

**South Berwick
Town Council Meeting
August 8, 2023**

Chair Mallory Cook called the meeting to order at 6:52pm. Councilors present included John James, Jeff Minihan, Jessica Cyr, and Melissa Costella. Town Manager Tim Pellerin and Assistant Town Manager Jennifer Janelle were also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes

1. Town Council 07-25-23: On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Ms. Cyr, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as written.

Treasurer's Warrant

1. On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant dated August 3, 2023, in the amount of \$4,136.70.

On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant dated August 3, 2023, in the amount of \$1,355,104.98. This warrant includes the annual payment to the county and the monthly school payment.

Public Comment

1. Roxanne Poulin, 406 Main St, read a letter endorsed by 17 local businesses. The letter stated that they are forming a Downtown Business Alliance and are very in favor of downtown revitalization. A copy of the letter is attached in the official minutes book.

2. David Bradley, Emery's Bridge Rd, congratulated Councilor Costella and her husband on their 20th wedding anniversary.

Unfinished Business

1. Councilor Cyr explained that the Comp Plan Update Committee has been working on goals and strategies to implement the Plan. She stated that the Committee is looking for feedback from the Council. She asked, 'how do we turn the document into action.' Mr. Pellerin explained the process for public input, Council review, and final adoption. It was the consensus of the Council that it would be the responsible party for initiating actions.

New Business

1. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to issue a Cannabis Establishment License to Pied Cow, LLC.

2. The council discussed the request from Ashley Norwood, a resident on Bittersweet Lane to close the road for a block party on a Saturday in September. Mrs. Costella expressed her concerns with how many of the residents are aware that this may happen.

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to table action on the item until the next meeting on August 22nd.

3. The Council discussed the Maine Municipal Association (MMA) Risk Assessment Property Survey. The insurance rep identified several safety issues at various town facilities and we have 60 days to respond how/when the problems will be remedied. We have until the next inspection to complete the repairs.

4. The Manager explained that resulting from the MMA Risk Assessment, he has received a quote from and authorized Civil Consultants to provide a structural investigation of exterior masonry work at the Town Hall and Community Center. The cost is not to exceed \$5,750.

5. The Council discussed the need for a Downtown Revitalization Plan and reviewed the proposed RFP (Request for Proposals). Denise Clavette, Economic Development Director explained that the Revitalization Plan is a necessary part of the application for a new Downtown TIF. Mrs. Clavette informed everyone that there will be a meeting at M&T bank on August 24th @ 5:30pm for downtown business owners to help begin the process.

6. The Council discussed safety issues involving some of the downtown buildings. Mrs. Costella asked about liability if someone was hurt by debris falling from a building. Mr. Pellerin explained, that like the transfer station, use of town facilities, including sidewalks and parking lots are use at your own risk (per the Maine Torte law). If there are external safety issues with commercial buildings, the CEO has the right to conduct an external visual inspection and proceed accordingly.

Sam Flinkstrom, 406 Main St, made note of a facade improvement grant program. Mr. Pellerin stated that it is under legal review.

7. The Council discussed safety issues at the transfer station. Comments were made that it is not the perfect situation and is not a great layout. Future changes are on the radar and funds are being put into the capital improvement account.

David Bradley, Emery's Bridge Rd, stated that not allowing vehicles to park by the plastics has made it difficult for the elderly or infirmed to walk up and down the hill.

8. On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to hold workshops on the first Tuesday of the month at 6:00pm in the Town Hall auditorium to discuss the future town hall.

Town Manager's Report

-Police: The new cruisers are in. The Nite Out in York was well attended. Arrest & call volumes are up. Being short staffed, traffic stops are down. Will be hosting a "Rebuilding after COVID" workshop at the senior center. Our new officer will be attending the academy for 18 weeks.

-Fire: Has been busy with 17 calls; YTD 326. Boat training is complete. Staff will be conducting smoke and search training at the old red barn. Planning on holding a recruitment drive.

Highway: Roadside mowing, ditching, and washout repairs are ongoing. Working with new FEMA rep; we may be getting more money. The new F550 plow truck will be getting outfitted in September. Hazard Waste Day will be early on August 26th.

-Transfer Station: The new camera system is up and running. Stickers seem to be working.

-HR: We will be receiving a 5% credit on our Worker's Comp. Working on various safety issues for our insurances. Preparing for tax bills.

-Assessing: Set up a "how to" for TRIO assessing data. Doing quality checks on map/lot changes, name changes, etc.

-Code/Planning: Have issued 5 occupancy permits, 5 plumbing permits, and 5 building permits. Have taken several training classes; the next is for stormwater. Planning has 1 pending application for Samville Estates.

-Town Clerk: Working on step-by-step instructions for the next clerk including month end reports for IF&W, concealed weapons, & dog licensing, vitals quarter end reports, motor vehicle weekly reports, rapid renewal uploads & downloads, daily/weekly/monthly, setting up zoom meetings, downloading the recording from zoom and uploading it to YouTube, how to finalize the council agenda & support docs, how to post agendas & support docs to website, how to set up for an election, issue nomination papers, ordering ballots, etc. Staff have issued over 1200 transfer station stickers so far. To date have issued 2 sets of nomination papers for council & 1 set for school board.

-Library: The summer reading program has wrapped up. Several staff members have vacations. Teddy's writers' group is going well and well attended.

-Recreation: The seniors have had several successful trips, and more are planned. Will be hosting workshops on probate & estate planning and dementia. Senior Center memberships are up.

-Economic Development: Continue to research grant opportunities for various departments. Working on establishing a business alliance to help create business expansion and retention.

-Administration: Continue to work with FEMA on the Christmas storm. Working on getting a quote for a new elevator. Working on getting a virtual tour video of the Town Hall. The General Assistance audit went well.

Mr. Pellerin shared the Google analytics of hits on our site with the Council.

Councilor Comments

1. Mr. James:

-Thanked Chief Ruger for showing off the new cruisers. The Chief has done well at providing quality, safe equipment for the officers.

2. Mr. Minihan:

-Reminded everyone of Lantern Fest on Wednesday night at Spring Hill.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Cook, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:06pm.

Attest:

Barbara Bennett, CCM