



**Town of Berlin  
Municipal Office Building  
108 Shed Road**

**Berlin, VT. 05602  
Regular Select Board Meetings  
1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of Each Month**

**Monday, November 16, 2020  
7:00 PM**

Selectboard Members: Bradley Towne, Chair; Flo Smith, Co-Vice Chair; Justin Lawrence, Co-Vice Chair; John Quinn III, Secretary; Angelina Capron. Present: Tom Badowski, Assistant Town Administrator; Diane Isabelle, Town Treasurer; ORCA; David Delcore; Wendyln Bolles, Conservation Commission; Tim Davis, Road Foreman; James Pontbriand, Chief of Police; Karla Nuissl, Hiring Committee; Keith Van Iderstine, Hiring Committee; "Guest 1". All items are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

### **APPROVED MINUTES**

#### **Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Preparation – 6:30 p.m.**

Chair Towne called the meeting to order remotely through the Zoom conference call program. Smith and Lawrence were also present from the selectboard. While Badowski connected the worksheets to the zoom video for all to view, Towne asked Road Foreman Davis whether the new grader had arrived. Davis explained that while it was not yet at the town garage, he did receive an update and the grader is in the country. Town Treasurer Isabelle began discussing the budget meeting. The summer road crew was down but two crew members were added as it was understaffed so there was a decline in the budget while there were fewer staff than anticipated. Some road work that needs to be done in the summer results in overtime for the highway department which accounts for an increase in the proposed budget. The roadside mowing and tree trimming is increased in the budget by \$1,000 because many residents have asked for more roadside to be mowed. The road foreman recommended renting a machine meant for a second pass to clean up the roadside further. Summer road budget remains the same, at \$28,000. Culvert materials remains at \$10,000. Summer equipment repairs remains at \$30,000, keeping in mind needed repairs on the loader. Summer equipment fuels remains \$20,000; spending tends to be lower but fuel price uncertainty accounts for the budget amount. Wages for winter roads includes a 2% increase but overall decrease due to staffing numbers. Sand for winter roads reflects an increase because of the need for a new bid this year that may be less favorable than the previous 3-year contract. Salt also reflects an increase to purchase more to avoid paying an emergency rate and the apparent increase in ice which has seemed to be more plentiful than snow. Winter equipment repairs remains the same as does winter fuel. Asphalt marking and sanding remains at \$150,000 because of known work to be completed and the uncertainty of receiving grants. Resurface gravel increased because of a number of roads needing work. Bridge maintenance was discussed briefly due to a bridge with a wood deck that may need replacing. There was no discussion of increasing the \$1,500 budget at this time. Road signs may need an increase to add

inventory as many signs have to be borrowed or even hand-written. Guard rails is anticipated to remain the same but keeping in mind the need for some replacements. The new rates for Worker's Comp are not yet released so it does not yet show a change pending the new rate. Health insurance for the highway department reflects an increase because of a change in employees utilizing the plan. Other changes in cost related to employment reflect changes in staffing. The storm water permit is annual cost of \$3600. Erosion control, mandated by the state, will be a new cost. Hand tools are also a need for the road crew. Davis also discussed the possibility of purchasing a buffalo blower which clears debris from roads and ditches. The cost is about \$7500. Part of that may be available from a reserve fund. Advertisement budget remains the same. Training is requested to increase to cover flagger training, emergency training (such as CPR), or others. The phone for the highway department and utilities are remaining the same. The building requires some maintenance that Davis spoke to. Trash removal is increased to \$1500 to account for needed disposal of tires collected from roadsides. Uniform costs increased to reflect actual spending trends. The overall increase in the budget stands at 6.47% at this early stage. Isabelle discussed establishing a committee to itemize the equipment and anticipated replacement needs for planning purposes. Lawrence asked that Isabelle provide detail regarding the reserve funds available and their location to the board. Isabelle responded that she will send that information when in the office.

#### Public Hearing – Adopted Water/Wastewater Ordinance

No members of the public attended to comment. Badowski was not expecting any commenters. Another hearing will be held at the next meeting.

#### Selectboard Meeting – Call to Order

Towne convened the Selectboard for their regularly scheduled meeting. Capron absent.

#### Additions or Changes to the Agenda

None.

#### Public Comment

None.

#### Treasurer's Report

Isabelle asked to set up another budget meeting. Such meeting was scheduled for the following Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. She provided a Contractor's Application for payment number 5 for Paine Turnpike North to board members prior to the meeting and asked for approval in the amount of \$265,672.02 with a signature from the Chair. Lawrence moved to approve the payment. Seconded by Smith. Passed unanimously.

#### Approval of Licenses, Permits, Vouchers, and Applications

Smith moved to approve payroll warrant number 21-10 for payroll from October 25, 2020-November 7, 2020, paid on November 10, 2020, in the amount of \$40,891.58; also accounts payable warrant number 21g10 with checks 20677-20719 in the amount of \$42,562.74; October general journal entries and October reconciled bank statement for the general fund, sewer commission, and water division; and October trial balance, budget status report, and delinquent tax report. Seconded by Quinn. Passed unanimously.

#### Fisher Road Culvert

Badowski received communication from Robert Clark of Otter Creek. They completed the topographic survey and completed soil boring. The firm responsible for hydrogeologic work was not able to complete that work for this meeting. More information is expected in the near future.

#### VTrans Alternative Transportation Grant

Badowski sent to the board, in advance of the meeting, the plan for the multi-use alternate transportation routes. The grant will help to cover the costs of a scoping study. The project is estimated at \$50,000 with \$40,000 covered by the grant and the balance to be paid by the town. The segment of trail contemplated in the application would connect the trails behind and around CVMC to the Irish Hill trails, essentially connecting all Berlin trails together and including the new town center area. Lawrence moved to approve spending \$10,000 from the bike path reserve for the scoping study. Seconded by Smith. Passed unanimously.

#### Berlin Corner Cemetery Association Request of \$10,000

Badowski provided board members with copies of the application for funds in advance of the meeting. The Berlin Corner Cemetery Association applied similarly last year. The item would appear on the ballot at Town Meeting.

#### Use of Town Lands for Recreation

Quinn reported there has been communication between the Conservation Commission and snowmobile clubs. Those clubs did submit a letter of interest today, forwarded to board members. The Conservation Commission will now consider the letter of interest. Maps of the area, as requested at the special meeting, are to be circulated.

#### Minutes - October 19, 2020

Smith moved to approve the minutes of October 19, 2020. Seconded by Lawrence. Passed unanimously.

#### Use of Town Owned Coos Trail Property

A logger has been contracted to log property near the trail and asked that he be allowed to use property as a landing area for the duration of his project. Badowski advised him that the town will likely require proof of insurance and need to discuss allowing a commercial operation to use town land. Towne shared an opinion that this would be acceptable with proof of insurance, a contract stating the land will be returned to the condition it is found, and a bond. Lawrence suggested that improvements to the area be requested as a condition, such as planting new grass seed.

### Roundtable

None.

### Executive Session

Towne asked for a motion to enter into executive session for personnel and contract matters. So moved by Quinn with a second by Lawrence. Passed unanimously.

Lawrence moved to exit executive session at 8:07 p.m. Seconded by Quinn. Passed unanimously.

Quinn moved to hire Steven Tiersch and Victor Hinojosa to the Berlin Police Department as full time officers. Seconded by Smith. Passed unanimously. These are currently part time officers who will attend academy. The positions are budgeted.

Quinn moved to adjourn. Seconded by Smith. Passed unanimously.

For the Select Board:

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Bethany A. Towne