

**South Berwick
Town Council Meeting
March 26, 2024**

Chair Mallory Cook called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Councilors present included Vice Chair John James, Jessica Cyr, Melissa Costella, and Jeff Minihan. Town Manager Tim Pellerin was also in attendance.

Executive Session

1. On a motion by Vice Chair James seconded by Chair Cook it was voted 5-0 to go into executive session 1 MRSA §405.6A Personnel at 6:03pm.
2. On a motion by Vice Chair James seconded by Chair Cook it was voted 5-0 to come out of executive session 1 MRSA §405.6A Personnel at 6:29pm.

Approval of Minutes

1. Town Council 3-12-24: On a motion by Vice Chair James, seconded by Councilor Costella, it was voted 4-0 to adopt the minutes as written. Councilor Minihan abstained.
2. Special Town Meeting 3-19-24: On a motion by Vice Chair James, seconded by Councilor Costella, it was voted 5-0 to adopt the minutes as written.

Treasurer's Warrant

1. On a motion by Vice Chair James, seconded by Chair Cook, it was voted 5-0 to sign the warrant dated March 21, 2024, in the amount of \$237,052.14.

Unfinished Business

1. Councilor Cyr discussed the Comprehensive Plan process and shared the tentative timeline of remaining work and meetings to be achieved. Councilor Cyr suggests going forward we keep a smaller committee to continue the upkeep of the plan. No action taken.
2. On a motion by Chair Cook, seconded by Vice Chair James, it was voted 5-0 to approve the Fiscal Year 25 draft Expense Budget increase of \$829,717, for a total of \$10,088,474.

On a motion by Chair Cook, seconded by Vice Chair James, it was voted 5-0 to approve the Fiscal year 25 draft Revenue Budget increase of \$150,555, for a total of \$4,767,489.

New Business

1. Town Manger Pellerin presented to the council a project he approved monies for in the amount of \$2,248.06 to the Conservation Commission to repair bridges in the Town Forest.
2. On a motion by Vice Chair James, seconded by Chair Cook, it was voted 3-2 to present the Warrant Article at the Town Meeting on May 21st, 2024.

On a motion by Chair Cook, seconded by Vice Chair James, it was voted 5-0 to move forward with option 2 of the presented warrant questions; To see if the Town will vote to appropriate up to \$200,000 from the Undesignated Fund to Great Works Regional Land Trust for stewardship start-up costs related to the Salmon Falls Tidal Waters project, and authorize the Town Council to review and approve any expenditures for such costs submitted by the Great Works Regional Land Trust, as the Council deems in the best interest of the Town?

On a motion by Chair Cook, seconded by Vice Chair James, it was voted 5-0 to authorize the Town Manager to work with legal to draft additional language to accompany the warrant article covering the information to the question.

3. On a motion by Vice Chair James, seconded by Chair Cook, it was voted 5-0 to sign the Corporate Resolutions and Incumbency certificate, and allow the Town Manager to sign the lease for the new 2024 Electric Hyundai Ioniq 5 for a yearly payment of \$1,794 for three years.

4. On a motion by Vice Chair James, seconded by Chair Cook, it was voted 5-0 to approve the Police Department Labor Contract for patrol officers and sergeants effective July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2026.

Town Manager's Report

- **Public Works** Softball field rebuilding infield and batting cage. Ditching on Great Hill Road, replaced driveway culvert. Blasting Thurrell Road. 2 snowstorms and a windstorm. Fill low shoulders and washouts.
- **Police Department** 6 Accidents, 5 Arrests, and 94 Traffic Stops.
- **Fire Department** 18 Calls in the last two weeks and 93 YTD. The fire in the Gym at the Seacoast Christian School was detected by the smoke detector in the front entryway. The first engine arrived within 6 minutes of the call, and was able to knock the fire down quickly, using just over 1000 gallons of water. Due to the size of the building, a second alarm was called, bringing in assistance from surrounding communities. The building is likely a total loss due to heat and smoke damage throughout. The dollar loss is estimated at \$1,000,000. The State Fire Marshal's Office responded, the cause appears to be accidental and likely electrical in nature.
- **Transfer Station** people are still putting household trash in contractor and leaf bags and dumping them in the paper bin. This is causing the Town to receive additional costs due to Casella having to take the time to sort it out. The Town may end up closing the paper bin down and have no more recycling. The Transfer Station does not have the staffing to go through all the materials brought to the Transfer Station.
- **Code Enforcement** 6 Building Permits and 2 Plumbing Permits.
- **Planning** No projects at this time.
- **Library** Started using social media to get the word out for their programs. Already having positive responses out of it. Staff is excited that the Page position was approved. This position will start in July. They will help shelf books and keep the library neat. Tyanne was the first lunch with an employee guest. It was very successful! Next will be Heather Stanley in April.
- **Recreation/Senior Center** Egg Hunt / Touch-a-Truck was postponed until this weekend, the 30th. Fire and Police are planning to bring a car and some trucks over. Public Works is hoping to also bring a truck. Seniors went to an Irish music show in Daversport last Wednesday. They enjoyed the music and said the food was delicious. Easter lunch this Wednesday, the 27th. We tried to open Powderhouse Hill this weekend, but the snow didn't quite work out.
- **Town Clerk** Got married! She is now Tyanne Giambusso (Jam-Boo-So) Next Monday April 1st will be the start of our new office hours: Monday-Wednesday 9-5 and Thursday 9-6. On April 3rd and 4th (Wednesday and Thursday) the Town Clerk will be the only person in the office as both staff members will be attending New Clerks Training.
- **Assessing** I am out in the field doing the permit passes. KRT staff are working in Vermont this week. Next week they will be back to finish the 2nd round of postcards/addresses before starting the 3rd round. Here is a list of the streets included in the 3rd batch: Berwick Road, Birch Drive, Bittersweet Lane, Colcord Street, Dawson Street, Demers Lane, Echo Hill Drive, Front Street, Goodwin Street, Great Works Drive, High Street, Highland Ave, Hill Drive, Jewett Ave, Norton Street, Paul Street, Railroad Ave, Ross Street, Spillane's Hill, Spring Street, Stevens Street, Tibbetts Street, Union Street, and Wadleigh Lane.
For citizens who ask about KRT coming to their home for inspections, but they are not home, working from home, or some other issue arises. KRT will still complete exterior inspections and measurements. At the end of the project, next spring, there will be a 2nd mailing sent out and appointments can be made.
- **Economic Development** Initial conversations with SMPDC/KACTS staff, is that Maine DOT is looking into a "bundled" federal application for the region, Route 236 corridor. (also under grants) Working with KACTS, Stephanie Carver to set up meeting with Maine DOT on next steps after the planning and engineering phase is completed (the \$520,000 grant) Comprehensive Plan meets this evening. Public information session is Thursday, April 11th. Going to Town Council for presentation May 14th, and on schedule to send to the State, for consistency review late May, early June.
- **Assistant Town Manager/Finance/HR** Last and final budget meeting was on 3/19. 3 positions added with Town Council approval. 2 PD Officers and 1 Library Paige. The Police Union Contract will be voted on tomorrow 3/26. There was good effort by the Town Council and Chief Ruger helped in the process. We appreciate all the police officers and the work they do.

- **Town Manager** 8 Business Meetings and 26 Staff Meetings. Police Union Contract ready for Town Council vote. Town Clerk submitted a memo to express a reminder to all board and committee members that upon being appointed or re-appointed you must be administered an oath of office by the Town Clerk. This ensures you are officially appointed for your term as well as grants the authority to vote on Board Affairs. Kickoff with Oak Point today. We took a tour with 6 attendees. I am pleased and in favor of their approach with ideas and priorities. More information TBA.

Councilor Comments

1. Jessica Cyr: Unfortunate about the situation going on at the Transfer Station, we need proper compliance with recycling. Until the ongoing issues get sorted out the idea of reopening the swap shop can't happen. The 6th grade chorus is traveling tomorrow to Augusta to sing the National Anthem.
2. John James: I'd like to thank Tyanne and her staff it's incredible the amount of good comments I'm hearing about the office and how it's run and how friendly you all are it's very well noticed within the community. Thank you to all.
3. Jeff Minihan: Congratulations to Tyanne. Thank you to Chief Ruger for the hard work put into the contract showing the data it was good to see and understand what is going on.
4. Melissa Costella: Very interested in the Community Police Academy Program being put on by Sgt. Pelkey and would like to know when the application will be available.
5. Mallory Cook: The presentation presented by Chief Ruger showing data as to why they need more staff will be made available for public viewing. Mamma Mia opens this weekend at Marshwood High School.

Chair Cook allowed an additional public comment to be made;
Rob Bernier, Chair of the South Berwick Republican Committee, wanted to thank and recognize Tyanne and her staff for all their hard work and help with election work during stressful times.

Adjournment

On a motion by Vice Chair James, seconded by Chair Cook, it was voted 5-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:02pm.

Attest:

Tyanne Giambusso, Town Clerk