

**North Berwick Board of Selectmen Minutes May 19, 2020**

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

**Also Present:** Dwayne Morin

Chairman Cowan opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

- 1. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 2. Review and Approve Minutes of May 5, 2020**

Selectman Johnson, Sr. motioned to approve the minutes of May 5, 2020. Selectman Galemmo 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, Town Meeting Discussions

Dwayne Morin stated that the Referendum Questions that are to be voted on in July are included in their packet on page 15. He stated that they look a little bit different than what the Board saw at the last meeting. The lawyers took a look at it and whenever we do a Referendum vote for the Budget, the Board of Selectmen's recommendation must be included on the question. On every question, he added, "Board of Selectmen Recommends: Ought to Pass".

He stated that, the other thing that is different is there is no vote tally for the Budget Committee. His concern was that for the overall budget it looked like 2 people were voting against it. However, the negative votes were all for the Social Services and from different people. The Attorney said that the best way for us to handle it was to not put the vote tally on the Referendum question. Selectman Johnson, Sr. asked if the Budget Committee was aware that we were voting on the Budget as a Referendum. Dwayne stated that some of them knew because he has talked to some of them. He said that he can reach out to the Budget Committee, but nothing has changed since they reviewed the budget, other than going from 44 questions to 11 questions. Dwayne stated that there were also a few language changes that were made but they were nothing of any significance.

Dwayne stated that if the Budget fails, we will need to hold a Selectmen's meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> and schedule an open Town Meeting on September 1<sup>st</sup> at the Community Center.

Dwayne stated that the Superintendent will be present at the meeting on 6/2/20 to discuss the School Budget. He would like to have the questions in advance if possible.

Dwyane stated that we were approved for the Linscott Road intersection grant. This will fill the hole in our budget. He spoke with Hussey today to let them know the status of everything. They had put their plans on hold because of the buyers. They are meeting with them either tomorrow or Thursday to continue to look at site development and what the building would look like on their site. Dwayne told them that, with the vote in July, if he can get the house constructed, have the tenant move and get the house demolished before snow flies this year, it would be a great accomplishment. We would look to build the road in the Spring of 2021.

**B. GWRLT: Discussion on Negutaquet Conservation Area Parking Lot**

Dwayne spoke with someone from the Great Works Regional Land Trust and they said that they did raise some money to build the parking lot. The parking lot has been designed and has been laid out. They are hoping to get back in touch with us at the latter part of May or beginning of June to see if it can be constructed at that time. They are still trying to figure out how much money they raised. They had a big fundraiser over the past several weeks. They still don't know the total amount raised and how much can be used for the parking lot project. They do feel that they will be able to construct the lot this year.

**C. Assessing: Review State Assessment Results, Discuss Value Adjustments for FY21**

Dwayne stated that Craig is about 99% complete on all of his pickup work which includes all new value, new houses, new additions, and anything else. He will be running all of the numbers tomorrow just to see what we added in value. He is also going to start working on changing the tables to see what the values will actually do. We are still waiting on Pratt's declaration which is due by June 1<sup>st</sup>.

Dwayne said that they are still working with TRIO to get our online assessment database up and running. He said that they have 17 towns that they manage and ours is the only one that won't work. They did get a working model this afternoon and Dwayne was able to test it. The only problem is that it is not showing our pictures and our sketches, so they are working on that part now. If everything goes well, we should be able to get it onto our website tomorrow and people will be able to start accessing it.

**Reminders: Next Board of Selectmen's Meeting – June 2, 2020 – 6:30 pm – Municipal Building**

## **5. New Business:**

### **A. COVID-19: Town Reopening Plan**

Dwayne stated that they opened the office yesterday and everything went well. They were pretty busy. They had people there at 7:30 waiting for them to open. Selectman Johnson, Jr. asked if it was property tax payments or excise tax payments. Dwayne said that it was excise tax payments. He said that the Governor had issued an Executive Order that people had to get their cars excised. That has now been rescinded because the Secretary of State has some concerns about that. Dwayne said that they heard that the Secretary of State doesn't want to open DMV's yet. This is having a negative effect on municipalities because one of our main revenue drivers is excise tax. If you tell people that they do not have to excise their cars, they won't do it.

Dwayne stated that the staff is happy with the process and people have been very cordial and very nice. He said that the Code Enforcement Office is very busy right now. Building in town is still going strong. He stated that we have exceeded our building permit numbers that he had originally expected in terms of value. We are overbudget and have collected more revenue than we had anticipated. Chairman Cowan asked about how many new houses they had this year. Dwayne stated that there were 23 new ones this year and there was a total of 93 permits issued this year.

Dwayne stated that he is still waiting on the UV and Ozone system that they are going to put for our HVAC system. The whole HVAC system has been revamped over the past 2 weeks. He stated that we were not going to pay to have the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor done, however the company has said they are going to do it at no cost to us. Chairman Cowan asked what the maintenance costs was for this system. Dwayne said that every 2 years we need to change a cartridge and that costs \$300.

### **B. Town Meeting: Review Town Meeting Newsletter Update**

Chairman Cowan asked if he had put anything in the newsletter stating what the possible repercussions would be if they vote down the budget. Dwayne stated that he did not put that in the newsletter, but he can add something if they want him to. He did indicate that there will be a Public Hearing on June 23, 2020 via ZOOM because there is a possibility of having more than 50 people present. He then lists all of the questions followed by an explanation for each one. After the questions, he added a Selectmen Pledge to Voters to state that the Selectmen will continue to monitor the expenditures and revenues within the budget and make adjustments throughout the year where it is necessary. Dwayne stated that they can also mention it at the Public Hearing. He said that he was trying to keep the newsletter positive. He does indicate that the budget does not increase taxes. We are receiving a grant from the MDOT for the Linscott Road project that will give us more than half of what the cost will be. The project was going to cost us out-of-pocket about \$135,000 but it will now be about \$75,000.

Dwayne stated that they will be printing these in house on our copiers and stuff them into the previous newsletter printed earlier. If the Board sees any changes to be made, he would like to know as soon as possible. He would like to mail them out by the beginning of June.

Selectman Hall asked if they had printed out the Town Reports yet. Dwayne said that they had. He said that they will start releasing them this week. He said that the back of the report will still have the old Warrant so people will just have to disregard that part of it. Dwayne stated that he will be putting something on the website as well that will explain everything about the change in the voting style this year.

Selectman Johnson, Sr. stated that he was approached by a resident who asked about having a mail drop box added somewhere else in town. They find it hard to get into the Post Office at times especially when Pratt & Whitney are getting out of work and other times when it is busy. Dwayne stated that it would be a question for the Postmaster and not for the Selectmen. He said that he can reach out to the Postmaster and ask if this is something that can be done. Chairman Cowan said that it would be nice to have a location where we could just drive up to the box like South Berwick has.

Chairman Cowan stated that they will also need to vote for a new Chairman at some point. Dwayne stated that they can't do it until after the election.

**6. Other Business:**

Dwayne stated that they have received their new copier and we have finalized that purchase. It cost \$2,995 for the \$12,000 copier. The staff is very happy with it.

Selectman Johnson, Jr. asked what the status of Verizon was now. Dwayne said that they are doing their Federal permitting right now. Because we are an historical building, they need to go through historical permitting and environmental permitting. Our building is not on the Historical Register, so we need to write a letter for them stating this. They believe the permitting process will last the summer. Once they have received it, they will go through the Planning Board for their permit. Their goal is to be up and running by October. Dwayne doesn't know if this timeline will be pushed back because of the virus.

Selectman Hall asked what was going on with the Farmers Market. Dwayne said that they signed the contract yesterday. They are planning on opening on June 4<sup>th</sup>.

**7. Review and Approve Warrants and Correspondence;**

Warrant:	May 12, 2020	- \$	0.00
Warrant:	May 19, 2020	- \$	593,212.48

Selectman Galemmo motioned to approve the Warrant of May 19, 2020 for the amount of \$593,212.48. Selectman Hall seconded the motion. VOTE: 5-0

**Adjournment:**

Selectman Glemmo motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 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 Glemmo

Selectman: Michael Johnson, Sr.

