

Town of Benton
Select Board Meeting
Monday June 11, 2018

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

Also Present: Dwight Swauger, Treasurer; Joseph Boutin, Jr., road contractor; Mike Stiebitz, Town Clerk; Alan Curtis, Tim Churchill and Billy Jo Sackett

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 6:30 PM

Member Elliott moved approval of the May 14, 2018 meeting minutes, seconded by Member Vincelette and approved.

Alan Curtis appeared before the Board to ask if he needed any approvals for the small parking area off his existing driveway at the start of Howe Hill Road. The Selectboard agreed that he needed no further approval but thanked him for his courtesy.

The Treasurer reported that the operating account had \$63,231.18 and the ICS account had \$250,264.38. Checks were signed to pay bills, including \$4,000 to Haverhill for fire services.

Chairman Darcy reported that he had “scoping” meeting with FEMA and NH Emergency Management at Town Hall last week concerning the October 2017 storm and today took the FEMA inspectors to view the areas of Howe Hill Road and Tunnel Stream Road that still needed paving. As a result of those meetings it appears we can claim reimbursement for the culvert destroyed by the storm which we replaced on Howe Hill Road. Joe Boutin also made the Board aware of the fact that last week he had repaired some of the October storm damage on Tunnel Stream road, a ditch further down the road from his house that had been widened and deepened by the storm. Chairman Darcy also noted a final question he answered from FEMA concerning the July storm, about the stone restoration near and under Davis Brook bridge.

Tim Churchill and Billy Jo Sackett appeared with an additional building permit request for the property adjacent to Town Hall. They were told that in addition to the filing fee that they needed a driveway permit before the Board could consider their permit request.

Chairman Darcy noted the pictures of the Mountain View Cemetery condition and work he and his wife had done that had previously been sent via email. He said the Town needed to 1) repair the stone wall next to Rte. 116, 2) straighten granite posts marking the boundary of the original cemetery, 3) remove a dead birch tree, 4) restore flat gravestone margins, 5) clean gravestones, and 6) restore fallen gravestones. Volunteer help could complete tasks 2-5, but professional help

would be required for tasks 1 & 6. Other issues included the timing of opening up the expansion area by cutting down the trees. Chairman Darcy said doing that work may affect the aesthetics of the cemetery and increase maintenance costs at a time when we don't currently need additional vacant gravesites. Member Elliott agreed. There was a discussion of the parameters of the voluntary work performed by Mr. Darcy and his wife on Mountain View Cemetery with it ultimately agreed that the labor of he and his wife would be donated and all out of pocket costs would be reimbursed by the Town. Other issues discussed included the maintenance of the other Town cemeteries, rules for the cemetery, purchase of plots by non-resident relatives of those buried in the cemetery, grave embellishments, etc. It was decided that the Board would have a separate meeting on June 18 at 6:30 at the Town Hall devoted primarily to a discussion of the cemetery operations.

Chairman Darcy reported that only our current contractor responded to the published request for proposals for road maintenance. He handed out Joe Boutin's proposal and, after reviewed by the Board, moved that the Boutin proposal be accepted, seconded by Member Elliott and approved. Chairman Darcy then presented the Board with a revised three-year contract for road maintenance and noted the changes from the previous contract: the equipment and labor charges in Boutin's proposal were specifically incorporated into the contract and included in an appendix; annual insurance had to be purchased each year of the contract; and work other than road work could be assigned to the contractor at the same equipment and labor rates. After reviewing the new road maintenance contract all Board members and Joe Boutin signed the contract.

Chairman Darcy presented the Board with a draft request for proposals for paving Town roads, specifically the road work approved at the Town Meeting for Tunnel Stream Road and the paving for the roads harmed by the October 2017 storm. The RFP has an estimate of the extent of paving needed to remedy the October storm, but the actual numbers measured by the FEMA inspector will be used. The Board agreed to issue the RFP to known paving contractors in the area (e.g. Blaktop and Bigelow).

The Board reviewed the "representations" the auditors wanted the Board to make in support of the audit numbers. The Board signed the requested representations and Chairman Darcy signed the audit approval document.

At the request of Mike Stiebitz, the Board revisited the tonnage limit signs for Davis Brook bridge to be placed near the Benton Trail turnaround area and at the beginning of Tunnel Stream Road. Because semi-trailers have axles further apart than the length of the bridge, only one axle will be over the bridge at one time, so a higher tonnage limit for those vehicles would not unduly stress the bridge. Chairman Darcy moved that the tonnage limit sign limit tonnage over the bridge to 20 tons for most vehicles but 36 tons for semi-trailers, seconded by Member Vincelette. Member Elliott was concerned that increasing the limit may encourage increased use. The motion was passed, with Member Elliott abstaining

Chairman Darcy reported that the NH DOT informed him that as a result of a more detailed inspection which showed the Route 25 bridge near Learned Farm Road was in worse condition than expected, DOT will not be doing the repair work next year.

Chairman Darcy informed the Board that the contractor who did the logging on the Black Mountain Trail still had not cleaned up his mess of old rusted culverts and the USFS had not restored the trailhead sign to the parking lot. As a result, he again called the USFS's Jason Walker to take care of these matters, but he hasn't yet returned the call.

A letter was received from Josephine Cruz informing the Board of her intention concerning the development of the former Matz property and assuring the Board there would not be two residences on one lot.

The Rockingham County Attorney sent the Town a letter informing us that he intends to offer Dwayne Crim a plea deal that would require his restitution to the Town of the costs of the signs stolen from the Town and that he have no contact with the Town or entry onto our property.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.