

**North Berwick Board of Selectmen Minutes April 21, 2020**

**NORTH BERWICK BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES APRIL 21, 2020**

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

**Also Present:** Dwayne Morin

Chairman Cowan opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

**1. Pledge of Allegiance**

**2. Review and Approve Minutes of April 14, 2020**

Selectman Hall stated that on page 8, the first sentence in the first paragraph currently reads, "...woman that moved into a home by water tank.". It should read, "...woman that moved into a home by the water tank."

Selectman Galemmo motioned to approve the minutes from April 14, 2020. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

**3. Public Input**

There was no public input at this time.

**4. Unfinished Business:**

**A. Budget FY21: Discuss Budget for FY21**

Dwayne stated that he corresponded with the Superintendent through email and he has included those in the Selectmen's packet. The Superintendent will be presenting a budget to the towns that is a 1.26% increase. However, that translates to a 3.4% increase to the towns. Dwayne stated that he has not seen the budget but if you take these numbers and multiply them out, it is a \$206,000 increase to the Town of North Berwick. This would translate to a \$.27 increase to our mil rate. Dwayne stated that he doesn't know if the numbers the Superintendent provided include the Capital Improvements that they have been proposing. He stated that he knows that they have been looking at \$38 million worth of new capital, but he doesn't know if that is included in the budget.

Dwayne stated that their goal is to have their budget meeting on 6/23/20 with the vote on 7/13/20. Selectman Galemmo stated that his wife, who is a School Board member, told him that they were looking at the Lebanon school right now. Selectman Galemmo said that he didn't

know if the budget numbers from the Superintendent include this. Dwayne stated that he has asked the Superintendent for a copy of the budget so that the Selectmen can review it.

Dwayne said that the other concern that he had is something that has been somewhat ongoing for the past couple of years and is becoming an issue. He said that every time they contact the school about voting, it gets brought up. The Superintendent doesn't want us to use the elementary school for voting anymore. Dwayne said that he got another email from Steve today about it. Dwayne responded to him that this was getting tiresome and worrisome because every time we talk to them about holding an election, he tells us to find someplace else. However, they continue to allow other schools like Lebanon to vote in their schools. Steve told him that we should vote at the Community Center. Dwayne would love nothing more than to be able to do that, but it is just not big enough. He stated that the main room in the Community Center is just under a third of the size of the gym.

Chairman Cowan said that she feels that we have gone round and round with them on this issue. The last correspondence that Dwayne sent them was very thorough and explained our reasoning for this. She is wondering where this is coming from. Dwayne said that he knows that Steve has had calls from some parents that are bringing their kids to school, but he is not sure where it is currently coming from. Chairman Cowan asked if it was up to the Selectmen as to where the elections are held. Dwayne stated that if Steve tell us that we can't hold it at the school then we wouldn't be able to. He said that if that happens, the Selectmen will need to meet with the School Board to discuss it further. Dwayne said that he understands the concern with the safety of the kids and now, Steve has also mentioned the concern with the health of the kids. Dwayne has asked why they don't just have a teacher workshop on that date. A lot of other schools across the State of Maine and across the country either close for election day or they have teacher workshops. The elections are preplanned at least a year ahead so there is no reason that they couldn't schedule a teacher workshop day when they do their school calendar.

Selectman Johnson, Jr. asked what the complications were with holding the election at the Hurd School. Dwayne said that the issue would be that there is no parking. Chairman Cowan stated that the gym there is a little small as well. Dwayne said that he would love to have it at the Community Center because there is plenty of parking. The problem is the size of the room. He said that people would have to stand outside, and we wouldn't be able to utilize enough booths. It would not be easy to get people in and out. Selectman Hall said that they have a new Superintendent that will be starting on July 1<sup>st</sup> and the school year is ending May 29<sup>th</sup>. Chairman Cowan stated that if this issue continues then they will want to definitely meet with the School Board.

Dwayne stated that if they get kicked out of the school, one of the things that they could look into is at a church. Selectman Johnson, Jr. stated that the churches are probably not big enough either. Dwayne said that the only one that he could think of was the New Covenant Church. They have a big parking lot and they don't have pews in the church. They use chairs when they have a service. He said that he's not sure if it would be big enough. He would need to go take a look at it. Dwayne is hoping to hear back from Steve soon.

Dwayne states that he is still monitoring our budget to see where we will be at. With everything going on, it is a little difficult to nail the numbers down. He said that, because he was conservative enough, we should be good except for a couple of areas. He thinks that we can save some money. We were budgeting the full amount for Winter Highway not knowing the amount that we were going to bring over. We now know what we are going to bring forward, which will be about \$30,000 so we can reduce that budget amount by \$30,000. He is still working on some other numbers that he can pare down to make sure that we can make it through the next year.

**Reminders: Next Board of Selectmen's Meeting – May 5, 2020 – 6:30 pm Zoom Meeting**

**5. New Business:**

**A. COVID-19: Update of Town Precautions and Discussion**

Dwayne stated that he was keeping this on the agenda to keep the Board informed. He said that he had 3 things to discuss but he had them as separate agenda items.

**B. Memorial Day Parade: Discuss Cancelling for the Year**

Dwayne stated that he spoke with the Commander of the American Legion. The State Legion has been looking at it and they will decide on May 1<sup>st</sup> as to whether to recommend cancelling or not. However, the Commander said that if the Board wants to cancel it, he will not go against that decision. Dwayne said that it looks like Maine will have a 3-phase gradual reopening. The 1<sup>st</sup> phase is at the beginning of May, the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase is in the middle of May and the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase would be into June. He said that he needed to know what the Board would like to do regarding the parade. The Commander of the Legion said that they were going to decide by May 1<sup>st</sup> so if the Board wants to wait to make a decision until the first meeting in May, they could do so.

Chairman Cowan stated that she sees the participation of the school bands as a big part of the parade and that a lot of people in town enjoy this part. With no school being in session right now, they wouldn't be able to have the band to participate. She is also leery about bringing crowds of people together too soon. Selectmen Johnson, Jr. stated that it would be nice if it was the Legion's decision to cancel it. Selectman Johnson, Sr. said that it wouldn't hurt to see what the State decided before the Board makes a decision. The rest of the Board agreed.

**C. Summer Camp: Discuss Cancelling for the Year**

Dwayne stated that he sent the Board a copy of Kristie's email for their review. Kristie is concerned about holding camp this year. She is concerned on how they will keep the kids safe, especially after they are under our protection. She would like to have a decision by May 1<sup>st</sup> but she definitely needs one by May 15<sup>th</sup>. She hasn't hired anybody yet or put anything in place so if they want the camp to go on, she will need enough time to get it all together.

Selectman Johnson, Jr. asked what the Phase 3 of the opening entails. Dwayne said that it means that we would be back to being totally open for everything. He said that they will have benchmarks established to get to those phases. Selectman Johnson, Sr. stated that the number of

cases will go up as soon as we open everything and everyone is around each other. He said that the reason we don't have many cases now is because we are all staying home. He stated that we can't stay home forever. Chairman Cowan stated that, in reading Kristie's letter, it sounds like it is her preference to cancel it now. Looking at the logistics with what is involved in planning for the camp, it makes sense to her to cancel it like some of the other towns have already done. Chairman Cowan can't imagine that there would be too many parents out there that would want to put their kids in a group this quickly. Selectman Johnson, Sr. said that he doesn't have any kids, so it doesn't affect him. However, he thinks that it would be way too many kids being too close too soon. It would be hard to keep them apart from each other consistently. Selectman Galemmo stated that he believes the States that are pushing to open early are going to have a surge in cases. He believes that we should cancel it for this year.

Selectman Hall asked what the town's liability would be if we did have camp and a parent claims that their child got COVID19 at camp. Dwayne stated that he did not know the answer to that. He would have to talk to our legal counsel to find out. He said that the biggest concern would be what the State releases for future social distancing requirements. If they say that we shouldn't be gathering with so many people and we allow them to gather, then we would have some liability there. He thinks that if the State hasn't made any specific requirements, then there may be no liability. Selectman Hall stated that he is not opposed to cancelling camp but there is just so many unknowns. He also said that have camp without any field trips is not going to be enjoyable. Selectman Johnson, Jr. stated that his only concern with cancelling camp is the hardship that it puts on parents who are going to work.

Selectman Galemmo motioned to cancel Summer Camp for the 2020 season. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Dwayne stated that Kristie is also trying to plan for the Mill Field Festival. She reached out to the Committee members and to the vendors like the Fire Department and American Legion and they are all in agreement that it should be cancelled for the year. He stated that this is the time when the Committee is planning for it and they can't do that right now. Selectman Hall asked if the decision had to be made tonight. Dwyane said that they did not. Selectman Hall said that it is hard to make a decision for August because there are so many unknowns. He said that if they can wait another month or two to decide, he would rather do that. Chairman Cowan asked what the time frame was to notify vendors. Dwayne said that the Committee's concern is with trying to get their stuff together. The Fire Department said that this is usually the time that they are going around getting donations. The American Legion said the same thing. The Historical Society said that they can't go talk to anybody because the businesses are not open.

Dwayne stated that the person that runs the children's part of the festival wonders how they are going to sanitize in between children playing in play groups.

Chairman Cowan asked Dwayne if the Committee members were recommending that they cancel the festival. Dwayne said that he received emails from all 9 main members of the committee, and it was unanimous to cancel the festival. Selectman Galemmo said that it seems that we will not have the Mill Field Festival as we know it, but maybe still try and do something on a smaller scale. They can probably still show a movie or do a community picnic. This would

all be if we are allowed to congregate at that time in larger groups. Chairman Cowan said that they could probably do a smaller Fall Festival in September or October.

Selectman Galemmo motioned to cancel the Mill Field Festival with the possibility of having a community event if we are allowed to gather in large groups. Selectman Hall seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

**D. Lebanon Road: Request for No Parking Area**

Dwayne stated that, at the last meeting, we had a request from a resident that lives on Lebanon Road to install a no parking zone. The Police Chief did go take a look at the area. He said that the side of the road that she lives on should definitely be assigned as no parking for 300 feet on both sides of her driveway. He said that, on the other side of the road, it doesn't become a visual block for people coming out of the driveway. It becomes a potential hazard with people moving into the middle of the road because the road is not wide enough to park cars along the side of the road. He recommends that we at least put up signs on the north side of Lebanon Road, but he would not be opposed to having the signs on both sides of the road. It would be about a 600-foot section on both sides of the crest. This change would be located in our Traffic Ordinance under Article VI, Section 4. They would add the following:

M. Both sides of Lebanon Road near Negutaquet Conservation Area/Water Tank as designated by the signs reading "No Parking".

Selectman Galemmo motioned to adopt No Parking on both sides of Lebanon Road as outlined above. Selectman Johnson, Jr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

Selectman Hall asked about doing something with the parking lot at the entrance of that trail. Dwayne stated that it is not our parking lot. The unfortunate thing is because they haven't done anything with that parking lot it becomes really muddy in the Springtime and Fall time. They close off the parking lot during this time. Dwayne said that he can always address the issue with Great Works Land Trust and see if they can do something about it. Selectman Hall stated that he is full support of adding the signs but believes that something should be done with the parking lot. He recommended that Dwayne discuss it with Great Works. He said that we could probably help with constructing something that would work. Dwayne will reach out to Great Works to discuss it.

Chairman Cowan asked Dwayne when the signs would be able to be put up. Dwayne said that we have some signs right now that read "No parking in this area" and have arrows on both sides to designate the area. He said that they can put those up for now, but they only have one arrow pointing in each direction. He can order signs that say, "No parking between signs".

**E. Town Manager Contract: Discuss Contract Renewal**

Dwayne stated that, usually a year before his contract is up, the Board usually starts discussing his contract. Selectman Hall asked what he was proposing for a salary increase. Dwayne said that he doesn't put a salary increase in it. The way the contract is stated is that it is the base

salary that was approved in January and the Board decides on the salary every year. His contract has never been set up that he gets so much this year and so much the next year. The only provision is that his salary never goes below the base salary that is listed in the contract. He stated that he doesn't want to lock the town into a specific amount. If the town is not doing well, then he would not expect a raise.

Chairman Cowan asked if there were any other changes such as in mileage or other benefits. Dwayne stated that the only thing that changed is the amount of years. This one is for 5 years instead of 4 years.

Selectman Johnson, Jr. motioned to approve the new contract for 5 years for Dwayne Morin. Selectman Johnson, Sr. seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

## **6. Other Business:**

Dwayne stated that our janitor will not be coming back to work. Selectman Galemme suggested to get a cleaning service instead of hiring a janitor as a town employee. Dwayne agreed that he would like to do that. The problem with hiring as a town employee is that it is only a 20-hour position and it is hard to find someone for that. Dwayne stated that he looked into it before and the problem is with the Police Department. We will have to actually fingerprint people. If a cleaning company changes their employee after they have been screened it could cause some problems. Dwayne did say that the banks use cleaning services so it should be fine. He will look into it. Selectman Hall stated that he is fine with a cleaning service, but he wants to make sure that whatever company they get is paying their employees minimum wage.

Dwayne stated that all the employees are staying healthy. He has spoken with Mike Barker who is our EMA Director and Rescue Director. He has been attending all the COVID19 meetings. Every couple of days, the County gets together in ZOOM meetings do discuss any issues. Dwayne said that we are doing well. The biggest issue we have is with getting PPE supplies. He said we are all set right now except for thermometer covers. However, York Hospital has stated that they will give us some of theirs.

Chairman Cowan asked if he knew how many cases that we have in North Berwick. Dwayne said that he has not been able to obtain that. He did say that our Rescue Squad has not transported anybody that has been found to be positive. Dwayne said that he knows there are some cases in North Berwick, but the CDC will not release those specific numbers. They only give it to us by County,

## **7. Review and Approve Warrants and Correspondence:**

There are no Warrants to be reviewed.

**8. Adjournment:**

Selectman Glemmo motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:29 pm. Selectman Johnson, Sr. 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 Glemmo

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Sr.