

Village of Old Bennington
Trustees Meeting Minutes
March 6, 2018

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

Residents present: Jill Jones and Richard Poeton.

In the absence of Don Miller, the presiding officer, the meeting was called to order at 7:17 with Andy Buchsbaum acting as temporary presiding officer.

1. Ron Rabidou noted that Don Miller resigned from the board effective March 4, 2018 because he was no longer a resident of the village, having sold his house and moved elsewhere in Bennington on February 28, 2018.
 - a. There was a short discussion concerning how to proceed in Don's absence, potential replacements for Don, and the possibility of Don serving out the remainder of his term.
 - b. Andy Buchsbaum agreed to contact Don concerning serving out his term (if permitted by law).
2. Ron moved that the trustees approve the minutes of the February 6, 2018 meeting as corrected for typographical errors. Susan Wright seconded the motion. The trustees approved the motion unanimously.
3. During the Citizens Comments portion of the meeting, Richard Poeton noted that snow removal expenses already exceeded the budget for the year. The trustees discussed the ways we have tried to reduce snow removal costs in the past and potential ways we could reduce costs in the future. The trustees agreed to discuss the matter further when preparing the budget for next year.
4. Andy presented the Road Commissioner's report.
 - a. Andy will survey the roads with Jerome Construction to identify potholes needing cold patching.
 - b. Pembroke notified Andy that they were increasing the cost of cutting the grass on the village greens by \$20 per cutting. After negotiations, Pembroke agreed to limit the increase to \$10 per cutting.
 - c. Andy reviewed several options for addressing the sidewalk issues on the west side of Monument Avenue.
 - i. Repair sidewalk through Bank Street.
 - ii. Repair sidewalk through the north island of the village green.
 - iii. Remove the existing sidewalk and replace with grass.
 - d. In response, Richard suggested that we consider replacing only the damaged sections.

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- e. After further discussion, the trustees agreed we would present recommendations for voter approval at the annual meeting.
 - f. Andy also noted that in late April he was meeting with state officials concerning the possibility of a grant to defray at least part of the cost of repairing the sidewalks.
5. Ron presented the Tree Commissioner's Report.
 - a. Ron sent a letter to Dr. Mahler concerning the diseased tree at the end of his driveway. While the tree is on private property, the trustees feel that it represents a threat to public safety. Dr. Mahler has not yet responded concerning his plan for the tree.
 - b. Ron is working with Pembroke on a plan to plant two trees in the village where residents removed dead trees from the public right of way.
 6. Kathy Wagenknecht presented the Treasurer's Report.
 - a. Kathy projects that we will be significantly over budget (about \$12,000) for snow removal.
 - b. However, due to highway repair costs and several other line items being less than budget, she projects that we will have a positive variance for the year (about \$10,000).
 7. Kathy presented the warrant list. Ron moved that we approve the warrant list. Andy seconded the motion. The Trustees voted unanimously to approve the warrant list.
 8. Under Old Business:
 - a. Kathy distributed a worksheet for preparing next year's budget to be completed before next month's meeting.
 - b. The trustees discussed the preparation and distribution of the annual meeting call.
 - c. The trustees discussed vacancies on the village boards and potential replacements.
 - d. The trustees further discussed the resignation of Don Miller. Once again, Andy agreed to talk with Don to see if he would be willing to serve through the end of his term (this year's annual meeting) if it's permitted by law.
 9. Under New Business, Ron indicated that he had prepared current versions of our village documents in digital format except for the village ordinances. He plans to work the Donna Berry to complete this document soon.
 10. Ron motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:45; Andy seconded the motion. The trustees unanimously approved the motion.