

North Berwick Board of Selectmen Minutes June 18, 2019

NORTH BERWICK BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES JUNE 18, 2019

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

Also Present: Dwayne Morin, David Edwards

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

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Review and Approve Minutes of June 4, 2019

Selectman Glemmo motioned to approve the minutes of June 4, 2019 as written. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 4-0 Abstain: 1

3. Public Input

There was no public input at this time.

4. Unfinished Business:

C. Conservation Agricultural Commission: David Edwards Membership Application

Dwayne Morin stated that David Edwards was here to discuss his application for the Conservation and Agricultural Commission. Chairman Cowan noticed that he came from Rahway, NJ and asked what brought him here. Mr. Edwards stated that he got a job at UNH. He had been trying to get out of New Jersey for quite a few years. He has been coming to Maine since he was 8 months old. His father used to vacation on Bailey Island and they used to go there for the summers. He stated that his father retired in 1996 and now lives in Bath and his brother works in Augusta. His grandparents and some of his other family have also moved up to Maine.

Dwayne asked if he was a professor at UNH. Mr. Edwards said that he is on staff and his title is Hazardous Waste Coordinator. He has an Undergraduate Degree in Soil Chemistry Plant Science from University of Delaware. He also has a Masters Degree in Environmental Science from NJTI. He has been working in the environmental field since 1992 in various aspects but has been concentrating primarily on hazardous waste management and disposal.

Chairman Cowan asked Mr. Edwards if he had attended any of their meetings yet to see what it was like. Mr. Edwards stated that he tried to attend a meeting but no one was there when he showed up for it. He said that there is nothing posted on their website that he could find. He said that he was on the Environmental Commission for the City of Rahway for many years and,

by law, they had to post their meetings. Chairman Cowan said that this is a volunteer group and Selectman Johnson, Jr. said that this committee is mostly to make suggestions and not for rule making. Dwayne said that they did have a meeting that they had to postpone because they didn't have enough people coming to that meeting.

Dwayne stated that the Committee has been finalizing the Trail system, working on pollinators, and finished a Food Sovereignty Ordinance that was passed in April. They have been looking at pesticides and insecticides and what they may want to proposed to the Town. Mr. Edwards said that he has some good input on this topic with some of the experiences that he has had. Dwayne asked him if he knew how to get rid of poison ivy with organic chemicals. Mr. Edwards said that he would hire goats first. He said that there are some people that raise goats strictly for eating poison ivy. He believes that Maine DOT hires them.

Chairman Cowan asked Mr. Edwards where he stood on the topic of pesticides and using toxic vs non-toxic products. Mr. Edwards said that he has been a gardener for his whole adult life and he is strictly organic. When he was an undergrad student, he worked with chemicals but as data starts coming out, he doesn't believe that we are getting the right story on a lot of the materials. He stated that he cannot use at least half of the materials that he was able to use when he was an undergrad student. They are no longer on the market. His first preference regarding the poison ivy is to hire the goats and then find organic methods. He said that they should only use artificial chemicals when nothing else will do the job. Chairman Cowan stated that the Board had a discussion at the last meeting regarding the use of pesticides at the Community Center. One of the issues that they need to deal with at this location is the exposure of children that use the Community Center during the summer and may have allergies to some of the pollinators. They have found that the more organic compounds that they could use to deal with these issues are not effective. She would be interested, given Mr. Edwards' background, to hear about any other options that he may have. Mr. Edwards stated that a lot of the organic pesticides like Pyrethrin is highly effective. One of the advantages is that it doesn't stay around for a long time. It lasts about 10 days. The artificial derivatives of this are very persistent and stick around for 2 or 3 months and can still kill the pollinators.

Chairman Cowan asked Dwayne if he knew exactly what we are using to spray at the Community Center. Dwayne said that he did not. Chairman Cowan asked him to find out and he said that he would.

Selectman Galemмо motioned to approve to appoint David Edwards to the Conservation and Agricultural Commission. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

A. Maple Street Forest: Maine Community Foundation Day Fund Request

Dwayne showed the signs for the trail that he picked up today. They will try to get them installed within the next week. On Pages 9 and 10 of their packet, it shows Dwayne's design on how to build the signs. The kiosk sign will be on 6 x 6 posts with decorative caps. Selectman Johnson, Sr. asked what it was made of. Dwayne states that it is a type of plastic. Chairman Cowan asked if they were white. Dwayne said that it was not. Everything will be pressure treated so it will mix in well in the area. The sign will be covered in plexiglass with a plywood

backing. They will also have a Tobacco Free Area sign on the kiosk and also a sign showing that we received funding from the State of Maine for the project. Both of these signs will be aluminum. The brochure holders came in today. Dwayne stated that the information signs will be 12 x 18 on a 4 x 4 post. They will be framed and sandwiched inside with a plexiglass cover on top of it. They will put the 4 x 4 posts at about a 30 degree angle and the sign will be screwed into the post. The sign will be about 30 inches above the ground so anybody can walk up to it and see it. He has the trail signs but is waiting to find out where the Commission wants to put them up.

Dwayne stated that the grant that he wrote to the Maine Community Foundation was accepted. They have already given him a check for \$15,000. This will be used to build the bridge. He has notified the Great Works Land Trust so they can start that project.

B. Assessing: Review Assessor Proposal for Valuation Increase

Dwayne stated that, at the last meeting, they had a lengthy conversation regarding assessing. The Board wanted to wait to give final approval when they had a full Board because there were a couple members missing that night. Dwayne stated that Craig has done some preliminary work on assessing. He stated that they did a 10% bump on building values. It is really a cost bump on our cost tables. It actually doesn't funnel down to an actual 10% increase on each property. At the last meeting, they also decided to increase the commercial tables by 5% because there were some deviations. When we performed our reval back in 2006 we were running a square foot dollar value between \$85 and \$90 per square foot. Right now it is running between \$110 and \$115 per square foot. We don't want to go to 100% because we don't know what the market is going to do so our goal is to shoot for 96%. By running the 10% and 5% increases we came in at 96% for our certified ration. Right now we are at 92% and if we stay at the numbers we are at now, next year we will drop below 90%. This would reduce everybody's Homestead Exemption, Veteran's Exemption and the Blind Exemptions. Although these are bad in and among themselves because it affects the individual taxpayers and they will see it on their bill, the larger thing that it affects is our BETE reimbursement. If we can only certify at 90%, it would be a \$200,000 loss in revenue to the Town which would mean that we would need to increase our tax rate to be able to cover the loss.

Dwayne stated that in looking at the raw numbers that they have put together, it looks like they will be able to drop our mil rate significantly. He said that our current rate is \$12.90. He said that they just recently received Pratt's declaration. Pratt had originally told them that they were done buying their equipment 2 years ago. They bought another \$80 million in equipment last year. We realize \$29,000 of that in real value. In actual tax value we recognize \$16 million. Dwayne stated that our protection was that we would get \$5 million in new value but the number is actually going to be about \$21 million. He said that we will lose \$4 million in personal property.

Dwayne stated that the Governor just signed the new budget and it includes an increase in Revenue Sharing from 2% to 3% which will be about \$40,000 increase for us. We will go from about \$137,000 to about \$174,000. He said that he also renegotiated the banking this past year. We were making about \$10,000 in interest earnings and this year, the will be about \$70,000 to

\$80,000. Dwayne said that by adding the 10% to the cost tables and 5% to the commercial cost tables, it adds about \$17 million to \$20 million. Selectman Johnson, Jr. asked if this was going to hurt us for the school budget because of the higher valuation. Dwayne said that the school budget is based on the State valuation number and the State valuation already takes this into consideration. They have already boosted our valuation. We are only trying to get to where the State is saying that we are valued at. Dwayne stated that the new value does hurt us but the student number is dropping faster than our valuation is increasing. Our valuation increased \$60 million the past 2 years but we lost about 30 students so our share of the budget went down last year.

Based on preliminary estimates, right now it looks like the mil rate will be around \$12.40 to \$12.45. This means that all but about 99 taxpayers will have a tax decrease. These numbers could change because Craig is still finalizing the numbers. Dwayne said that they also changed the date from 2006 to 2016. They didn't bring it all the way up to 2019. Selectman Galemmo asked what the average taxpayer's decrease would be. Dwayne said that it would be a decrease of about \$50 to \$60.

Selectman Galemmo motioned to approve the increase in the assessing values. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

D. Linscott Road: Update on MDOT Review of Intersection with Route 9

Dwayne has a meeting scheduled with Maine DOT and Hussey Seating on 6/26. He said that DOT originally said they would not do our safety review. They have now decided that they will do the safety review. They will be doing it on 7/26 at 3:15. They will get a firsthand experience of what it is like to get out of Linscott Road when Pratt & Whitney gets out.

Dwayne said that he has been talking to the Regional Planning Engineer to find out what to do but he has not gotten anywhere very fast. He told her that we started this back 3 years ago with the speed limits to be changed and they rejected the speed limit changes. It took 2 years to review the speed limit proposal. He told her that we then came up with a plan for signalization. They shot that down and said that we needed to go by safety review. We were told that this would be done by the summer. We then found out that this just meant you were going to decide who was going to have the safety review by the summer. This will push off for months again. The engineer said that they should probably put us into either a PPI program or the MPI program. He told them that these programs could take another year or so to go through and there are costs associated with it that the town has to bear. We didn't put any money in our budget and the State sets the number so we don't even know what the number would be. Dwayne told the engineer that they also have a business in town that is looking to redevelop their property. They have 40 acres that is right on the intersection and they need to have some information about what they can do or can't do so they can make some decisions. The engineer called him and said that they should meet to discuss the options.

Reminders: Next Board of Selectmen's Meeting – July 2, 2019 – 6:30 pm Municipal Building

5. New Business:

A. Street Lights: Review Affinity LED Streetlight Conversion Proposal

Dwayne said that he had included a proposal from Affinity LED Lighting for changing our streetlights to LED lighting. He said that we have 174 streetlights in our town and it costs us about \$30,000 to operate them. To install the streetlights, it would cost about \$63,000. We would have an additional cost called the CMP NBV. This is the value that we would need to pay CMP to buy out for our streetlights. Unfortunately nobody knows how CMP creates this number. Our number is \$38,978. This is our cost to buy out our contracts with CMP. The total cost of the project is about \$101,453. We would go from yearly costs of \$30,000 to just under \$4,000. We would be paid back in less than 4 years.

Dwayne said that if they were interested in doing this, it would have to go to Town Meeting. He said that the longer they take to go to Town Meeting, the longer it takes to get our pay back. He said that they have the money in savings. He said that they could do a Special Town Meeting by the end of July.

Selectman Galemmo motioned to have a Special Town Meeting as soon as possible. Selectman Hall seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Dwayne said that he will start working with Chris to get it going. They will have it at the Community Center. He will put out a newsletter to the residents to explain what they are doing. He stated that he would like to also set aside money for the survey for the Linscott Road intersection. They could vote on this as well.

Dwayne stated that the school has streetlights within our community. If the school decides to join with us and change their lights over their payback would be lower than our payback. The school's total cost is about \$11,363. Their yearly costs would go from \$4,324 to \$775 and the payback with be 3.2 years. He sent this information to the Superintendent. Dwayne stated that if we change our streetlights and the school does not do their conversion with us, State Law says that they lose the ability to convert their streetlights in the future. The conversions are only available to municipal governments. He will send the Superintendent another email to let him know that the Selectman have decided to move forward with this so he needs to let us know if he wants to be included.

B. Appointments FY20: Review Affinity LED Streetlight Conversion Proposal

Dwayne said that every year, every non-elected officials need to be appointed by the Selectmen. He stated that Dave Parker came in to let him know that he is declining the Tree Warden position. He will also be retiring as a Firefighter soon. Selectman Hall asked if we had a replacement and Dwayne said that they did not.

Selectman Hall motioned to approve all of the appointments for 2020. Selectman Galemmo seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

C. County Tax: Review and Sign Assessor's Return

Dwayne stated that the County Tax for the ensuing year could be found on pages 67 & 68 of their packet. It increased by about \$17,000. He needs them to sign the return.

D. Budget Committee: Amelia Small Resignation

Dwayne stated that Amelia Small is resigning from the Budget Committee because she is moving out of North Berwick. She was elected this past year and her term expires in 2021.

Selectman Galemmo motioned to accept the resignation of Amelia Small from the Budget Committee. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

E. Cemetery Trustees: Amelia Small Resignation

Dwayne stated that Amelia Small is resigning from the Cemetery Trustees because she is moving out of North Berwick. She was elected last year and her term expires in 2020.

Selectman Galemmo motioned to accept the resignation of Amelia Small from the Cemetery Trustees. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

F. Vacation: Request to Bring Additional Week Forward, Kristie Michaud & Mike Dunn

Dwayne stated that he has a couple of employees that need to bring forward some vacation forward. Per the policy they are allowed to get paid for 40 hours and they are also allowed to bring forward 40 hours. The Board can allow them to bring forward up to an additional 40 hours. Kristie Michaud would like to bring 40 hours forward. Last year, when we lost the Summer Camp Director, she put in a lot of overtime. They made her use a lot of that overtime as comp time but she didn't have time to use the additional vacation time. Mike Dunn would like to bring forward 40 hours. Because winter ran long this year, he was not able to take the time. Richard Anderson was scheduled to use his vacation up but unfortunately his wife just passed away so he has been on bereavement leave. Dwayne would like to allow them to carry forward up to 40 hours. They would need to cash in 40 hours and just carry over whatever they have left after the cash out.

Selectman Galemmo motioned to allow Kristie Michaud, Mike Dunn and Richard Anderson to carry forward up to 40 hours of additional vacation time. Selectman Hall seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

G. Holiday: July 4 and July 5 Request

Dwayne stated that the employees would like the Board to consider for them to be allowed to have Friday, 7/5 off in addition to 7/4. He said that the front office staff asked because they only work a half day on Friday anyway.

Selectman Johnson, Jr. motioned to allow the employees to have Friday, 7/5 off. Selectman Hall seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

H. Selectman Schedule: July Dates for Meeting

Dwayne said that he will be on vacation from 7/13 to 7/20. There is a meeting scheduled for 7/16. Since we have 5 weeks in July, he would like to move the meeting from the 7/16 to 7/23. He also said that they could cancel the meeting on 7/2 and just do 7/9 and 7/23 for the meetings in July.

Selectman Galemmo motioned to have the meetings on 7/9 and 7/23 for July. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

6. Other Business:

Dwayne said that the siding on the library expansion is cracking. They had used Certainteed, but they have since been bought out. The other company is not honoring any warranties. There is currently a class action lawsuit that we are involved in. We have to have a claim into them by August 11th. Hancock Lumber, where we originally purchased the siding, has been very helpful. They helped prepare the claim forms.

Selectman Hall asked if they were going to talk some more about poison ivy. Dwayne said that there are a few spots in town where they have some poison ivy issues. We have a couple of cemeteries and the Community Center that are being overridden by poison ivy. Dwayne contacted the company that does our spraying and asked them to find an organic spray that would work. The company said that there is one spray out there that people use. They told Dwayne that it is as costly if not more costly than what we have been doing. Dwayne said that we have been using Roundup. The company said that they can use the other spray but told Dwayne that we would be very disappointed. The leaves die but it doesn't kill the roots and the leaves come back. Dwayne contacted the Conservation Commission and asked them what we could use. Their response was that you put on Tyvek suits and go pull them out or use goats. Dwayne said that the problem with using goats is that the poison ivy is along the roadside. There is no way that we can use goats because the areas are way too close to the road. Dwayne said that camp starts in 2 weeks and we still have poison ivy. The mowers that mow the cemeteries said that they won't maintain those with the poison ivy because he is highly allergic.

Chairman Cowan said that she would like to see if getting goats would be a possibility. Selectman Galemmo said that there was someone in Kennebunk that rents goats. He suggested that Dwayne call them and see if they can come and do the Community Center before camp. If they can't they we would have to spray. The other Board members agreed.

7. Review and Approve Warrants and Correspondence:

Warrant:	June 11, 2019	- \$	0.00
Warrant:	June 18, 2019	- \$	620,107.50

Selectman Galemmo motioned to approve the Warrant of June 18, 2019 for the amount of \$620,107.50. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Adjournment:

Selectman Galemmo motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:49 pm. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Respectively Submitted,
Susan Niehoff, Stenographer

Original to Town Clerk

Chairman: Wendy Cowan

Selectman: Jonathan Hall

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Jr.

Selectman: Charles Galemmo

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Sr.