

**South Berwick
Town Council Meeting
January 23, 2024**

Chair Mallory Cook called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Councilors present included Jeff Minihan, Jessica Cyr (late arrival), and Melissa Costella. Town Manager Tim Pellerin and Assistant Town Manager Jennifer Janelle were also in attendance.

Executive Session 1MRSA 405.6A

On a motion by Mallory Cook, seconded by Melissa Costella, it was unanimously voted 3-0 to go into Executive Session 1MRSA 405.6A at 6:32pm.

On a motion by Mallory Cook, seconded by Jeff Minihan, it was unanimously voted 3-0 to come out of Executive Session 1MRSA 405.6A at 6:38pm.

Approval of Minutes

1. Town Council 01-09-24: On a motion by Mallory Cook, seconded by Jeff Minihan, it was unanimously voted 3-0 to adopt the minutes as written.

Treasurer's Warrant

1. On a motion by Mallory Cook, seconded by Jeff Minihan, it was unanimously voted 3-0 to sign the warrant dated January 18, 2024, in the amount of \$297,564.83.

Reports & Presentations

1. Tin Smith of Great Works Regional Land Trust presented a slideshow presentation to the council showing recent properties GWRLT has obtained and is working to obtain. Specifically referring to Map/Lots 006-014, 006-014-A, and 006-029-A. He also explained a budget and 2 ballot questions to redesignate funds to GWRLT to assist the purchase of land. The other question is to see if the town will accept the ownership of the land mentioned above. The questions were requested to be reviewed by the Towns Attorney for precise wording. The item is standing.

2. Town Manager, Tim Pellerin presented what was discussed during a meeting with Casella regarding the Transfer Station. They had a site review to assist with ideas to improve and better serve our residents. Tim explained how costly recycling can become and why, along with what Casella does with the recyclables that go to their facility. Tim also explained that we will need to review procedures and eventually need to decide if we want to separate out all recyclables vs. single sort recycling but continue to keep cardboard separate. There are many factors going forward to consider about how we as a town will handle trash. Casella is the first of many companies to look into. This will be an ongoing agenda item.

3. Jessica Cyr reported a successful public workshop was held on 1/18/24 with about 75 people in attendance. There is a survey available on the town's webpage to provide background information and enable the community to support grants for repairs such as sidewalks. Following the results of the survey the committee will

continue to work with Wright Pierce, who is the towns consultants for the project. They are putting together a Public Workshop for the draft plan in May. The committee hopes to have a final plan by September. Melissa Costella urges others to get involved, it's important.

Public Comment

1. Tamre Steinhauer 19 Hill Drive, wanted to know how the childcare provided during the Downtown Revitalization Public Workshop was funded and why it's not offered at all meetings. Tim explained that TIF funds is what was used and that those funds are voted on and need Town Council approval.

Unfinished Business

1. On a motion by Mallory Cook seconded by Melissa Costella it was unanimously voted 4-0 to table the item until next council meeting on February 13, 2024.

New Business

1. On a motion by Mallory Cook, seconded by Jeff Minihan, it was unanimously voted 4-0 to appoint Tyanne Vasapoli as the Registrar of Voters effective 2/1/2024, with a term to expire 12/31/2024.

2. On a motion by Mallory Cook, seconded by Melissa Costella, it was unanimously voted 4-0 to appoint Tyanne Vasapoli as the Motor Vehicle Agent and Excise Tax Collector effective 2/1/2024.

3. On a motion by Mallory Cook, seconded by Melissa Costella, it was unanimously voted 4-0 to accept the 24/25 budget schedule.

4. Tim reviewed the status of the search for a new Town Clerk, he explained the applications received and about the interview process. Mr. Pellerin announced Tyanne Vasapoli, the current Deputy Clerk applied and was unanimously chosen to be the next Town Clerk by a board of nine. Tyanne was sworn in by Barbara Bennett as Interim Town Clerk effective 2/1/2024. An official ceremony to be sworn in as the Town Clerk will follow in the next couple weeks.

Town Manager's Report

- Highway

o 602 tons of salt used to date.

o Dealing with ice spots around town we have used a lot of salt.

o Hooper Sands Road is on hold, weather permitting.

o Kevin Sarzynski has been hired.

- Police Department

o 7 Arrests.

o 11 Accidents.

o 60 Traffic stops.

o Introduction of Erin McGann. Erin McGann from Sweetser was present at the meeting for introductions to the staff. She is working through the Police

Department as the Town's Options Liaison. Her focus is substance abuse and mental health issues. She is here for staff and town's people. She says we can

provide her contact information at any time to anyone who needs it. 207-468-5149 and email emcgann@sweetser.org.

- Fire Department

o 19 Calls and YTD is 24.

o The Fire Department was awarded a Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) grant from the Maine Forest Service to replace our aging forestry coats and gloves. The total cost of the project is \$7,522, of which 50% is covered by the grant, and 50% by the town. Our goal is to receive the 36 coats and gloves before the spring brush fire season arrives.

o On Saturday, January 20th, we responded to a 1st Alarm building fire at 118 Knight's Pond Road. The single-family residence was approximately 600' off the road, and the family was away for the weekend, delaying detection and report of the fire nearly three hours. There were no injuries, however the family's two dogs perished, and the house was a total loss. Chief saw the family this morning and they are doing well, all things considered. Response time 4 minutes for Chief. 9 minutes for first apparatus. 4 Mutual Aid responders. Loss of \$300,000.

- Code Enforcement

o 2 Building Permits.

o 2 Plumbing Permits.

o 15 Inspections.

o 5 Meetings.

o Readdressing Liberty Street.

- Planning

o Automotive Service final plan 2/7.

o Samville Estates final plan 2/21.

- Library

o 2/14 Valentine's Day concert with Granite State Bell Ringers from 6-7. Free event.

o Storybook Ball event is to be held Saturday February 24th from 4-6 pm. This year will be the first time for this event. Kids are encouraged to dress in costume (adults are welcome too as well!). There will be fairytale-themed games, crafts, and snacks.

- Recreation

o The first Community Night was this past Saturday at the Maine Mariners. It was successful with just under 40 people attending the game. Our next Community Night is at UNH on February 2nd, and we have about 44 people attending.

o AARP tax appointments start next Friday, 2/9 and will be every Friday through 4/12. They are taking 20 appointments a day. This is a free service to anyone in the community. The scheduling is well underway, and we expect it to be full within the next couple weeks.

- Seniors

o January 31st lunch is a football/Super Bowl themed lunch.

o The next planned trip is a St. Patrick's Day dinner show on March 13th in Daversport.

- Assessing

o Working on a permit inventory to make sure everything is ready for the permit pass in March.

o Brittany has worked on getting the property cards printed for the revaluation staff. This was a challenge due to limitations in Trio. This project will be completed this week.

- Town Clerk
 - o Kandice is doing well and adapting to the clerk's office just fine. Since starting she's applied to become a Notary Public and Marriage Officiant for the State of Maine and she has been approved.
 - o Elections are underway, starting with the upcoming primary March 5th. Absentee Ballot requests are being accepted and we will mail out the ballots once received.
- Transfer Station
 - o Briella Ford- Administrative Assistant started 1/17.
 - o Cardboard baler has been fixed and is up and running. Still looking at other alternatives.
 - o Glass recycling is back with a designated spot for repurposing for landfill cover and road fill.
- Economic Development
 - o The Downtown Revitalization Workshop had about 75 people in attendance. Jeff did a great job. He divided the crowd into 8 or 9 groups to brainstorm and gather questions. Many topics of discussion that filled the whiteboard.
- Finance/HR & Benefits/Safety
 - o Assistant Town Manager Meetings: 11 Business Meetings and 43 Staff Meetings.
 - o Employee Annual Reviews- completed.
 - o Friday, Jen finished up with FEMA in regard to the Christmas storm of 2022. This last piece will give an additional \$5800 and bring the storm total to \$220K. 75% gets reimbursed by FEMA, 15% MEMA, and 10% is the Town's responsibility.
 - o Kennebunk Savings Bank- all accounts interest will be going from 3.75% to 4.5% due to the Town's relationship.
 - o Working on completing Workers' Compensation Audit.
- Admin
 - o Town Manager Meetings: 8 Business Meetings and 35 Staff Meetings.
 - o 2nd Round of Budget meetings- 14 completed.
 - o Winter storm meetings with EMA and team staff.
 - o Employee Annual Reviews in process.
 - o Met with Casella on getting recycling education/materials and thoughts on Transfer Station setup.
 - o Met with 2 citizens on citizen complaints.
 - o Police Department Union contract draft updated. Negotiations scheduled on Wednesday 1/24.
 - o Town Hall tour with RFQP submission companies.
 - o Community Resilience Partnership- Grant SMPDC- charging stations.
 - o Town Clerk Oral Board.
 - o Eastern Trail Alliance Meeting with Tom McCullum and new Executive Director Chelsey Berlin.
 - o Barbara's Staff Retirement Party 1/22.
 - o Barbara's Retirement Party- 1/30 4-6 at the Community Center.
 - o Tim and Jen attended 2 lieutenant interviews at the Police Department. Follow-up interviews next Tuesday 1/30 at Town Hall.
 - o Entrance door broke when citizen entered, and the door arm fell and hit him in the head.

Councilor Comments

1. Jessica Cyr - Please don't forget to take the survey for the Downtown Revitalization. The last comprehensive plan meeting was 11/27/2023 there has been a lot of work done to update the outdated comp plan to better service our town and be eligible for possible grants. A plan is in place to hold public feedback session in April. Invites the community to stay up to date and join the meetings held on the fourth Monday of each month.
2. Jeff Minihan - Congratulations Barbara and Tyanne. Impressed at Downtown Revitalization turnout so far.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mallory Cook, seconded by Melissa Costella, it was unanimously voted 4-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8pm.

Attest:

Tyanne Vasapoli
Town Clerk