

Town of Benton
Select Board Meeting
Monday April 8, 2019

Select Board Members: William R. Darcy, Chair; Regina Elliott, Carol Vincelette

Also Present: Dwight Swauger, Treasurer; Joseph Boutin, Jr., road contractor

These draft minutes of the Town of Benton Select Board are believed accurate and correct, but they are subject to additions, deletions and corrections by the Select Board at the next meeting when the Board votes its final approval of the minutes. These minutes are made available at this time to conform to the requirements of New Hampshire RSA 91-A:2.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Darcy at 6:32 PM

Member Elliott moved approval of the March 18, 2019 Board meeting minutes, seconded by Member Vincelette and approved.

The Board discussed the State DRA demand that the Town hold a procedural defects special town meeting because the budget posted before the Annual Meeting was not posted using the DRA form MS-636. DRA says no newspaper publication of the special meeting is required. A public hearing before the Board is required no less than 7 days before the special meeting to inform the town of the reasons for the special meeting.

As a result of the passage of the zoning amendments a new building permit form is necessary. Chairman Darcy said the Planning Board believed other subjects should be addressed as well as the necessary changes, such as declaring whether the building has a commercial or small business use, a description of the procedure for application review, applicable fees, provision of examples of the graphic representation of the building's location, etc. Member Elliott suggested that the applicants should also be informed the permit is good for one year.

The Planning Board also requested that the Select Board refer all building permits to it for comment, with the understanding that such comments are advisory. The Planning Board can request additional information of the applicant to provide a fuller record upon which the Select Board can decide whether to issue the permit. If the Planning Board does not submit comments or does not act in a timely manner the Board can go ahead and act on the application. All the Board members were in favor of referring building permits to the Planning Board.

The Chairman requested that the Treasurer prepare checks to welfare organizations, the payments for which had been incorporated into the budget. The Treasurer did so and they are now ready for signing. The Chairman of the Trustees of the Trust Funds sent a check to the Town closing out the Road Expendable Trust Fund pursuant to Warrant Article 7 passed at the Annual Town Meeting. It was agreed to deposit that check in the ICS account.

DRA financial forms MS-535 (year end balance sheet and income statement) and MS-60 (audit) were reviewed and signed by the Board as well as a representations letter to our outside auditors.

The Chairman stated he met with Joe Boutin & Son and communicated with the engineer working on the Tunnel Stream Road culvert for the purpose of getting a post-DES permit estimate of the cost of the project. The goal was to make sure no likely cost was overlooked. The result is the pre-permit estimate of about \$100,000 is now about \$130,000. That estimate will be used in seeking grant money to assist with the project.

The Notice of Intent to Cut Wood on Flat Iron road, having been properly posted, was signed by the Board.

The Treasurer reported the operating account had \$218,631.02, after the checks prepared for today, and the ICS total is \$220,443.82.

The Chairman noted receipt of an elderly tax exemption request, but the applicant had too much income to qualify. Benton has the lowest income qualification allowable, only \$20,000 for a couple, below most of the towns in Grafton County. He suggested next year a revision would be appropriate to submit to the Town Meeting. For those who qualify, \$5,000 of property value is exempted (age 65 to 74); at a \$20 tax rate it only amounts to a saving of \$100 a year.

A Town Hall rental request for Andrea Elliott has been calendared for September 14.

The DRA property tax equalization report has been received.

Joe Boutin reported that his son successfully completed the culvert contractor certification course and the Town has been billed \$100 for the course. Joe also stated he and Mike Stiebitz were planning on erecting an enclosure over the community sand pile next week, with the lumber costs anticipated to be about \$1,500.

The cemetery clean-up day was tentatively set for Saturday May 11 at 10 AM. The mowing and trimming bidders from last year will be contacted about their proposals.

The meeting adjourned at 7:37 PM.