



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

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

**Monday, September 8, 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; Greg Gallant, ORCA. All items are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

APPROVED MINUTES

Call Meeting to Order

Chair Towne called the meeting to order. Capron absent.

Changes to Agenda

None.

Public Comment

None.

Treasurer's Report

Isabelle provided the third installment of the Paine Turnpike North payment paperwork for Towne to sign. Quinn moved to authorize Towne to sign the document. Seconded by Lawrence. Passed unanimously.

Grader Financing

Isabelle spoke briefly of the two financing options for the grader, sharing that the Community Bank NA option would cost less in the long run. Lawrence moved to approve the Community Bank NA financing for the grader. Seconded by Smith. Passed unanimously.

Approval of Licenses, Permits, Vouchers, and Applications

Smith moved to approve payroll warrant number 21-05 for payroll from August 16, 2020 to August 29, 2020, paid on September 2, 2020, in the amount of \$39,057.13. Also payroll warrant 21-g-05 with check 2482-2525 in the amount of \$98,804.62. Payable warrant for FY '17 truck payment to Community Bank NA for \$16,348.78. Seconded by Lawrence. Quinn asked about a monthly charge of \$240 for a fax line as it seemed high. Towne believed that included the equipment rental. He also asked about \$6500 in screened sand. He believed the sand had already been delivered for the year. Towne explained that the screened sand is not road sand. Passed unanimously.

J&H Properties – Working in the Town Right of Way

Jason Morrell explained that he was approved for a permit with a stipulation that the driveway location be changed. He came before the board to ask permission to make that change. The work will take about a day with no interruption to traffic in the road. Quinn moved to approve J&H Properties request to work in the town right of way. Seconded by Smith. Amended to include the permit number 20-06. Passed unanimously.

Fisher Road Culvert – Robert Clark

Clark was not present so Badowski provided the update. The proposed sleeve was tested and did not fit. A sleeve 2 sizes smaller fails hydraulic capacity state requirements. The next idea was to build off the bottom but that is too deteriorated. Currently, the possibility of re-pouring concrete at the bottom is being determined. Towne asked about details regarding the concrete dimensions. The information was not readily available. Towne asked when it is expected to receive an answer from the state about possibly adding cement. There should be an answer soon but in no particular time frame.

Brady Saxton/Karla Nuissl – Berlin Town Center

1. Water/Wastewater Allocations (Saxton)

The board will receive a draft ordinance regarding allocating water and sewer.

2. Municipal Planning Grant – Municipal Facilities Needs Assessment (Nuissl)

Badowski provided the board with a letter in support for a municipal planning grant. The matter goes before the planning commission tomorrow. Nuissl discussed that the grant would be for municipal facilities and accompany town center applications. A match would be in the amount of about \$2,000 as the grant is for up to \$20,000 and the match is 10%. The proposal will be shared once it is available.

Weston Mobile Home Co-op – Reduction of Speed Limit on Route 12

Linda Thurston joined the board to discuss speed reduction on Route 12 from Weston's to the Montpelier line and ask for the board's support. A petition from the residents and support of the board is believed to help in presenting the matter to the state (it is a state highway so state decision to change the speed limit).

Police Chief Recruitment – Draft #2 Selection Committee/Hiring Process

Badowski provided an updated draft for the board's review. There was discussion of asking a state's attorney to sit on the selection committee. Discussion continued about potential committee members. Quinn asked how many applicants there currently are to which Badowski answered 7 or 8. The board asked that Badowski consult with Trevor Whipple. Quinn asked if there has ever been consideration given to merging with Barre City Police Department. Towne reflected on an attempt to combine emergency services at one time which increased the cost to Berlin by 40% at the time. The board agreed that inquiring about the practicality and feasibility of such an arrangement is acceptable but should not detract from the process of hiring a new Police Chief for the Berlin Police Department.

Town Campus – Stormwater Treatment – Bid Award

The bids were over budget and the Regional Planning Commission went to the funding source. There is a verbal agreement to fund the shortfall. Badowski is awaiting confirmation in writing of that agreement.

DRAFT Transitional Return to Work Program Policy

Badowski provided a draft policy to the board, it is derived from a template available through the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. Towne asked that the topic be added to the next meeting for discussion once the board has time to review. The draft policy will also be sent to the town attorney for review.

Private Road – Water Works Way

Badowski reviewed a map with the board, indicating the location of the proposed road off of Dodge Farm Road near the water tank. There is a fourth house now located on the road so E911 requires the road to be named. Smith moved to name the road, as described by Tom Badowski, Water Works Way. Seconded by Lawrence. Lawrence asked who will maintain the road. The owner is amenable to have each property's deed specify a maintenance agreement. Passed unanimously.

Local Government Expense Reimbursement Grant

A federal grant is available for COVID expenses and improvements. Badowski applied for the full \$70,000. The caveat is that the money must be spent before January 1. The staff has circulated a number of ideas. Badowski discussed a few with the board. The first was an audio system for remote meetings and a banker's box for Isabelle to take payments inside the building. Also making the service window for the Clerk's office a permanent fixture. Badowski discussed the imminent need to waive the bidding process for this grant because of the time sensitivity of the projects. With the funds being from a specific grant, rather than town funds, the board was amenable. It is currently unknown how much the town may receive. An answer will be available by September 15. Other ideas included keyless entry, laptops for the highway department to complete trainings, and a kiosk/freestanding bulletin board outside the building. Quinn moved to suspend the local bid policy for the purpose of spending the local government expense reimbursement grant. Seconded by Lawrence. Passed unanimously.

Approval of Selectboard Minutes – 07/22/2020 & 08/03/2020

Smith moved to approve the Selectboard minutes from Wednesday, July 22, 2020. Seconded by Quinn. Passed unanimously.

Smith moved to approve the Selectboard minutes from Monday, August 3, 2020. Seconded by Quinn. Quinn noted that Capron did not attend so should be removed from the attendance list. Badowski noted the change. Passed unanimously.

Town Administrator Report

None, items discussed throughout meeting.

Roundtable

Quinn discussed an injury (dislocated knee) on the hiking trails off Brookfield Road. It took about 4 hours to remove the person. Quinn believes that the difficulty is, at least partially, because an ATV cannot go over the bridge to remove people from the trail. Repairs make the bridge walkable but it should still be replaced.

Quinn and Lawrence went to the area where the sap lines are installed in the town forest. It was their impression that, at least where they were, the lines were on the Northfield side. They could not say for the property over the hill.

Executive Session

Lawrence moved to enter executive session for legal, personnel, and contract. Seconded by Smith. Passed unanimously.

For the Select Board:

Bethany A. Towne