

**South Berwick  
Town Council Meeting  
May 9, 2023**

The Chair reported the following to the Clerk:

Chair Mallory Cook called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Councilors present included John James, Jeff Minihan, Jessica Cyr, and Melissa Costella.

**Executive Session**

1. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to enter executive session at 6:01pm pursuant to 1MRSA §405.6A, to conduct interviews with a prospective planning board member and prospective members to the York River Stewardship Committee.

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to end the executive session at 6:24pm.

The regular meeting commenced at 6:30pm with the Clerk, Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager all present.

**Approval of Minutes**

1. Public Hearing 04-25-23: On a motion by Mr. Minihan, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as written.

2. Town Council 12-27-23: On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as written.

**Treasurer's Warrant**

1. On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant dated May 3, 2023, in the amount of \$871,865.14. Note was made that this includes the monthly school payment.

**Reports & Presentations**

1. The Police Department, represented by Chief Ruger and Lt Upton, received the designation as a Maine Law Enforcement Accredited Police Department from MLEAP. Edward Tolan, retired Chief, and Shawn O'Leary of Dirigo Safety explained that the process to become certified takes about 3 years and is very difficult to achieve. There are 167 standards; and all must be met. There are specific policies, procedures, and training requirements.

Accreditation shows that the Department is well trained and constantly reviewing and updating its practices and policies. The Town will also save 15% on its liability insurance through Maine Municipal Association.

Congratulations to the South Berwick Police Department.

2. The Council awarded plaques to the winners of the Town's writing contest. The winning entries can be read on the Town's website. 1<sup>st</sup> place: Greg Ouellette, 2<sup>nd</sup> place: Tamara Milliard, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place: Rebecca Henry. Thanks, and great job!

**Public Comment**

1. Pat Robinson, Brattle St, Conservation Chair, made note of three upcoming events: 5/13 is a Migratory Bird Walk with Brett Cropp at the Town Forest, 5/18 is Water Test Kit drop off day at Town Hall 9-11, 5/18 is the Native Plant Webinar at 6:30pm on zoom.

**Unfinished Business**

1. On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was voted 4-1 (Mr. Minihan opposed) to appoint Aaron Rouse to the Planning Board as an alternate with a term to expire June 30, 2025.

2. On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to appoint Karl Honkonen to the York River Stewardship Committee as a full member with a term to expire June 30, 2027 and to appoint Philip Brekke as an alternate member with a term to expire June 30, 2026.

3. Mrs. Cook noted that the Council held a public hearing on April 25<sup>th</sup> for the required MS4 (Stormwater) ordinance changes. She also noted that the Council did not receive any public comments.

On a motion by Mr. Minihan, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to adopt the amendments to Code Chapters 96, 108, 121, & 140 as written.

4. The Manager updated the Council on the ordinance work regarding LD2003. Rep Tiffany Roberts informed the Council that LD 665, which would have granted an extension amongst other changes, was killed in committee. A new bill has been introduced (LD1706) and will need a 2/3 vote to pass.

Discussion ensued regarding the involvement of Leejay from SMPD with the development of the ordinance language for the required changes. Jeni McCabe, CEO, explained that Leejay has been very involved and will be reviewing the presentation that will be made to the Planning Board and Council.

5. Traffic Study update: The Manager explained that he has met with the MDOT and KACTS to discuss the proposed changes made by Sebago Technics. To be eligible for federal grants Sebago will have to complete the reports for the roundtables. Mr. Pellerin made it clear that the MDOT will only consider the project if the Town is serious and plans on moving forward. We also may want to prepare for participating in the upcoming federal Piscataqua Bridge project.

Cliff Cleary, Spillane's Hill, expressed his concerns with the loss of parking for the downtown businesses. Manager Pellerin stated that he has been in communication with several of the downtown business owners.

### **New Business**

1. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to cancel the June 13<sup>th</sup> meeting to accommodate the scheduled school budget election. All business will be conducted at the meeting on June 27<sup>th</sup>.

2. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to accept the 2023 ONE Boat vin #0BC38R1H233 and the 2023 Venture boat trailer vin #47GAB1617PB005065 from the Firefighter's Association.

The boat and trailer are excepted with much thanks to the Firefighter's Association. The boat will be a valuable asset to the Department.

3. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant calling the MSAD Budget Validation Referendum on June 13<sup>th</sup>.

4. On a motion by Mr. Minihan, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to accept the safety grants from Maine Municipal. \$2500 for dump locks (safety mechanism) at the Transfer Station and \$3140 for security cameras at the Town Garage on Front St.

5. The Council and Manager briefly discussed the disposition of the old Red Barn. The building is unsafe and not usable. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Cook, it was unanimously voted to authorize the Town Manager to have the building removed. The funds to be expended from the CIP Account.

Mr. Pellerin explained that the plan is to level the area and create a gravel parking area. This should help with the overflow from the ballfields. Hussey Excavation is donating its time and our crew will help with the project. The property is restricted to recreational uses and cannot be developed.

6. Recreation was able to secure a new 'warming hut' for the ice rink at Powderhouse Hill. Mr. Pellerin stated that they were able to get 4 buildings for the price of one. \$3000 was granted from the Vaughan Fund and the Town will pitch in \$1905.

7. The Manager presented the Council with a draft for the new Council Rules of Order & Procedure. The Council agreed to review the document and discuss it at the next meeting.

8. Mr. Pellerin informed the Council that the Administration is looking into starting a Town Facebook page. This would provide an additional avenue for disseminating valid information to the public. The page would not be interactive; the public will not be able to comment. It will be made clear who to call for the correct information.

-Deb Ganster, Emery's Bridge Rd, commented that our town meeting was not advertised on our website. [This was corrected the next morning]

-Joseph Dallatore, Emery's Bridge Rd, stated that this may not be the best use of staff time. He also noted that a lot of people do not use Facebook and the public should not be required to set up accounts and log in to get information.

Note was made that this is just an additional form of communication. All information is still available on the Town's website. Also, the Town has found that there are several social media pages that have posted a lot of wrong information. This will help the Town correct those errors.

### **Town Manager's Report**

-On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to dispense with the reading of the Manager's Report. The report can be found on the Manager's Page on our website.

### **Councilor Comments**

None of the Councilors had any comments.

### **Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:56pm.

Attest:

Barbara Bennett, CCM