Group for \$1,773.98 and requested permission from the Board to accept the bid. The Snowman Group has done the printing for the last four years. She also noted 250 reports will be ordered this year compared to 500 of previous years because the report is available on-line and several reports are left over from previous years.

**Motion:** Selectman Plante made a motion to accept the bid of \$1,773.98 for 250 Reports from The Snowman Group for the printing of the 2016-17 Annual Town Report. Selectman England seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously: 3– 0.**

#### **14. Quitclaim Deeds and/or Installment Contracts**

None.

#### **15. Abatements/Supplements**

None.

#### **16. Second Public Comment**

Chair Wright opened the second public comment. There being no comments, Chair Wright closed the second public comment.

**17. Executive Session**

None.

**18. Other Business/Non-Agenda Items**

Town Manager Eldridge reported that upon inspection, the wood trim around the tower clock has rotted. A bid was given in the amount of \$3,800 to \$4,000 over the original proposal. Town Manager Eldridge requested authorization to take this money from the contingency fund. Ms. Finger stated there are three options for the funds; the Lena Clark fund, contingency, or Building Reserve CIP account. She recommends contingency fund.

Mr. Adam Bowie, resident, spoke. He asked if the wood is rotted why we are replacing it with wood; could a different component be used. Town Manager Eldridge replied the contractor is a local contractor and is versed in wood preservation.

**Motion:** Chair Wright made a motion to authorize taking funds from the contingency fund in the amount of \$4,000.00 for the replacement of the wood trim on the clock tower. Selectman Plante seconded the motion.

**The motion carried unanimously: 3– 0.**

Chair Wright stated there is a court date for the sober home. It is in mid-March.

**19. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:27pm.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Patricia Murray**  
Town Clerk

**The March 7, 2017 BOS Meeting Minutes – Signed as approved at the Board of Selectmen’s March 21, 2017 Meeting.**

**On behalf of the Board**

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