

**South Berwick
Town Council Meeting
March 28, 2023**

Chair Mallory Cook called the meeting to order at 6:33pm. Councilors present included John James, Jeffrey Minihan, Jessica Cyr, and Melissa Costella. Town Manager Tim Pellerin and Assistant Town Manager Jennifer Janelle were also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes

1. Public Hearing 2-14-23: On a motion by Mrs. Costella, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as written.
2. Board of Assessors 2-14-23: On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as written.
3. Town Council 2-14-23: On a motion by Mr. Minihan, seconded by Ms. Cyr, it was unanimously voted to adopt the minutes as written.

Treasurer's Warrant

1. On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant dated February 23, 2023, in the amount of \$170,629.11.
2. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Ms. Cyr, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant dated March 9, 2023, in the amount of \$950,376.34. Note was made that this warrant includes the monthly school payment of almost \$729,000.
3. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Ms. Cyr, it was unanimously voted to sign the warrant dated March 23, 2023 in the amount of \$136,810.40.

Public Comment

None.

Unfinished Business

1. Tin Smith of the Great Works Regional Land Trust & Land for Maine's Future was present to discuss the LMF application for the Salmon Falls Tidal Waters Project. The project encompasses 3 parcels totaling 69 acres on Oldfields Road. The GWRLT is looking for more funding; the Town's \$250,000 is being used to leverage other grants (and cover some costs of developing better public access.

Mr. Smith asked if a representative from the Town would join him at a meeting in Augusta in May for a 7-minute presentation for the Maine Parks & Recreation grant application.

Mr. Pellerin informed Mr. Smith that when the LMF is ready, a formal written request for the funds would be necessary, with at least a 2-week notice. Mr. Smith stated that they don't expect to request the funds until the end of the year.

2. Mr. Pellerin updated the Council on the financing for the York Ambulance Service. The Service has been running at a loss and is looking to get increased funding starting in 2024. This would mean a significant increase for South Berwick; from \$278,324 in 2024 to \$385,526 in 2028.

3. The Council briefly discussed the Punkintown Business Park Omnibus TIF. The second amendment has been approved by the State. We are waiting on the approval of the Transit Oriented TIF.

New Business

1. On a motion by Mr. Minihan, seconded by Ms. Cyr, it was unanimously voted to accept Burnell Bailey's resignation from the Planning Board.

2. The Council discussed the change of appointment of Chris Prunier from an alternate on the Planning Board to a full voting member. Sam Flinkstrom & Roxanne Poulin both spoke in opposition to the appointment.

During their comments a Point of Order was called by Town Manager Pellerin identifying that the statements being made were complaints and that complaints should be formally submitted, in

writing to the Town Manager which would then be forwarded to the Town Council. Town Manager Pellerin also stated that it is inappropriate and a violation of our code to discuss a board member without that member being present.

Council Chair Cook agreed with the Point of Order and asked that Mr. Flinkstrom and Ms. Poulin work with the Town Manager to organize any future discussion, regarding their complaints, with the Council.

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to table the appointment until further investigation.

Manager Pellerin added that he would contact legal counsel and then work to schedule a meeting (possible executive session) to discuss the issue.

3. On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to hold a public hearing on Tuesday, April 25, 2023, 6:30pm at the Police Station to receive input on the proposed ordinance changes involving stormwater management.

4. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to authorize the taking of Alewives & Blueback Herring in South Berwick, as allowed by the State Recreational Fishing Limit of a maximum of 25 fish per individual per day, for the 2023 harvesting season. Commercial harvesting is not allowed.

5. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to approve the renewal of Fogarty's Restaurant's liquor license.

6. On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted hold a public hearing on May 9, 2023, to receive comment on the proposed changes to the Zoning ordinance regarding Medical Cannabis Registered Caregivers.

7. On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Minihan, it was unanimously voted to adopt the draft budget for FY 2023/2024.

On a motion by Mrs. Cook, seconded by Mr. James, it was unanimously voted to set the public hearing date of April 11, 2023, at 6:30pm at the Police Station, to receive input on the proposed budget for FY 2023/2024.

Town Manager's Report

-Highway: Used 2080 tons of salt. Prepping for spring road work. A new hire will handle the parks and mowing.

-Police Department: 8 arrests, 10 accidents and 46 traffic stops. The Chief & Lieutenant will be attending a week-long FBI training class. Have received confirmation that South Berwick has obtained its accreditation through the Maine Law Enforcement Accreditation Foundation. We are now 1 of only 20 in the state. The new LED sign is up and running.

-Fire Department: 17 calls; 188 YTD. The Firefighter Association has raised funds and purchased a boat for water rescues. The Chief and several firefighters attended the annual ME Chief's Professional Development Conference at Sunday River last week. As a result, action items for staff have been identified.

-Code Enforcement: 11 building permits. Martha the temp is working very well. She is covering for an employee that is out on disability. The CEO is currently working on 3 violations.

-Planning: Working on 4 projects and more ordinance changes.

-Library: The Coding Program is finished; it will be back in the fall. Lorena will be starting a 'fairly house' program. Lee has found it necessary to set the computers to shut down 10 minutes prior to closing; some patrons don't want to leave at closing time. May 13th will be another book sale.

-Recreation: AARP tax preparation has been well utilized this year. April 8th will be the Egg Hunt & Touch a Truck event. Powderhouse had a great season; open 20 days and sold almost 1400 tickets. Over 80 seniors attended the St. Patrick's Day luncheon.

-Assessing: Continues work on building permit follow-ups. Working on BETE applications and the Town's growth estimate, and map changes.

-Town Clerk: New hire Britney Spencer starts on the 4th. Beginning prep for the June school budget election.

-Transfer Station: Officer Arsenault has visited with non-compliant residents; they will now be using the Town's blue bags. Dan is noticing more furniture. Dan is also looking into ways to alleviate some of the "mess" at the donation boxes. He knows of a vendor than will turn old jeans into home insulation.

-Econ Development: Denise is busy with the Market Analysis project. Waiting on the state for the final approval of the Transit Oriented TIF.

-Finance: The budget is ready to go; and completing the warrant for the town meeting. Tax payments are rolling in. Was able to secure a higher guaranteed interest rate on our bank funds with Kennebunk Savings, amounting to about \$20k/month. Sharon of Safety Works has been in to do a workstation ergonomic assessment at all locations. April 26th will be the annual walk through for our MMA insurances. Jennifer and several other staff members will be attending a FEMA training in Alfred.

-Administration: Our Building Committee is working with Port City, we are gathering info as to whether it is better to renovate the current town hall or build a new one. Very early numbers indicate that renovating the current building would be much more costly than building new. A member of the Historical Society met with Tim and stated that he likes the direction the Town is taking by controlling the changes. Staff will be taking a half day and visiting the museum. Waiting on the final draft of the Traffic Study. We may be getting some Federal money (\$12,000) for the Christmas storm.

Councilor Comments

1. Mr. James:

-Kudos to the Police Department for obtaining its accreditation.

-Reminded everyone that the library has over 300 different cake pans people can borrow.

2. Mr. Minihan:

-Congratulated the Police on getting accredited.

-He thanked Jennifer for her efforts with increasing our rates at the bank. Most don't know what work goes on behind the scenes.

-Thanked Dawn & Lee for being so easy to work with.

3. Ms. Cyr:

-Made note that both York and Eliot are Purple Heart towns. We should consider joining.

-Kudos to the Police for obtaining accreditation.

-The next Comp Plan update meeting will be on April 10th.

-Thanked Rep Roberts for her quick response and help with getting our Punkintown TIF approved at the state level.

4. Mrs. Costella:

-Commented that the dwarf blue spruce on the island didn't make it through the winter. She recommended looking for a replacement. She added that this would improve the esthetics and help deter panhandlers. Note was made that we may want to hold off pending the work that could be done because of the traffic study.

5. Mrs. Cook:

-Enjoyed attending the staff meeting. She added that she feels more educated.

-Kudos to the Police Department.

-Reminded everyone of the Marshwood presentation of Frozen.

Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. James, seconded by Mrs. Costella, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:35pm.

Attest:

Barbara Bennett, CCM