

**South Berwick  
Town Council Meeting  
February 14, 2023**

Vice-Chair Jeffrey Minihan called the meeting to order at 6:59pm. Councilors present included John James, Jessica Cyr, and Melissa Costella. Mallory Cook participated by Zoom; all votes will be by roll call. Town Manager Tim Pellerin and Assistant Town Manager Jennifer Janelle were also in attendance.

**Approval of Minutes**

1. Town Council 01-31-23: On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as written.

**Treasurer's Warrant**

1. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Cook, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant dated February 9, 2023, in the amount of \$1,430,385.09. This warrant includes the monthly school payment of \$728,737 and the annual county taxes of \$383,913.

**Reports & Presentations**

Paul Schumacher of Southern Maine Planning & Development gave the Council an overview of the Comprehensive Plan Update. The group is approaching the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of 3. Will be working on strategies and ideas over the spring and summer. The Sebago Technics traffic study will have some impact; and Mr. Schumacher recommended holding a public information meeting. He added that the goal is to have the public hearing and council action in the fall.

The Council also discussed the results of the survey conducted last fall. We received 1230 survey responses. Most respondents were concerned with traffic congestion, maintaining the historic village and small-town atmosphere, preservation of open space and natural resources, and were in support of reasonable development and growth.

**Public Comment**

1. None.

**Unfinished Business**

1. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Cook, it was unanimously voted to award the Town Office Facility Study & Needs Assessment to Port City Architecture in an amount not to exceed \$48573, to be funded from the Town Hall CIP Account.

**New Business**

1. On a motion by Mr. Minihan, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to amend the Zoning Ordinance to include a definition and performance standards for Commercial Solar Energy Facilities and to include such facilities in Land Use Table A, as presented to the Board as draft revision #8, dated February 6, 2023.

2. The Flynn's have petitioned the Town to accept Bittersweet Lane as a public way. Appropriate staff has reviewed the construction of the road and necessary documentation for the transfer of ownership. There are some non-road related items that needs to be addressed in the spring.

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Cook, it was unanimously voted to accept Bittersweet Lane as a public way; provided that the six items listed in the Oldfields LLC letter dated January 20, 2023, are completed as soon as possible in the spring.

3. Denise Clavette, Economic Development, participated by Zoom. She explained that we only received 1 bid for the Market Analysis & Implementation Plan Matrix. Mrs. Clavette stated that she has worked with the company before and highly recommends them.

On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to authorize the Town Manager to negotiate a contract with Camoin Associates for the Analysis & Plan; funds not to exceed \$30,000 from the Punkintown TIF District.

## **Town Manager's Report**

- Highway: Have used 1280 tons of salt so far this season. Still working on storm clean-up; have spent \$30,000 on clean-up. Beginning to plan for this year's road work.
- Police: 5 arrests, 6 accidents and 66 traffic stops. Lt. Upton attended the Coalition for Health & Safety in Washington DC. Officer Pelkey has been honored by being pinned South Berwick's first Police Chaplain.
- Fire: Attended 18 calls; 139 year-to-date. Driver certifications are complete. First Due software is up and running.
- Code Enforcement: Issued 4 building permits, 2 renovations, 1 addition, and 6 plumbing permits.
- Planning: Currently working on 1 site plan and 3 major site plans. Continue to work on ordinances.
- Library: Held a Valentine's celebration on the 14<sup>th</sup>. The Coding program is going well. Suspending new book donations.
- Recreation: The Maine Mariners trip is scheduled for the 18<sup>th</sup>. AARP is set up for tax preparation on Fridays at the Community Center; not many vacancies left.
- Assessing: Sent out 195 Personal Property Tax Declaration letters. Working on growth estimate and tax map changes for April 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Town Clerk: Still having a hard time filling the office position. There will not be a state election in June.
- Transfer Station: More people trying to avoid paying; some are using plain blue bags. Tire disposal and fuel charges have increased. People are bringing hazardous waste.
- Economic Development: Continue working on final approval of the TIFs. Volunteer started on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Working with CEO on ordinance language revisions for road frontage in the Industrial Zones.
- Finance/HR: Work continues on the budget. Getting ready to send out tax reminder notices. Job descriptions have been compiled and are being reviewed.
- Administration: Staff evaluations are complete. Leadership training for department heads will begin in March. The new maintenance custodian will start on February 21<sup>st</sup>.

## **Councilor Comments**

### 1. Mrs. Cook:

- Enjoyed attending the staff meeting.

### 2. Mrs. Costella:

- Considering the difficulty of getting new employees; should we consider position sharing with another town? Comment was made that it probably wouldn't work in the Clerk's Office.
- Will the Town be receiving any funds to help cover the costs of the storm clean-up? Mr. Pellerin stated that the storm only affected 4 towns, South Berwick the hardest; and doesn't meet the threshold for disaster funding.

### 3. Mr. James:

- Asked if the ice rink is available for use. Unfortunately, not. It has been cold enough, long enough.

### 4. Ms. Cyr:

- Attended the County District meeting. Currently working on facilitating a job fair. This could help with increasing awareness of municipal job availability.
- Happy to attend the staff meeting. Sharing of information, increased HR functions, and budget awareness help keep the staff engaged.

## **Adjournment**

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:10pm.

Attest:

Barbara Bennett, CCM