

North Berwick Board of Selectmen Minutes May 15, 2018

NORTH BERWICK BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES MAY 15, 2018

Present: Chairman Hall, Selectman Galemmo, Selectman Cowan, Selectman Johnson, Jr., Selectman Johnson, Sr.

Also Present: Dwayne Morin, Steve Connolly, Stan Cowan, Sue Austin

Chairman Hall called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

- 1. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 2. Review and Approve Minutes of May 1, 2018**

Selectman Cowan motioned to approve the minutes of May 1, 2018. Selectman Galemmo seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

- 3. Public Input**

There was no public input at this time.

- 4. Unfinished Business:**

- A. Tax Acquired Property: Malcolm Hilton Property and Gordon Donnell Property**

Dwayne stated that the Board needs to sign the deed for Mr. Pomerleau. He stated that Mr. Pomerleau is trying to clear title right now and he told him that he has 30 days to get everything accomplished.

Dwayne said that the right of redemption on the Donnell property ended on May 9th. Mr. Donnell called him on May 10th and asked Dwayne when he was going to send him the tax bill. Dwayne told him that the tax bills went out in August of last year. Mr. Donnell said that he had never received them. Dwayne told him that he has been trying to reach him for 3 years. He told Mr. Donnell that the town has taken his property and he would need to come before the Board to get it back. Mr. Donnell assumed his uncle had paid the taxes but Dwayne told him that he had not. Dwayne started explaining to him about coming to the Board and Mr. Donnell hung up. He has not heard back from him since. Dwayne had told Mr. Donnell that we were going to clean the property up and if he was going to buy it, the price for cleaning would be added to the taxes owed. Selectman Cowan asked where Mr. Donnell was currently living. Dwayne said he was in Florida.

At this point, Dwayne will move forward with the cleanup of the property. Selectman Cowan stated that they did give Mr. Donnell the opportunity and would have been willing to entertain a proposition for him to retain the property.

B. Public Works: Project Updates

Dwayne said that hopefully by the end of this week, the garage will be sided and roofed. They have ground Church Avenue. The Water District is working on putting water lines in and then we will finish up with that road. He stated that, if everything goes well, they will be paving the parking lot on Saturday. They are fixing the sewer manhole tomorrow. The new flag pole has been installed.

Dwayne stated that he met with the Birch's today regarding the parking lot for the trail and they are fine with it. Once he gets the DOT permit, we will be able to put the parking lot in.

Reminders: Next Board of Selectmen's Meeting – June 5, 2018 – 6:30 pm Municipal Building

5. New Business:

A. SAD 60: Meeting with Superintendent on FY19 Proposed Budget

Steve Connolly distributed a list of talking points that he had put together. He stated that they have the Budget Meeting coming up on May 21st and the Budget vote is on June 12th. As he goes around to each of the towns, he tries to focus on what the major cost drivers are. He stated that they formed a Facilities and Finance Committee this year which consists of one representative from each Board. These members are Stan Cowan from North Berwick, Travis Doiron from Berwick and Joanne Potter from Lebanon. There are also a couple of administrators, facilities leaders and Sue Austin and Denise Van Campen. He said that they did a tour of each of the facilities and looked at long and short term planning.

Mr. Connolly stated that the 18/19 projected School Budget is \$41,390,414.00 and the EPS funding for this is a little under \$20.5 million which is 49.42% of the total. If you look at the ED 279 that shows what our subsidy is, it shows it to be 58% because it doesn't take into account the amounts that the citizens approve above the EPS. Mr. Connolly stated that the net to the taxpayer is a 5.63% increase which is substantial.

Mr. Connolly stated that, this year, there is a difference with the Food Service. It has always been under Articles 1 thru 11. This year, for the first time, the State has said to pull it out of there and it will now be a separate MSAD vote just like Adult Education.

Mr. Connolly stated that on \$200,000.00 property, the net increase will be about \$120 to Berwick and just under \$100.00 to North Berwick and Lebanon. Dwayne stated that these numbers are not accurate. He said that the impact to our town for a \$200,000 home will be about \$200.00. Mr. Connolly said that the State takes a 2 year look at the property valuation and not an annual one so it will never compare equally.

Mr. Connolly started going over some of the cost drivers. He stated that new employment for Special Education is just under \$600,000.00. The Mill rate moved from \$8.19 to \$8.51 per \$1,000.00 property valuation and is a change of \$545,000.00 to the District. Career and Technical Education shifting back to Sanford High School is something they knew about. However, there was a change in legislation this winter that is yet to be voted on. The new legislation says that the money goes to fund up front the vocational center so we won't be seeing \$216,000.00 in funding in 2019 and the \$86,000.00 in 2020.

Mr. Connolly stated that they are looking to join a Regional Service Center for System Administration. Even with participating in the Regional Service Center it is a \$50,000.00 loss in State funding. If they do not join an RSC, it would be about a \$131,000.00 loss.

In the Special Education areas there is a fluctuation in the numbers at the levels. For example, Lebanon has 34 students at the High School but they have 97 in the Elementary School. It is all based on student programming and the total number of students in the District that receive Special Education of one kind or another is almost 600. This is a 19% population for Special Education Services compared to the State average of 17.9% so we are running a little high. Mr. Connolly stated that North Berwick has 28% of the total students. He stated that out of the 10 high need programs and out of district placements, North Berwick's percentage is at 9.31%. This tells him that a lot of the kids that are living in North Berwick are minimum receiver services such as just the use of the Resource Room or Speech and Language Therapy.

Mr. Connolly stated that at the Vivian Hussey School there are 2 currently existing programs. They are adding a new program this year at an additional cost of \$443,000.00. They have 40 students identified as needing services coming into kindergarten through the Child Development Services. Dwayne asked if they were all high need students. Mr. Connolly stated that out of this group of 40, 12 of them are high need. The maximum in a program with State ratios is 11 to 1 which means 11 students to 1 teacher. The number of Ed Techs depends on what the IEP states for the students. In one program, he has 1 teacher and 5 Ed Techs because so many students have significant services and need constant monitoring whether it is from seizure disorders or from behavior where the student keeps putting things in their mouth. Mr. Connolly stated that the Knowlton School will have 1 additional program. He went on to state that there is currently 1 program in Lebanon and Noble Middle School, 2 at Noble High School and 1 at the Mary Hurd Academy. They also have out of district placement. This total projected for next year is \$516,458.00. The range on this is between \$46,000.00 for 1 student to \$119,800.00 for 1 student. The total per town is Lebanon at just over \$1 million, Berwick is about \$2.5 million and North Berwick is under a half million for high need programming.

Mr. Connolly stated that in 2012 we had 28 students who were averaging \$43,000.00 per student in out of district costs. He stated that 50% of those students were for high medical needs that we couldn't meet and the other is for high behavioral programming. We have some programs that have 2 adults with 1 student in a private setting. This is when we didn't have the Mary Hurd Academy. In 2018/2019, we are currently servicing 42 students in either the out of district or Mary Hurd Academy. We are seeing that the cost per student is \$23,842.00 and it is a 70/30 split. It is largely the high medical needs that causes us to pull students from the academic setting. These programs meet the needs of 117 students in our school district which is 20% of the Special

Education population. Two years ago, we had 18 students that came in from CDS. This year we had 22 students and next year we have 40 identified. He stated that we are a microcosm of what's happening in our society. If you look at the biggest drivers of situations of what our communities are dealing with, a lot of it is connected to the opioid crisis. In 2014, there were 1,053 babies born in the State of Maine that were addicted to some form opiate or other substances. Those kids are in the 4 year old range this year and will be stepping into school next year.

Dwayne asked if other schools were seeing similar increases. Mr. Connolly stated that it was on and off. In Gorham, a Superintendent from 4 years ago added a new Autistic Spectrum Disorder program, added another one 2 years ago and she will be adding a new one this coming year. In Saco, they are seeing more as well. Mr. Connolly stated that Marshwood and Sanford are not seeing any big increases. Dwayne stated that one of the things that he hears all the time is about border jumpers with people from New Hampshire coming in here especially in Berwick where they already have such a high number of kids. He stated that he would expect to see this at Marshwood as well because they are also close to the border and would expect to see it especially in the Eliot region. Mr. Connolly stated that there is a lot of connection in people's thinking with socioeconomic status. Are the border homes that are rental properties in one town cheaper and easier to get? He stated that there is a study out of the UK that supports that but the US study refutes that claim. He personally sees a connection to it in our case but it doesn't on a national level. Selectman Cowan asked Mr. Connolly if he had ever done some kind of economic study for our region. He stated that free and reduced meals is an easy indicator to look and see what the case load of students is in economically disadvantaged situations and is one of the reporting that we do for the State. Selectman Cowan asked if it was broken down by town. Mr. Connolly said that it is not separated by town because it is a little difficult to separate things. For some of the higher needs programs, he can do tracking for particular information but the other 450 students would be a little more difficult. Selectman Cowan asked if there was any way that they could identify the number of students per town and link that to certain criteria such as concentration of rental properties. Mr. Connolly said that he can do that. He said that he does know that Berwick has the Somersworth border and lower rentals and home opportunities so it has a higher percentage of the economically disadvantaged students in our district. In North Berwick we don't have the same number of opportunities for transient population. Selectman Cowan stated that she would like to see what the total student population percentage is per town and what percentage of the student population per town are identified for Special Education services. She would also like to see what these numbers have historically been for past years versus current year. Mr. Connolly stated that he could get that for her.

Chairman Hall asked if you had to be Special Ed to go to the Mary Hurd Academy. Sue Austin stated that they are all identified. Selectman Cowan stated that she works in the York schools and has had some of her students go to Mary Hurd and she has heard nothing but good things about it. They have been very pleased with their experience and the kids have been very happy. Chairman Hall asked why it had to be Special Education students only to be eligible to go to the Mary Hurd. Mr. Connolly stated that if you had regular education students go there, the people that we have employed there are under Special Education. Certain portions of their pay may be connected to specific services that they provide or Local Entitlement among other things. They are not allowed to do the Regular Education. Also if they are not significantly behaviorally

identified and are under emotional disorder or multiple disorders, there must be other programs within the school that will fit their needs. Sometimes it involves working with the State as well. We had a couple of cases this year that became State Agency clients where kids were removed from the home. Chairman Hall asked if a student is not Special Education but requires a less restrictive environment, could they go to Mary Hurd. Mr. Connolly stated that if they are not qualified and don't have an IEP they could not go. The Center of Regulations DSM 4 is a list of qualifications. If you don't meet those qualifications, then you don't have an IEP, you are not able to attend Mary Hurd. It is just a Special Education setting.

Sue Austin said that their goal would be to provide as much services in a regular setting for students that don't qualify for services. The program that they developed for the Middle School is where they are at for trying to meet those needs. If kids are identified as emotionally disabled, she believes that those are the most restrictive place that they go. They are trying to develop programs for the less restrictive students to assist with their needs.

Chairman Hall stated that it doesn't list Federal dollars anywhere in the paperwork that was provided to the Board. He asked if some of our budget is federally funded. Sue Austin said that it was. Chairman Hall asked what percent was funded by Federal dollars for next year's budget. Mr. Connolly stated that they don't have the numbers yet. Sue Austin stated that the Title 1 this year was a little over \$600,000.00, Title II was \$100,000.00, Title IV was \$9,000.00 and Title 6 was \$6,800.00. She stated that local entitlement is the Special Education aspect of it and she is not sure what that was. There is a total of about \$1.5 million that comes in. Chairman Hall asked if this Federal money is included in the total budget that we are voting on. Sue Austin said it wasn't. Mr. Connolly stated that in Article 2 in their handouts it shows that the total Special Education budget is \$7,108,481.00. He stated that about 12 to 13 percent of that is actually paid out through the Federal grants. Chairman Hall said that he would like to know, above and beyond the \$41 million budget that we vote on, how much more money is the district receiving from the Federal government. He believes that the citizens of the 3 towns should be aware of that number as well.

Mr. Connolly stated that the Board had inquired about System Administration and School Administration. These categories include salaries, wages, insurances, fringe and other things. It involves Board expenses like ballots and annual report printing. System Administration has 8.6 positions and total \$1,054,833.00. These include superintendent, assistant superintendent, business manager, payroll manager, human resources, payroll clerk, bookkeeping and administrative assistant. School Administration pays for positions to run the school. We have 25.5 positions which include 13 clerks and secretaries and 12.5 principals and assistant principals.

Mr. Connolly stated that the Adult Education budget is \$414,938.00 and the local share is \$251,246.00. The difference is due to State subsidy registrations and their programs and Fund Balance. He said that they received some funding last year from grant opportunities that were not utilized by other Districts in the State for other departments so we were the recipient of them.

The Food Service total budget is \$1,443,612.00. The district contribution to that is \$126,000. The overall district free/reduced lunch percent dropped to 36% this year. Selectman Cowan asked what it was previously. Mr. Connolly stated that it was 38%.

Mr. Connolly stated that Regional Service Centers or RSC's were introduced this year by the Governor and Commissioner. The idea was to create 10 to 12 service centers across the State to eventually eliminate System Administration. There are currently 15 RSC's that have been approved across the State. If we elected not to participate in the Regional Service Center, we would have lost an additional \$81,000.00. One of the interesting pieces about it is that if you do elect to belong to an RSC and the public votes for that, you don't actually have to use the services. You can be a voting member. They can offer things like food supplies or custodial supplies and you don't have to take it and you will still get your money from the State. We are already members of the Food Supply Co-op. Our Food Service Director, Tyler Goodwin is actually the Director of that part of the organization through Kennebunk. We are currently looking at the custodial supplies. If the taxpayers vote for participation in it we will see a loss of \$41,000.00. If the taxpayers vote against it, we will see a loss of \$81,000.00.

Mr. Connolly stated that it is not the year to ask the people if they want to continue the Town Meeting format. There will also be no referendum on any State subsidy determined after the budget validation referendum. If there is any money that is determined after the fact, those funds would go towards the Fund Balance. It would not be able to be used in the current budget but would be held over for the following year's budget.

Sue Austin stated that she received more information regarding the Federal grants. She said that they used to report the Federal grants in the budget process. About 7 years ago, they changed the process. The \$41 million is local funds and the \$1.6 million is in Federal grants. The reason they don't report it anymore is because we were the only district in the area that was doing it and it was getting confusing so they were asked to stop doing it that way. They said it wasn't appropriate for us to be reporting it in the local budget. Chairman Hall stated that he always hears that Special Education is an unfunded mandate. While he agrees that that is mostly true, there is \$1.6 million that goes towards it. Sue Austin stated that she agrees with him that it might be a good idea to share this with the townspeople.

Selectman Galemmo stated that under the cost drivers, it shows that last year, they wanted the towns to raise \$8.19 and this year they are saying to raise \$8.51. Has the State share kept up with what his real inflation is? Mr. Connolly said that it has not. He said that they have used the Fund Balance to help offset some of that. There is a little bit of a difficulty when you do that because if you are not using your Fund Balance for one time only things like paving or roofing, then you are creating a hole for next year. Selectman Galemmo said that he knows that they have been doing everything to keep the budget tight. Mr. Connolly said that he feels that their staffing is in very good shape. Some of the things that they are putting off are some paving project, roofing projects and transportation would need to be on a 3 large and 1 small bus schedule. We have a fleet of 50 vehicles. The State has said that we can apply for replacement. According to the State guidelines, we currently have 11 vehicles that qualify because of their age and their mileage. However, the vehicles that we have are 10, 11 or 12 years of age and the vehicles that are being replaced by the State are 15, 16 and 17 years old. We will never get to

that point where we will let our vehicles age to be able to have the State replace them. They also have a plan at Loring Air Force Base in Northern Maine where they will refurbish the body of a mid-age vehicle. He has repeatedly requested for a facility like that to be built down here. It makes no sense for us to bring our buses all the way up there for an inspection, drive the bus back here, drive back up with a second driver to bring the first bus back, etc. You also can't get enough bus drivers. We currently have enough drivers but not enough spare drivers. We also need another shop truck.

Mr. Connolly stated that they are also in need of updating our facilities. We need an addition at Hussey probably by the end of the next school year. We are adding a cottage to Hanson. North Berwick Elementary School has functioning classroom space but the office spaces have never been well functioning. The conference room is very small. The cafeteria is half the space it should be.

Selectman Cowan asked Mr. Connolly if he was anticipating including in his presentation anything about what could be if the State adequately funded education. Mr. Connolly stated that it would be a great opportunity to address the public and ask for their help with promoting this with the Legislature. He is not having a lot of luck with this.

Chairman Hall said that, last year when Mr. Connolly came before the Board, he had presented to them with a list of things they would do if they received more funding from the State. He wondered if they were going to do the same thing this time. Mr. Connolly stated that, last year, we were in a situation where they were going to be reducing 11.5 teaching positions and Ed Tech positions. They had decided that if any money came back, the School Board had determined that they would reinstate things from their list. They are not anticipating any changes and are not relying on it. Anything that they would get back will go into the Fund Balance.

Mr. Connolly stated that the Culinary Program is listed as an expenditure but it is also on the revenue side because Sanford has asked us to host it for half a year because they are not completely up and running. The Fund Balance has a hole right now because it is not for one time only expenditures.

They are putting \$50,000.00 for Year 1 of the Owls Nest Project. It is a 4 classroom stick built similar to what they have at North Berwick Elementary. The State offers a rebate for these. It cost the district \$21,000.00 because the State paid \$110,000.00. The program is still in place for now.

The MLTI (Maine Laptop Technology Initiative) State contributions have dropped by \$30,000.00. We would receive \$253.00 per student for each of the 4 years but now they will provide \$200.00 and will only allow us to do the equipment lease for 3 years instead of 4. Miscellaneous Revenue decreases because the SRO funds were moved there at last year's budget.

Mr. Connolly stated that Hussey will need an additional classroom wing that will have to be built next summer. North Berwick Elementary School needs upgrades on offices, conference room, cafeteria, global areas and the library. Noble Middle School will go through the Phase 3 project.

This includes updating locker & fitness rooms, main office, guidance, SRO, band and chorus stage and library as well as do asbestos removal. The Noble High School has some moisture in the gym walls. The State is setting aside \$20 million for security for facilities. He stated that they would like to try and get some of that. Mr. Connolly stated that they have not locked in on their oil price yet.

Dwayne said that he noticed that they have \$60,000.00 in the budget for the mobile library. He wondered if this was a one-time item or multiple years. Mr. Connolly stated that there is some employee cost that will be a continuous piece. There is also money in there to continue to build up the collection.

Selectman Cowan asked how we stacked up in terms of salaries compared to other districts. Mr. Connolly said that the closer to the water, the bigger the salaries. If we take the local areas, we are medium comparison and if you take all of York County then we don't compare as favorably.

B. SAD 60: Sign Warrants, Ballot Clerk Appointments

Dwayne stated that the Board just needed to sign the Warrants and appoint Ballot Clerks. He is recommending Susan Caler, Susan Ouellette, Linda Pedersen, Lisa Corcoran and Cynthia Matthews Roy.

Selectman Galemmo motioned to approve Susan Caler, Susan Ouellette, Linda Pedersen, Lisa Corcoran and Cynthia Matthews Roy to be Ballot Clerks for the June 12, 2018 Primary. Selectman Cowan seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

C. Beech Ridge Road: Accept New Turnaround Easement Deed for Beech Ridge Road

Dwayne stated that the back Beech Ridge Road has been abandoned by the town so we haven't done anything to the road. He has had developers come in and say that they want to build back there. They asked if the town would take care of the road. Dwayne told them no because it is an abandoned road. He told them that if they build the road to town specifications and provide us with a place to turn around with the vehicle, then we will plow the road. He stated that the developer has been building some of the road and providing a turnaround. He then extends the road, builds another turnaround and extinguishes the previous turnaround. Dwayne said that this was pretty much just a hand shake deal. They have started running into issues. Dwayne stated that the turnaround is for maintenance of vehicles. It is not to be a driveway. Every time he extends the road and before the turnaround gets extinguished, he turns it into a driveway. Dwayne told the developer that, from now on, whenever he extends the road, he will provide us with an easement that states that it is not a driveway and that it is a turnaround for the town to maintain the road.

Selectman Cowan motioned to accept the easement deed to allow us to maintain the road. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

D. MDOT: Staples Bridge Update

Dwayne stated that DOT will be doing some testing on Staples Bridge starting on May 29th for about a week. They are doing core sampling in preparation of replacing on bridge.

6. Other Business:

Selectman Galemmo said that the State did pass the marijuana law. Dwayne stated that the Board may want to ask the Planning Board what their thoughts are in terms of planning for the town. We will also need to hold some Public Hearings. Selectman Cowan is interested in finding out what other areas are doing for restrictions.

7. Review and Approve Warrants and Correspondence:

Warrant:	May 8, 2018	- \$	0.00
Warrant:	May 15, 2018	- \$	571,353.64

Selectman Galemmo motioned to approve the Warrant of May 15, 2018 for the amount of \$571,353.64. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

8. Adjournment:

Selectman Cowan motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 pm. Selectman Galemmo seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Respectively Submitted,
Susan Niehoff, Stenographer

Original to Town Clerk

Chairman: Jonathan Hall

Selectman: Wendy Cowan

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Jr.

Selectman: Charles Galemmo

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Sr.