



Town of Berwick

BOARD OF SELECTMEN/BOARD OF ASSESSORS MINUTES

Tuesday, April 17, 2018

6:30pm

Selectmen's Room
11 Sullivan Street
Berwick, ME 03901

1. Call to Order

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

2. Roll Call

Board Members Present: Chair Thomas Wright, Vice Chair Edward Ganiere, Selectman Rebecca England and Selectman Mark Pendergast.

Board Members Absent: Selectman Joshua Plante.

Staff Members Present: Town Manager Stephen Eldridge, Assessor Paul McKenney and Town Clerk Patricia Murray.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Wright led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- April 3, 2018

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere moved to accept the April 3, 2018 minutes as written. Selectman England seconded the motion.

The motion carried: 4:0

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**

No report.

- **Envision Berwick**

Chair Wright reported that the Community Engagement Academy which was held April 12, 2018 was successful and well attended.

8. Appointments/Presentations/Other Guests

None.

9. Unfinished Business

None.

10. Town Manager Report

Town Manager Eldridge reported the following:

- Mark Kehaya, Fund of Jupiter, is back in the country and should be available for a visit to Berwick soon. Work in the “Blue Sort” building will commence soon. Some of the contaminated materials from the blue sort building could potentially be used as fill for the parking lot. The contaminants would be encapsulated. The Town is waiting for matching funds from Fund of Jupiter. Selectman Pendergast asked about the green space. Town Manager Eldridge stated no decisions have been made but the Economic Development Committee and Envision Berwick are working on suggestions.
- The 911 Dispatch 5-year contract was finalized with Sanford and will begin July 1, 2018. Cost will be roughly \$220,000 annually.
- Calls from residents regarding the closing of the swap shop at the transfer station have been received. Town Manager Eldridge asked people to continue to call with their concerns. Discussion regarding traffic flow ensued.

11. Selectmen Communications

Chair Wright received a letter from Comcast regarding changes to the monthly billing statements.

The Town received notice from Maine DOT that a public hearing regarding work on Hubbard Road bridge near Little River will be held on Wednesday, April 25, 2018 at 6:00pm in the Board of Selectmen Room at Town Hall.

12. Approval of Warrants

04-05-2018	A/P Warrant #1840	\$ 700,192.30
04-05-2018	Water A/P Warrant #0840	\$ 2,621.54
04-12-2018	Payroll Warrant #1841	\$ 52,330.64
04-12-2018	A/P Warrant #1841	\$ 99,891.23
04-12-2018	Water A/P Warrant #0841	\$ 401.31
04-19-2018	Payroll Warrant #1842	\$ 50,740.17

Motion: Chair Wright made a motion to accept the Accounts Payable Warrants as presented. Vice Chair Ganiere seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously: 4:0

13. New Business

- Ratio Declaration and Reimbursement Application

Assessor McKenney presented the Ratio Declaration which is a yearly State requirement to declare the assessment to sales ratio based on the State's sales analysis of the previous year. Last year was at 105%. This year is being certified at 100%; values are increasing therefore the ratio is decreasing. There are an estimated 1400 homestead exemptions which will be \$20,000 this year.

Motion: Chair Wright made a motion to accept and sign the Ratio Declaration and Reimbursement Application as presented. Vice Chair Ganiere seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously: 4:0

- Town Hall Use Policy revision

Tabled until May 1, 2018.

14. Quitclaim Deeds and/or Installment Contracts

- Installment Contract: Map R034 Lot 020

This property was foreclosed by the Town on February 9, 2018. The former property owner has requested the option to repurchase the property and will make the \$1,007.68 down payment before May 21, 2018. They will then make monthly payments of \$200.00 per month to bring their tax account current before the Town will issue a Quitclaim Deed without Covenants.

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere made a motion to accept the Installment Contract for Map R034 Lot 020 as presented. Selectman England seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously: 4:0.

15. Abatements/Supplements

- Abatement: 365 Ridlon Road, Map R001 Lot 15

Assessor McKenney explained this request is due to an increase in value at quarterly inspections of \$58,933 which the owner felt was not warranted. The assessing staff determined that the property condition was not accurately noted on the property card resulting in a reduced value and an abatement of \$715.16.

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere made a motion to accept the abatement for 365 Ridlon Road, Map R001 Lot 15 as presented. Selectman Pendergast seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously: 4:0.

- Abatement: 34 Wentworth Road, Map R061 Lot 3-A-2

Assessor McKenney explained this request is due to the garage being assessed as living area. Assessing staff completed an inspection and confirmed that the garage was not living area resulting in an abatement of \$428.75.

The property owner was present and asked if the abatement could be retroactive to the start of the incorrect assessment. Chair Wright responded that by State mandate abatement and supplements are typically only for the current tax period.

Motion: Vice Chair Ganiere made a motion to accept the abatement for 34 Wentworth Road, Map R061 Lot 3-A-2 as presented. Selectman Pendergast seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously: 4:0.

- Supplement: 397 Hubbard Road, Map R001 Lot 3-1

Assessor McKenney explained this request is due to omission of the property from the tax rolls. The occupancy permit was granted on March 22, 2017. The owners have been notified of the \$2,817.75 supplemental warrant.

Motion: Selectman Pendergast made a motion to accept the supplemental warrant for 397 Hubbard Road, Map R001 Lot 3-1 as presented. Selectman England seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously: 4:0.

16. Second Public Comment

Chair Wright opened the second public comment.

Vice Chair Ganiere commended the Noble High School team for their participation and top 10 placing in the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow competition in New York City. The Noble group developed a water filtration system that will remove elevated levels of manganese found in the local water supply using STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) skills. For their efforts the school will receive a \$50,000 technology grant.

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

17. Executive Session

- Title 1 §405(6)(A) – Discussion of Personnel

Chair Wright read a letter from Selectman Plante regarding the executive session.

I will not be at tonight's meeting.

I would like to make a public note of my request that Board Chair Tom Wright recuse himself from any discussion (in executive session or on the public record) regarding the performance of review of the Town Manager. With his wife being under the direct supervision of the Town Manager, it is wholly inappropriate for Mr. Wright to grade the Town Manager's performance; it is a conflict of interest.

Thank you.

Josh Plante

Motion: Chair Wright made a motion to enter into Executive Session per MSRA Title 1 §405(6)(A) – Discussion of Personnel. Selectmen Ganiere seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously: 4:0.

The Board entered into Executive Session at 7:12pm.

The Board adjourned its regular meeting at 7:12pm. Chair Wright noted no actions would be made during the Executive Session.

18. Other Business/Non-Agenda Items

Chair Wright noted the customer complaint email regarding the service window that was received by the Board and hopes that was resolved. Another incident involved a customer leaving the lobby area under curious conditions. The Police Department conducted a building search. Chair Wright suggested Town Manager Eldridge obtain video cameras for the lobby area. Town Manager Eldridge will check with Finance Director Maureen Finger regarding available funds.

Selectman Pendergast questioned the telephone recording and the difficulty of getting the correct extension number for staff. He also stated the phones often go unanswered. Chair Wright explained that the customers physically in the Town Hall take precedence. Town Clerk Murray explained the phone system.

Town Manager Eldridge reported that Port City Architecture will attend the May 1, 2018 BOS Meeting to present their ideas for a new fire station. BCTV interviewed Chief Plante regarding the deterioration of and other issues with the current fire station. The video can be viewed on BCTV website.

19. Adjournment

The regular meeting adjourned at 7:12pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Murray
Town Clerk

The April 17, 2018 BOS Meeting Minutes – Signed as approved at the Board of Selectmen’s May 1, 2018 Meeting.

On behalf of the Board
