

**South Berwick  
Town Council Meeting  
August 23, 2022**

Chair Mallory Cook called the meeting to order at 6:37pm. Councilors present included John James, John C. Kareckas, Jeff Minihan, and Jessica Cyr. Town Manager Tim Pellerin and Assistant Town Manager Jennifer Janelle were also in attendance.

**Approval of Minutes**

1. Board of Assessors: 08-09-22: On a motion by Mr. Kareckas, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as written.
2. Town Council 8-09-22: On a motion by Mr. Kareckas, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as written.

**Treasurer's Warrant**

1. On a motion by Mr. Kareckas, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant dated August 18, 2022 in the amount of \$16,705.32. [FY2022]
2. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Kareckas, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant dated August 18, 2022 in the amount of \$192,427.89. [FY2023]

**Reports & Presentations**

1. Nikki Conant of Sebago Technics gave a brief Power Point regarding the process for updating their 2010 traffic survey. A public information meeting will be scheduled in the fall for input. Note was made that this is not just another survey that will sit on a shelf.

**Public Comment**

1. Cliff Cleary, Spillane's Hill, commented that we should go back to using stickers for the transfer station. Mr. Pellerin commented that staff is in the process of looking into the costs. Our biggest problem is with contractors not individual residents doing renovations.
2. Audrey Fortier, Rodier Rd, commented that there are a lot of people in town that don't register their vehicles here, and that is why there are a lot of out-of-state-plates at the transfer station.
3. Melissa Costella, Boyd's Corner Rd, asked if the transfer station was a service or a business. Mr. Pellerin stated that it is a service for our residents. Mrs. Costella stated that we should be charging higher fees for non-residents. She added that going there has become an inconvenience and many people now use dumpsters, which creates more large trucks on our roads.
4. John Costella, Boyd's Corner Rd, commented that the problem of non-residents using our facility started as a result of the pay-as-you-throw bags. He also noted that our facility was built a long time ago and has not increased in size to accommodate the increase in population. Mrs. Cook noted that our hauling costs have increased by 47%. Mr. Pellerin stated that we are looking into changes.

**Town Manager's Report**

- Highway: Working on Belle Marsh Road paving and Boyd's Corner Road culverts. Street sweeping will begin next week.
- Police: 7 arrests, 4 accidents, and 126 traffic stops (52 on Portland St). Our department is joining with others to form the Southern Maine Chief's Group. Next year the Dept. will be switching firearms (to match what other departments are using) as a strategic plan to allow for the sharing of equipment with other departments. PD is working with Fire and the school on incident planning.
- Fire: 16 calls and 12 of our crew helped with the fatal auto crash on Route 4 in Berwick on Sunday. Rick Chute has been promoted to Captain and Training Officer. We hope to fill the open Lieutenant position by September 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Code: Issued 6 building permits. Work continues on cannabis related ordinances. Still working with several property owners to bring them into compliance.

- Planning: Great Hill Rd 5-lot subdivision is in the preliminary stages. Work continues on Solar Farms.
- Library: July was a busy month with 2279 patrons and 2995 items borrowed. The ice cream party on the 13<sup>th</sup> was a big hit. Local author Mary Lou Bagley will be heading a book discussion on September 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>. The new software should be up and running in September.
- Recreation: We have posted for a new Program Director to replace the former Assistant Recreation Director position. Adult yoga was a big hit, a new session will start in September. Over 200 senior center memberships have been received.
- Assessing: Have received over 50 tax stabilization program applications. GIS mapping is almost complete.
- Town Clerk: Have issued 3 sets of nomination papers for Council, one returned. Have issued 1 set of nomination papers for school board, one returned. This should be a busy election cycle; we already have over 50 absentee requests. The new State Automation Voter Registration is up and running. It allows for people applying for a driver's license or state ID to register electronically; we have processed over 60 so far. The Municipal Registrar still has final say whether they are added to the voting list or not.
- Transfer Station: New rates go into effect on September 1<sup>st</sup>. We have ordered a new sign "Resident dumping only/No commercial dumping." Hazardous Waste Day has been scheduled for September 10<sup>th</sup> from 9-1 at the bus garage on Route 4.
- Finance: Tax bills have been mailed out. Still working on year end and preparing for the audit.
- Administration: We have hired Pete Gitschier as our new custodian; replacing Jim Cassell, who has retired. Jen and Lt Upton attended grant training. Two traffic control signs have been ordered for Portland Street. Stormwater is due to the DEP on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Due to the bad acoustics, we will be moving the council meetings to the conference room at the Police Station. Consensus of the Council was to move the meetings to the Police Station. Work on the Route 236/91 intersection will begin in October by marking and clearing land. The completion date is December 2023.

### **Unfinished Business**

1. Manager Pellerin gave the Council an update on the State Roads transfer. The Town will have significantly increased maintenance of the roadways. The State will still handle signage, speed limits, and maintenance of the Great Works Bridge. Projected date for the transfer is July 1, 2023.

Mr. Kareckas made note that all maintenance work, especially dealing with cracking, should be appropriately fixed by the State before it paves and turns over the roads to us.

### **New Business**

1. The Council discussed the Paul Street Parking Lot. The lot was purchased in 1997 for the specific purpose of adding parking for the downtown businesses. The owner of a neighboring apartment house stated that she had a verbal agreement with former Manager Ellsworth allowing her tenants to park overnight. Her tenants are now getting ticketed for overnight parking. The ordinance doesn't allow overnight parking in that lot.

Mr. James made note that with the possibility of losing other parking in the downtown, the spots in that lot will become more necessary for business use.

Mr. Minihan, although sympathetic, doesn't feel it appropriate to change our ordinance to accommodate one property owner.

It was agreed to allow the overnight parking for a limited time while the Council decides the next course of action.

2. The Council discussed the potential sale of a foreclosed property on Bennett Road. We have two parties interested in purchasing the property, one is an abutter.

On a motion by Mr. Kareckas, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to put the subject property (Map 3 Lot 37A) out to public bid pursuant to A158.2, A.1.

3. On a motion by Mr. Kareckas, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to write-off property taxes for Owner Unknown properties (Accts 3368, 3369, 3370, 3371, 3372, 3373, 3374, and 3375) for 2019 in the amount of \$1,466.80.

4. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to write-off personal property taxes for the following accounts:

#268 Mikey's Pizza \$183.00 for 2017

#213 Isidore on the Rocks \$203.04 for 2020

#209 Vacuum Village \$1.36 for 2020

5. The Council briefly discussed the need for increasing our building code fees. There were no negative comments from the public.

On a motion by Mr. Kareckas, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to adopt the amendments to Chapter 60, Building Code, §3C Fees, as presented.

### **Councilor Comments**

1. Ms. Cyr:

-The Comp Plan Committee attended the last Planning Board meeting. Stormwater Management and low impact development standards were discussed. The possibility of a joint working group was also mentioned.

-School starts on Wednesday the 31<sup>st</sup>. Seacoast Christian starts Wednesday the 24<sup>th</sup>.

-The Comp Plan Update committee will be meeting on Monday.

2. Mr. James:

-Thanked Jay and the crew for the good work ditching and mowing.

-Thanked Chief Ruger for the increased traffic enforcement.

3. Mr. Kareckas:

-Mowing looks good. Reminded everyone that it is inappropriate to put signs on the war memorial. They will be removed

### **Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Kareckas, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:13pm.

Attest:

Barbara Bennett, CCM