

**South Berwick
Town Council Meeting
January 31, 2023**

Vice-Chair Jeffrey Minihan called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Councilors present included Mallory Cook, John James, Jessica Cyr, and Melissa Costella. Town Manager Tim Pellerin was also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes

1. Board of Assessors 1-10-23: On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Cook, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as written.
2. Town Council 1-10-23: On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Cook, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as written.

Treasurer's Warrant

1. On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant dated January 17, 2023 in the amount of \$241,620.76.

Reports & Presentations

1. York River Watershed Stewardship Plan update by Jean Demetracopoulos:
Mrs. Demetracopoulos explained that the group is no longer called a Study Committee; it is now the Stewardship Committee. South Berwick has the least amount of land area as part of the Plan, but should still find it to be helpful with implementation of storm-water education and, therefore, help bolster the Plan itself.
2. Comprehensive Plan update & survey review: Postponed

Public Comment

1. Pat Robinson, Brattle St, commented that she had signed up to receive email notifications on the new website, but hasn't been receiving any. Mr. Pellerin stated that he would have the Admin Asst check on it.

Unfinished Business

1. On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to hold a public hearing on Tuesday, February 14, 2023, at the Police Station, to receive comment on the proposed amendments to the Zoning Ordinance regarding Commercial Solar Energy Facilities.

Town Manager's Report

- Highway: Spent 372 hours working on storm. Used 256 tons of salt during the storm. Two large trucks were repaired in house; saving a significantly on the cost. The custodial position is still open.
- Police: Made 10 arrests, handled 10 accidents, and conducted 50 traffic stops. New Officer Sprouse started at the BLEPT 43rd Police Academy on January 20th. Sponsored a birthday party for a 5-year boy that wants to be a South Berwick Police Officer when he grows up.
- Fire: 114 calls in the last week; most storm related. 380 hours on storm related work.
- Code Enforcement: Issued 4 building permits, 4 plumbing permits, 1 demo, and 1 violation.
- Planning: Working on two projects, 406 Main St. and Samville Estates. A new 3-lot subdivision and 2 new businesses are preparing for submittal to the Board.
- Library: Starting a Coding Program for age groups on Wednesdays. Trying extended hours to 8pm to attract more use.
- Recreation: Powderhouse Hill finally opened. Snowshoe loan program has picked up. AARP will begin free tax preparation on February 10th at the Community Center.
- Assessing: GIS is live on the website. Will be sending out the personal property declaration letters with the BETE applications. Recommends a full measure and list revaluation, the last one was done in 2003.
- Town Clerk: Having a hard time filling the open position in the Business Office. Dog licenses are now late and there is a \$25 per dog late fee.

- Transfer Station: People are refusing to recycle and break down items for the bins. Received complaints that the new bags are too small; will order larger bags next time. A lot of people are refusing to show ID (residency). These plate numbers are being supplied to the Police Chief.
- Economic Development: Waiting on Augusta's approval of our TIF applications. Working with a couple businesses interested in locating on Route 236. Have secured a volunteer willing to work about 30 hours a week.
- Finance/HR: 1st round of budget meetings is complete. The Safety Committee held its first meeting on January 10th. Still waiting on more quotes for the town hall boilers.
- Administration: Reorganizing staff positions/offices for better work flow. Working on staff evaluations. RFP's for town hall are due February 1st.

Councilor Comments

1. Mr. James:

- Public Works, Fire, and Police did an awesome job handling the recent storm.
- Commented that a workshop is still needed to discuss the ordinance changes for cannabis.

2. Mrs. Costella:

- Asked if the shelter would be open this weekend in light of the cold weather coming. Mr. Pellerin stated that the shelter is only open in emergencies. However, if people lose power, it may be opened as a warming station.
- Commented that the sand/salt pile at the food pantry is left uncovered. This makes it difficult for some people to get to it, especially when it gets covered in snow or saturated with rain. Mr. Pellerin will have highway look into covering the pile.
- Commented that it was 'awesome' to sit in on the staff meeting. There is a lot going on.

3. Ms. Cyr:

- Very impressed with how well our crews responded during the recent storm.
- The January 30th Comp Plan Update meeting was cancelled.

4. Mrs. Cook:

- Thankful for all the staff efforts during the recent storm.

5. Mr. Minihan:

- Commented that it was a 'great experience' attending the staff meeting.
- Glad to know that we have a warming shelter when needed. He thanked Tim for making sure it was ready for use.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Cook, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:08pm.

Attest:

Barbara Bennett, CCM