

**South Berwick
Town Council Meeting
February 27, 2024**

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. Town Council 02-13-2024: On a motion by Chair Cook, seconded by Vice Chair James, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as amended.

Treasurer's Warrant

1. On a motion by Vice Chair James, seconded by Councilor Costella, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant dated February 22, 2024, in the amount of \$237,827.38.

Public Comment

1. Tamre Steinhauer 19 Hill Drive – In reference to the Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting, we paid for 2 attorneys, is this standard practice? Town Manager Pellerin explained that the Towns Attorney is there to represent the Code Enforcement Officer being a Town Employee always. He explained that he felt there was a need for a second attorney to represent the Zoning Board itself as there are new members and the topic at hand had a lot of components to it. Tamre also asked when a business applies for a permit and the hours are included are those hours listed enforced? Town Manager Pellerin explained it is to be enforced within the regulations. He acknowledged the issue she was referring to and stated he is working on it.

2. Paul Steinhauer 19 Hill Drive – Expressed concerns regarding the processes of the ZBA. There was a need to schedule another meeting and the Chair of the ZBA made a comment of "just meeting in the parking lot as they have in the past." Paul hopes they were joking but then said they stated ZBA would meet on Friday for the Finding of Facts. He questions the proper procedures of scheduling this meeting as he is aware of protocols for posting and holding meetings and does the ZBA have to adhere to these same rules? Town Manager Pellerin explained that under FOAA which is governed by State Law they have 3 days to post public meetings and the ZBA is within the needed requirements.

Unfinished Business

1. Town Manager Pellerin had a meeting with Tin on 2/21/2024. It was explained to Tin that if he still wanted to request monies from the town he would need to start the process again since the previously approved funds weren't utilized as described in the article passed by the voters.

2. On a motion by Chair Cook, seconded by Vice Chair James, it was unanimously voted to take action on New Business items before finishing up Unfinished Business.

New Business

1. On a motion by Vice Chair James, seconded by Councilor Minihan, it was unanimously voted to approve the liquor license renewal for Fogarty's Restaurant.

2. On a motion by Vice Chair James, seconded by Councilor Minihan, it was unanimously voted to approve the Special Amusement License for Odd Fellows Tavern.

Unfinished Business

1. On a motion by Chair Cook, seconded by Vice Chair James, it was unanimously voted to authorize Town Manager Pellerin to begin financial negotiations with OakPoint and Placework, and to schedule a meeting with Peter from OakPoint.

2. Town Manager Pellerin updated the council that LD 646 has passed. No Action Taken informational only.

Town Manager's Report

- Town Manager: Met with the Conservation Commission regarding the Town Forest and clean up and funding. Negotiations for the Police Contract are still underway. Final review of the

Ambulance Contract has been sent off for review and approval. We need a part-time (25-30 hours) attendant.

- Police Department: 5 Accidents, 0 Arrests, and 80 Traffic Stops. Officers are reaching out to the business owners and opening communications with the owners. The Chief will be out on vacation next week. Having a meet and greet in the PD training room for the new ACO March 13th at 6:00 pm.

- Fire Department: 2 Fire Alarm, 1 Tree/Wires Down, 6 Mutual Aid, 4 Medical Assist, 1 Vehicle Accidents, and 1 Assist PD. Period Total 15 YTD 57

We have received three new applications for membership which we will be processing this week in hopes of getting them on board in time to participate in the upcoming recruitment class.

Crews responded to mutual aid building fires in Lebanon (Tanker), Rollinsford (Ladder & Engine), and Eliot (Engine & Tanker). In all instances we were able to support the neighboring town's requests and have crews available in the station to cover calls in town.

- Economic Development: Downtown Revitalization Plan -217 surveys have been completed to date, which is a great turnout. Deadline is March 15th – plenty of time for those who have not completed it yet and you do no. Executive Pulse is up and running; next steps are to contact all of the businesses for contact information, email addresses, owners' names, etc.

- Human Resources: MMEHT has enhanced their life insurance policies and are having a special open enrollment period for those who may wish to add or modify coverage. Completed forms should be returned to me by February 27, 2024.

- Public Works: 1000 tons of salt used. Normal use is 2200. Running it down in order to recoat the salt shed with tar to preserve the concrete. Hooper Sands Road- will need to be dug to the road base. Working on estimating costs for the repairs. A quick estimate off the top of his head would be \$100K. Installing jersey barriers this week. Belle Marsh bridge- further exploration of the bridge verified the replacement of the decking.

- Transfer Station: Last Saturday there were 2 officers meeting and greeting citizens. Kenny's last day will be Wednesday. We will be down to 3 employees. We'll do our best to get bags out to the stores.

- Code Enforcement: 6 Building Permits, 7 Plumbing Permits, and 0 Violations.

- Planning: Samville Estates never notified the schools of the new development. Jeni will be sending a letter to the Superintendent today. 3/6/24 back in front of the board. Automotive Services- Final plan 3/6/24. ZBA- meets tonight regarding 161 Ogunquit Road.

- Finance/Assistant Town Manager: Budgets! Finalizing this weekend will bring it to the Town Council for 1st round of talks on 3/5. Town Hall renovation interviews this week included 3 councilors, Tim and Jen. 2/27 Town Council will discuss and pick by 3/13. We signed a new contract with Stellar Networks upgrading our IT services. We are also getting quotes for TRIO Web services, which is the program used by all departments for daily work. School budget ratios have changed; increasing the payout to the schools for the upcoming year by \$500,000.

- Library: 2/14 Granite State Bell Ringers performed, and we had a great turnout of 37 people. The Story Book Ball on Saturday 2/24 was a fun event with 90 people in attendance.

Wednesday 2/28 there will be a resident sharing gardening and planting tips.

- Recreation/Seniors/Community Center: AARP Tax-aide appointments take place each Friday where they process 20 returns for folks in the community who have made appointments. Right now we are booking out to April 5th, but we still have a few appointments on the 5th and 12th. We are in the process of summer camp planning. Our Valentine's lunch was a success with about 68 seniors in attendance. We have lunch with an Elvis impersonator this week and expect 70 – 80 seniors to attend.

- EMA: Ray has asked for clarification on the Major Disaster Declaration, FEMA-4754, from York County EMA for the 17-21 December 2023, storm. Based upon the current Declaration and communications thereof, it appears that York County is not eligible for Individual Assistance, IA, or Public Assistance, PA, resulting from this storm. Ray will provide updates to the SBEMA Team upon interpretation from YCEMA. YCEMA has communicated that a disaster declaration for the January 10 and 13, 2024, storms has been signed by Governor Mills. York County has met the requirements for Public Assistance. Governor Mills signed and submitted a Major Disaster Declaration request as of 23 February 2024. As you may remember, the Declaration will go through FEMA Region 1, FEMA HQ, and to the President.

- Town Clerk: Election Day is coming up quickly (3/5 8-8), last day to request your absentee ballot is the end of day Thursday! The chalkboard wall in the office is a huge hit and is getting a lot of positive feedback.

- Assessing: Brittany and I helped finish a project for CAI to have better information on the Wells/South Berwick line as well as working through duplicate map/lots on the tax maps. I'm expecting this to be the last of the projects and that we will have our 4/1/2023 tax maps and GIS layer soon. KRT staff is working on Portland Street area today. They will be lightly staffed until later Spring.

Councilor Comments

1. Councilor Costella: Would like to invite Erin McGann, a Sweetser Liaison who is stationed at our local PD to come introduce herself at a council meeting and discuss who she is and what she has to offer our towns citizens regarding Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services. She would also like to suggest that we be mindful of our interview processes to remain transparent and to be careful of who we are choosing for the interviews.

2. Councilor Cyr: Key dates; April 9th Public hearing for budget, April 11th Public information session for draft comp plan, May 15th School board budget meeting, May 16th Public workshop on the Downtown Revitalization Plan, May 21st Town meeting. Very busy spring ahead of us and please participate!

Adjournment

On a motion by Vice Chair James, seconded by Chair Cook, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:34pm.

Attest:

Tyanne Vasapoli, Town Clerk