



Town of Bernardston **Board of Selectmen**

MEETING MINUTES: November 30, 2011

Select Board Members Present:
Robert R. Raymond, Chairman
Stanley D. Garland
Virginia M. Budness

Others Present:
Jane Dutcher, Finance Committee

The Chairman opened the meeting at 6.01pm.

Warrants

The payroll warrant is approved for \$27,808.78. Motion by Virginia, second by Stan. Motion carried.

The vendor warrant is approved for \$15,643.95. Motion by Virginia, second by Stan. Motion carried.

Minutes

- Regular Meeting November 16, 2011. Motion by Bob. Second by Virginia. Motion carried.

Calendar & Announcements

Bob read aloud the following:

- Board of Health, Wednesday 11/30, 6.30pm at Town Hall.
- Cushman Library, Thursday 12/1, 7pm at Cushman Library.
- Planning Board, Tuesday, 12/6, 6.30pm at Town Hall.
- Agricultural Commission, Wednesday, 12/7, 7pm at Town Hall.

In addition, the following announcements were made:

- Finance Committee/Library Trustees, 12/12, 7pm at Town Hall.
- Lighting of the Christmas Tree at Cushman Park, 12/11 at 5pm sponsored by Kiwanis and the 250th Anniversary Committee. Attendees are requested to bring non-perishable goods to donate to the food pantry.

Permits

None.

Appointments

6.05 Jim Ruder – Mr. Ruder was appointed by the Moderator D. William Pratt to the School Committee to complete the term of Jonathan Raymond through November 2012.

Bob opened discussion stating the PVRSD budget is 64% of the town's total operating budget and a 2% increase at PVRSD impact the Town by 4%, a 5-6% increase results in a 10-12% increase to Bernardston. Bernardston is

BOS Meeting, Nov 30, 2011 (cont.)

1 of 4 towns in the school district and financial stability is a key aspect of maintaining fiscal responsibility. Stan said the school must live within its means suggesting that the administration is top heavy with salaries and overhead. He does not want to see costs cut that affect the classroom. Virginia added that Franklin County is the poorest county in the state. Bob noted that PVRSD takes in 130 school choice from other county schools and 50 buy-in students from Vernon, VT. Virginia wants to be fair to Town employees with cost of living increases as much as the PVRSD employees. The school assessment makes it difficult for Town employees to be fairly treated.

Jim stated he was new to the process, but has had considerable experience in the business environment with challenging the status quo, finding ways to reduce expenses, cutting waste and being more efficient with resources. Jim has a daughter in 1st grade and is a 5-year resident of Bernardston. The Board thanked Jim for his time in meeting with them.

6.15pm Peter Shedd – Fire Chief

Chief Shedd reported to the Board in writing some possible misconceptions regarding the Board's meeting with Abaz Cecunjinan of Belle Notte on October 19th. Bob read aloud the excerpt from the Oct 19 meeting. Peter questioned the crowd management ratio and the seating capacity based on standing counts and seated. Peter said that crowd managers are required to take an online course and receive certification for the same. Also, Peter wants to inspect the egress and ingress conditions at Belle Notte with the help of local building inspector Jim Cerone in accordance with MGL Ch. 148 Sec 34A. Bob asked that Peter's letter be forwarded to Abaz at Belle Notte. Hugh Campbell to do so accordingly.

New Business

Liquor Licenses – Virginia motioned to approve the liquor licenses for The Farm Table LLC and Crumpin-Fox Club, second by Stan. Motion carried. Virginia motioned to approve the change of manager at the Bernardston Veteran's Organization and Crumpin-Fox Club, second by Stan. Motion carried.

Annual Licenses – Bob motioned to approve the following license effective Jan 1, 2012, second by Stan:

Bernardston Auto Wrecking Class II and Class III; Deneault's Auto Class II, Beckwith's Class II and an Amusement Device for Antonio's II. Motion carried.

Police Chief Correspondence – Chief Palmeri reported to the Board that no compliance violations were incurred during the last under-age selling sting at Town establishments.

BES Use – The Bernardston Fire Dept is seeking permission to use BES for pick-up basketball. Motion by Bob, Stan second. Motion carried.

Legal Counsel – Stan mentioned the Police Chief wants to get an opinion from counsel to see if local rules about traffic safety are overruled by the state. The Chief has placed cones at the crosswalk at Kringle Candle to enhance visibility for oncoming traffic. In addition, Bob inquired about the lighting at the crosswalk which is triggered by motion detectors.

BOS Meeting, Nov 30, 2011 (cont.)

Compensatory Time for Highway Workers – Virginia broached the issue of the Town Highway staff not being compensated for their time when the Town Hall is closed due to a weather event or a loss of power. Town Hall personnel do not work their regular hours if the Town Hall is closed, but do get paid for the time the building is closed if occurring between Monday through Thursday. Stan stated he was opposed to any compensatory time since the Highway Dept's job and function is to be out in inclement weather for the sake of public safety. The Highway Dept works a 5-day 40-hour week and does get paid time and a half for hours worked beyond regular hours. Jane Dutcher said that it is only the hourly workers where this would be an issue. Salary employees are not impacted.

Old Business

County Dog Program - The Franklin County Sherriff's Office is asking for the Board to participate in a county dog program managed by the Sherriff's office. Cost to the Town is \$150 for the balance of this fiscal year and \$900 for FY13. Police Chief Jim Palmeri has endorsed the Town's membership in the program. No line item is currently available to fund this program and a reserve fund transfer will be requested. The program does not handle wild animals. Stan said this is win/win for the Town and will relieve the Bernardston police force of dog roundups. Motion by Stan, second by Bob to allocate \$150 from a Reserve Fund transfer to participate in the County Dog Program. Motion carried.

BES Heating System – Bob reported that George Milton is in the process of obtaining installation quotes to install the new burners at BES. Three quotes were sought per state purchasing guidelines and a burner is on order. Bob has contacted the engineer who proposed the project including the burner to now only include the pumps.

Wetland Delineation – The Board met with John Lepore regarding Cushman Park and the encroaching wetlands surrounding the park. Future mitigation measures regarding flooding, debris and silt build-up were also discussed.

FY 13 Budget – Stan mentioned that he would like the Board to consider allowing Town Department heads to make recommendations for pay increases based on merit rather than a percentage across the board for all employees. Virginia asked if a Dept Head wants to give out a 10% raise, can they? Stan said the requests need to be reasonable. Bob said he has not seen this approach work well and it seems to have the opposite effect on employees.

Adjourn With no further business to be discussed, Stan made a motion to declare the meeting adjourned at 7.10pm. Virginia seconded. Motion carried.

Attest: Hugh Campbell, Administrative Assistant

_____, Chairman _____, Member
_____, Member
Robert R. Raymond Stanley D. Garland Virginia M. Budness