

South Berwick Town Council Meeting September 27, 2022

Chair Mallory Cook called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. 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.

Executive Session

1. On a motion by Mr. Kareckas, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to enter executive session at 6:00pm, pursuant to 1MRSA §405.6A, to discuss a personnel issue.

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Kareckas, it was unanimously voted to end the executive session at 6:12pm.

Approval of Minutes

1. Board of Assessors 09-13-22: On a motion by Mr. Kareckas, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as written.

2. On a motion by Mr. Kareckas, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to reconsider the vote taken on September 13, 2022 regarding the sale of property at 22 Belle Marsh Rd. Due to a staff error, the wrong address was listed as the Town's. The correct Town owned property for sale is 40 Belle Marsh Rd.

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Kareckas, it was unanimously voted to authorize the sale of 40 Belle Marsh Rd, Tax Map 4, Lot 27B.

3. Town Council 09-13-22: On a motion by Mr. Kareckas, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes after correcting the spelling of Gregg Zinser to Greg Zinser.

Treasurer's Warrant

1. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant dated September 22, 2022 in the amount of \$309,276.31.

On a motion by Mr. Kareckas, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to hear the Town Manager's Report after public comment.

Public Comment

1. Melissa Costella, Boyd's Corner Rd, asked what the cost of the traffic study was and whether it was performance based. Mr. Pellerin responded that it is not performance based, and the cost to update the 2010 study is \$44,950. (A new, full survey could cost upwards of \$100,000.) The scope of the agreement is that Sebago Technics will evaluate vehicle and walking traffic patterns and provide solutions to mitigate the various issues.

Town Manager's Report

-Highway: The fire suppression system has been installed in the new facility. Currently working on storm drain cleaning and installations. Two new traffic calming signs have been placed on Portland Street and Main Street (near Counting House). Striping on Belle Marsh and Hooper Sands Road should be complete by the end of October (about \$2100).

-Police: 7 arrests, 9 accidents, and 93 traffic stops. Will be interviewing 3 candidates to fill the 11th position. Detective Sergeant Stephens will be conducting a fraud awareness training at the Community Center this week. Lt. Upton noted how well our Fire, Public Works, and Police work together at accident scenes. Ogunquit PD is looking into building a new station and would like to tour our facility.

-Fire: 18 calls; 305 year to date. Hope to finalize the choice for a new Lieutenant by week's end. Lt. Leach is coordinating with schools and daycares to conduct fire drills for Fire Prevention week.

-Code Enforcement: Issued 7 building permits, 3 plumbing permits and conducted 29 inspections. Staff has also responded to 3 FOAA requests.

- Planning: Will be submitting revision 6 of the ordinance language for solar farms to the Council. Still waiting on quotes for a 3rd party review of 406 Main Street. The ZBA will meet on October 4th regarding a timber harvest on Ogunquit Road.
- Library: 2760 people visited the library in August, and 2358 items were borrowed. Maureen's Dungeons & Dragons program is going well.
- Recreation: The new Programming Coordinator is working on informative sessions for the senior luncheons. The yoga and music programs are going well. Working on a proposal that would allow for the use of Powderhouse Hill to the ski team & boosters to hold practice on Mondays. Nikki thanked the police for the added patrol near the ball fields, especially during soccer. Former Manager, Perry Ellsworth will be back to play Santa at Breakfast with Santa. 30 seniors attended The American Music Cities of Nashville and Memphis trip. October 3rd is the Winnepesaukee foliage cruise.
- Assessing: We have received over 170 applications for the Tax Stabilization program. Working on new sales figures and tree growth reporting.
- Town Clerk: Have received over 400 absentee ballots to date. Have processed over 40 new voters through the Automatic Voter Registration program.
- Transfer Station: The new 'Resident Only' sign is working. We were filling up to 7 canisters a week; we are down to 2 or 3. Due to manufacturing issues, we can only get the blue bags with drawstrings.
- Finance: Lots of tax payments are coming in. Peter Hall was here last week to conduct the audit. He has more to finish and will make a presentation to the Council in December.
- Econ Development: Have met with other departments to see what needs are and if they can be funded with TIF funds. Working with Sebago Technics on the traffic study. Will be working on the Punkintown TIF and starting work on a new Economic Development TIF for downtown.
- Admin: Have begun the 1st steps of the town office project. Revize is on step 5 of 8 for the website upgrade. Have met with the Fire Chief and consultants for York Ambulance. Attended the monthly school meeting; discussed the school funding formula, budget, and timelines. Our first online newsletter will be published October 1st.

Unfinished Business

1. The Council discussed the Paul Street parking lot. Karen Marlsbenden, owner of 10 Portland Street, was present for the discussion. Ms. Marlsbenden informed the current manager that she had a verbal agreement with the prior manager that allowed her tenants to park in the lot overnight. Our ordinance does not allow overnight parking in that lot. Ms. Marlsbenden stated that she has been looking into other options, but would like to rent 3 or 4 spaces. General consensus of the Council was to acknowledge the difficult situation, but expressed concerns of setting a precedent.

On a motion by Mr. Kareckas, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to leave the current ordinance in place and to enforce it.

2. Mr. Pellerin stated, that as a result of the recent workshop regarding the town office project, he was looking for direction for moving forward. We are at the very start of the project. We only have a real estate appraisal on the current building; and may need an actual feasibility study done to determine the actual condition of the current building.

The Council also discussed conducting a straw poll at the Election to gauge resident feelings for the location of the 'new' town offices. It was agreed to discuss and finalize language for the poll at the meeting of October 25th.

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Kareckas, it was unanimously voted to authorize the Manager to draft an RFP for a town hall feasibility study. Note was made that there are funds to cover the cost in the Capital Improvement budget.

New Business

1. The Council met with Jane Brekke, a candidate for membership on the Conservation Commission.

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to appoint Jane Brekke to the Conservation Commission with a term to expire June 30, 2025.

2. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Kareckas, it was unanimously voted to hold a public hearing on October 11, 2022, at 6:30pm, to receive comment on the proposed annual updates to the General Assistance Ordinance.

3. The Council and Manager discussed the need for new Councilors and Planning Board members to receive training. Mr. Kareckas noted that Zoning Board of Appeals members should also be included.

Consensus was to authorize the Manager to draft a policy regarding orientation and training of Town Councilors, Planning Board members, and Zoning Board of Appeals members.

4. Mr. Kareckas made note that the Main Street Revitalization plan, specific to the B1 Zone and the Driscoll Brook area need to be revisited. Ordinance language needs work. Mrs. Cook suggested that this would be something for the Planner to look at.

Councilor Comments

1. Mr. Kareckas:

-Asked for the status of the gas facility upgrades on Route 236 and the level of 1st responder and safety coordination with our Police and Fire. Mr. Pellerin explained that they will be conducting training for local responders.

-Asked if the Town Hall Streams tab on the front page of the website could be removed. It is no longer functional. Mr. Pellerin stated that we will check on it, but it will be gone as part of the upgrade anyway.

2. Ms. Cyr:

-The Comp Plan Update Committee has received over 1000 completed surveys. The Committee will be scheduling a workshop evening.

3. Mrs. Cook:

-Reminded everyone of the traffic study meeting on October 18th. It will be held at 6:30pm in the 3rd floor auditorium at Town Hall.

-Received consensus to move the Marijuana workshop from November 1st to November 29th.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Kareckas, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:32pm.

Attest:

Barbara Bennett, CCM