

Village of Old Bennington  
Trustees Meeting Minutes  
April 3, 2018

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Officials present: Trustees Andy Buchsbaum, Susan Wright, and Ron Rabidou as well as Treasurer Kathy Wagenknecht.

Residents present: Jill Jones, Richard Poeton, and Maryanne Peters

Andy Buchsbaum, the acting presiding officer, called the meeting to order at 7:07.

1. Opening: In the absence of the clerk, Ron Rabidou volunteered to serve as acting clerk for the meeting. Andy moved to designate Ron as acting clerk for the meeting. Susan Wright seconded the motion. The trustees unanimously approved the motion.
2. Minutes: There were no changes to the previously distributed draft copy of the minutes. Susan moved that the trustees approve the minutes of the March 6, 2018 meeting. Andy seconded the motion. The trustees unanimously approved the motion.
3. Citizen comments: Richard Poeton pointed out that in Donna Berry's absence we'll need a clerk for the Annual Meeting. Ron noted that the trustees can appoint a clerk in Donna's absence. He also said that no one has expressed an interest in the clerk position for next year. Ron added that we could amend the charter, with the approval of the voters, to appoint both the clerk and the treasurer and to specify that neither needed to be a resident of the village, which would expand the pool of applicants. We agreed to continue to look for volunteers to serve as a clerk for the Annual Meeting as well as next year.
4. Reports of commissioners:
  - a. Road Commissioner.
    - i. Andy provided an update of the museum crosswalk project, indicating that the town will proceed with the crosswalk work this spring before the state repaving project begins. The state will then restripe the crosswalk walk after repaving the road.
    - ii. He also gave an update on the Route 9 repaving project, saying that he had provided a copy of our insurance certificate to the project team and he had also signed a finance and maintenance agreement regarding caring for the road after the state completes the repaving.
    - iii. He spoke with Jerome about lawn damage related to plowing the sidewalks. Jerome agreed to repair the damage before the Annual Meeting.
    - iv. He provided an update concerning enforcement of the No Through Trucks ordinance.
      1. We have memorialized the sign on the south island of the village greens. Officer Andy Corey can now write tickets. Andy will notify him.

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2. We also discussed the existing sign at the corner of Monument and Elm, which is facing the intersection at a confusing angle. We need to determine the proper placement and angle of the sign. We will consider the matter again at our next meeting after viewing the sign in the interim.
  - b. Tree Commissioner.
    - i. Ron said that Dr. Mahler removed dead tree at the end of his driveway as requested.
    - ii. We received a quote from Pembroke to plant two trees for about \$1,000 each.
  - c. Parks Commissioner – no matters.
  - d. Police Commissioner – absent.
5. Treasurer’s Report and Warrants:
- a. Kathy reviewed revenues and expenses.
    - i. We noted that snow plowing costs (\$56,000) were significantly (\$21,000) over budget because of the snowy winter. Kathy noted that this year’s expense included plowing for a storm last April (about \$6,000 or \$7,000).
    - ii. We discussed ways to control such costs in future, recognizing that we had few options.
  - b. Kathy reviewed the warrants.
  - c. Ron moved to accept the Treasurer’s Report and approve the Warrants. Susan seconded the motion. The trustees unanimously approved the motion.
6. Old Business:
- a. 2018 Budget. We discussed and completed the proposed budget for next year. Significant matters included snow plowing costs and sidewalk repairs.
    - i. We agreed to budget \$35,000 for snow removal, which is the average cost over the last five years.
    - ii. We agreed to budget \$30,000 for sidewalk repairs. This amount will cover one of several options that we will present at the Annual Meeting.
      1. Replace the sidewalk through Bank Street with matching grant from the state.
      2. Repair only damaged sections of the sidewalk.
      3. Remove the existing sidewalk and replace with grass.
    - iii. Andy will include a detailed description of the sidewalk options and their costs in the Annual Report.
  - b. Preparation for Annual Meeting.
    - i. Kathy discussed her presentation, including discussion of tax rate.
    - ii. Andy discussed his presentation on sidewalk options.

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- iii. Trustees should get their reports to Kathy by April 9 for distribution about April 15<sup>th</sup>.
- iv. There were no comments on the Annual Meeting Notice. Ron agreed to arrange publication in the Banner and to post the notice in the village as required.
- c. Storage of village documents.
  - i. With Donna Berry stepping down as clerk, we discussed the future storage and location of village documents (likely several filing cabinets).
  - ii. Kathy noted that the town previously offered us storage space.
  - iii. Richard suggested we review and organize the material.
  - iv. Ron pointed out that Arnold Ricks has records relating to the village roads.
  - v. Kathy noted that Dale Cobb also has old financial records.
  - vi. We agreed that we should review and compile these documents and store them in a single location.
- d. Maryanne asked about insurance coverage for the trustees.
  - i. Ron replied that former trustee Don Miller previously said that we had general liability coverage for the trustees as well as property and casualty insurance.
  - ii. Andy will review the policy to confirm this.
- e. Vacancies on Village Boards.
  - i. We discussed finding a new clerk for both the Annual Meeting and the next fiscal year.
    - 1. Ron explained that according to Carl Andeer at the VLCT we could appoint a trustee as clerk for the annual meeting and hire someone to perform the administrative tasks under his or her supervision.
    - 2. The village could also elect a trustee to serve as clerk next year with the same arrangement.
  - ii. We discussed filling the open trustee position. Ron noted that both Jim Warren and Maryanne had volunteered to serve. After further discussion, Maryanne said she would prefer to withdraw in favor of Jim.
  - iii. We agreed to add Jim to the list of nominees.
  - iv. Ron agreed to contact him.
- 7. Adjournment: Ron moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:10. Andy seconded the motion. The trustees unanimously approved the motion.