

**South Berwick
Town Council Meeting
September 12, 2023**

Chair Mallory Cook called the meeting to order at 6:16pm. 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.

Executive Session

1. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to enter executive session at 6:16pm, pursuant to 1MRSA §405.6A to conduct an interview with a potential planning board member.

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to end the executive session at 6:34pm.

Approval of Minutes

1. Town Council 08-22-23: 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. James, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant dated September 7, 2023, in the amount of \$1,658,809.94. This includes the monthly school payment.

Reports & Presentations

1. We have received two quotes for the Downtown Revitalization Plan RFP. Staff has requested that 2 council members be part of the selection committee to award the bid.

2. Staff met with MDOT and SMPDC staff to discuss the traffic study update and the next steps. We do not need a conceptual design; MDOT has agreed that the Sebago Technics Report meets the criteria. The MDOT funding may be pushed up from FY26 to FY24; and the town would be responsible for a 20% match, about \$100,000. This process ensures that the MDOT is the project manager overseeing the RFP.

Public Comment

1. Brad Christo, Oldfields Rd, read a letter regarding the Building Committee. He expressed his displeasure at the lack of the Council to involve the Building Committee in the 'town hall' process. Why was the Building Committee not included at the beginning of this project?

Unfinished Business

1. The Council reviewed and discussed the final report from Port City Architecture regarding the town hall. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Ms. Cyr, it was unanimously voted to adopt the final report from Port City Architecture, as presented.

New Business

1. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to table the consideration of a planning board appointment until the next meeting.

2. On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to hold a public hearing on Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at 6:30pm to receive input on the annual General Assistance Ordinance updates.

3. On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to hold a public hearing on Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at 6:35pm to receive input on the proposed changes to Chapter A142, Assessors Lot Merger Policy.

4. The Council discussed the recommendations from the Planning Board to make ordinance changes based on new state legislation, LD2003 (additional dwelling units).

Consensus was to hold a workshop with the Planning Board on Wednesday, October 25, 2023, at 6:30pm to discuss the ordinance changes regarding LD2003. Mr. Minihan expressed his concerns with the proposed language.

5. The Council discussed the need to replace the 2005 F250 used for recreation and public works. Repair costs are over \$14,000. It is recommended that a new or used truck be purchased to replace it.

Mr. James made a motion to reallocate up to \$40,000 in the Highway CIP account to be used to purchase a replacement truck for parks & recreation. Mr. Minihan seconded. After a brief discussion, the motion failed 1-4 (Mr. Minihan in favor).

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to reallocate up to \$58,000 in the Highway CIP account to be used to purchase a replacement truck for Parks and Recreation.

Town Manager's Report

-Economic Development: MDOT is in support of our downtown traffic project. Working on the formation of the downtown business alliance and the newly approved façade grant program.

Continue to research grant opportunities for various departments.

-Town Clerk: Have issued close to 2400 transfer station permits so far. Continue to work on 'manuals' for the next clerk. The office will be closed on Tuesday the 12th so staff can attend the annual Town and City Clerk Association Networking Day and Business Meeting.

-Library: Maureen got married over Labor Day weekend. Have begun working on programs for Halloween and Fairy Houses. Asked about getting the building washed. Discussed how to handle unsolicited items being left on the porch at the library.

-Recreation: Senior and youth programs are being well attended. Soccer has started; we have 22 teams. Have been receiving a lot of calls about renting space at the Community Center.

-Assessing: Valuation reports are now available online. Working on the 2023 valuation report for the state. Reviewing tree growth. Tyanne and Britney are very helpful in the office.

-Code/Planning: Have issued 1 building permit, conducted 26 inspections, and issued 4 occupancy permits. The Planning Board is moving ahead with a public hearing for combining the I1 and I2 zones into one, more customer friendly zone.

-Transfer Station: Traffic is down but steady. Expenses for disposals are still covering expenses. Will be on vacation next week.

-Highway: FEMA clean-up is done. Final paving on Park and Pleasant is complete. Continue to work on ditching and mowing. Prepping to remove the old salt shed. The red barn will be demolished on October 2nd.

-HR/Taxes: Heather has been on vacation. She thanked everyone for helping with her work.

-Fire: Attended 27 calls. Had numerous calls regarding down trees and limbs during Friday's storm. Getting ready for Fire Prevention Week in October. Will have one last training session at the red barn before it gets demolished.

-Police: The Chief's and Detective's cars are back in service. Will be helping in the 2nd part of a Make-A-Wish for a child, by providing an escort to the turnpike (for his trip to the Portland Jet Port, heading to Disney). Officer Legendre is half-way through his academy training. The Pumpkin Man Triathlon went well. Motor vehicle stops are up, crashes are down.

-Finance: Prepping for the annual audit. Worked with Firefly Media on the video of town hall. Working on quotes for the elevator and windows.

-Admin: Safety Committee meetings are mandatory for assigned staff. Preparing for an upsurge in the flu and Covid. Department heads are responsible for keeping their staff informed.

-It is the 22nd anniversary of the terror attacks on our country. We should all be mindful.

Councilor Comments

1. Mr. James:

-Commended the public's work crew for their efforts.

-Thank you to everyone that helped after the wind took down a lot of the tents for the Pumpkin man Triathlon. After the storm passed, a lot of people showed up to help clean-up after.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Cook, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:45pm.

Attest:

Barbara Bennett, CCM

The Clerk was not present at the meeting. These minutes were written by the Clerk after viewing the recording of the meeting.