

**South Berwick
Town Council Meeting
October 24, 2023**

Chair Mallory Cook called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. 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. Board of Assessors 10-10-23: On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as written.
2. Town Council 10-10-23: 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 October 19, 2023, in the amount of \$27,279.18.

Public Comment

1. Paul Steinhauer, Hill Dr, commented on the Council discussion that took place at the July 25th meeting concerning the downtown revitalization RFP. At that meeting, one Councilor was speaking when another Councilor moved the question. Mr. Steinhauer stated that he found it disturbing that one councilor would try to squelch the discussion. "Do you or do you not want citizen input?" The Board needs to work as a cohesive group.
2. Pat Robinson, SOBO Central, reminded everyone of the Keep South Berwick Warm Soup Supper at Spring Hill on November 1st from 5-7.

Unfinished Business

1. Mrs. Cook explained that the Council held an interview with the prospective planning board member at the last meeting. Mrs. Cook noted that for full disclosure, the applicant is not a South Berwick resident. Mrs. Costella commented that she did not feel she could vote on the appointment because of the lack of discussion. Mrs. Costella recommended that the interview and appointment process be changed to allow for more discussion amongst the Council.

On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to enter executive session at 6:41pm pursuant to 1MRSA §405.6A to discuss the appointment.

On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to end the executive session at 6:45pm.

Mrs. Cook made a motion to appoint Lindsay Quinn to the Planning Board to fill the regular seat with a term to expire June 30, 2024. Mr. Minihan seconded the motion. Mr. James abstained from the execution session, discussion, and vote because he was not present for the interview.

Motion to appoint Lindsay Quinn failed with a 0-4 vote.

New Business

1. The Council and Manager discussed the needed repairs on Fire Tank 3. Three quotes were received: Bulldog Fire Apparatus repairs @ \$14,020, Mick Body Works repairs @ \$28,340, & Lakes Region Fire Apparatus refurbishment @ \$173,764.

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to authorize the Manager to transfer \$9950 from the Undesignated Fund Balance to the Fire Department toward the repairs of Tank 3, at a total cost of \$14,020.

2. The Council discussed the appointment of committee members for the Downtown Revitalization Plan. The Committee will be advisory only.

On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to authorize the Town Manager to appoint the members of the Downtown Revitalization Plan Committee, with the opportunity for the addition of more members later.

Town Manager's Report

- Highway: Picked up the new F550. All trucks have been serviced and ready for winter. Installed new culverts & milled Boyd's Corner Rd. Mowing is ongoing. New hire Dan Hurley started today.
- Police: 6 arrests, 7 accidents, and 53 traffic stops. Looking into getting a Sweetser liaison for mental health counseling. Working with Eliot on the possibility of sharing an ACO.
- Fire: 11 calls; 412 YTD. Holding an open house on Sunday from 10-2. The recruitment campaign has resulted in several inquiries. The school is now playing an integral role as part of the Town's emergency management plans.
- Code/Planning: Issued 1 building & 3 plumbing permits. Conducted 14 inspections and investigated 5 violations. The 35-lot subdivision has been tabled. 1 Major Home Occupation was approved. Expecting two applications for new businesses.
- Library: The fairy house program went very well. The windows have been washed.
- Recreation: Rec & soccer programs wrap up this weekend. Preparing for Halloween Fun Run & parade. Have secured a Santa for Breakfast with Santa. The Powderhouse lift is ready for inspection. On the 18th, seniors enjoyed a visit with the Lighthouse Whisperer and on the 25th with hold a Halloween celebration.
- Assessing: Working on the map revisions from CAI Technologies. The Municipal Valuation Report is complete. The 3-year revaluation process with KRT Appraisal will start soon.
- Town Clerk: Have issued 3031 transfer station stickers thus far. Working on the November election; have issued 223 absentee ballots and 54 have been returned.
- Transfer Station: Working on maintenance and getting ready for winter.
- Economic Development: MDOT is working on the RFP for the design project on Route 236. Researching funding opportunities for the next phase. Working with several businesses interested in locating here.
- Finance/HR: Sevee & Maher Engineers conducted an air quality test on October 16th. Attended Mike Lassel's retirement party and presented him with a certificate of appreciation on behalf of the Town. Britney has been able to set up a yes/no answer survey on Facebook. Tim, Jen, Linda, and Heather attended an MMA Employment Law training conducted by Bernstein Shur. Town Hall windows have been washed. Working on obtaining a quote for carpet cleaning.
- Admin: Website analytics show 3.7k users; with the Town Hall Project page receiving 88 views with 47 users. A scrolling marquee has been added to the Emergency Management page. Attended the 2-hour management training conducted by the Town's Attorney. The employee photo wall is complete. Attended the Marshwood Youth Baseball Annual Meeting. Met with Berwick Academy. The Town Clerk presented her retirement notice on October 20th. Have been working with Ken Weston and Mike Lassel to review the RFQP for the Town Hall. Ken has been very helpful. Working on solid waste options.

Councilor Comments

1. Ms. Cyr:

- Made note of upcoming events including the Monster Mile Fun Run, the football playoff game at the high school, and the Harvest Fest at Seacoast Christian School.
- Working on increasing public engagement for the Comp Plan Update.

2. Mrs. Costella:

- Reminded everyone that Saturday is hunting opening day. Wear your orange.
- Wished Councilors Cook and James good luck in the upcoming election.
- Have a safe & happy Trick-or-Treat.

3. Mr. James:

- Thanked the Manager, Chief Hamel, and Jay Redimarker for having the new plow truck and Fire Tank 3 available for an "adult touch-a-truck".
- Wished Councilor Cook good luck at the election.

4. Mr. Minihan:

- Expressed his gratitude for the recent training with the attorney.

5. Mrs. Cook:

- Reminded everyone of the workshop with the Planning Board on Wednesday the 25th.
- Wished Mr. James good luck at the election.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:20pm.

Attest:

Barbara Bennett, CCM