

Village of Old Bennington  
Trustees Meeting Minutes  
February 5, 2019

Officials present: Trustees James Warren, Charles Edson, Andy Buchsbaum, Susan Wright and Ron Rabidou as well as Treasurer Kathy Wagenknecht and Clerk James Gallen.

Residents present: Marianne Peters

**1. Opening.**

Ron Rabidou, the presiding officer, called the meeting to order at 7:05.

**2. Approval of Minutes.**

Andy moved to approve minutes of the January meeting as amended. Susan seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

**3. Citizen Comments**

Marianne Peters stated that her garage is taking on water. Jerome construction mentioned that the shape of Bank street, and its water flow, could be contributing to the water going into the garage.

- a. Andy discussed some potential solutions, such as an extra storm basin to catch the water.
- b. Andy suggested that MSK could address the matter as part of their proposed study of the village roads.

**4. Reports of commissioners and officers.**

a. Road Commissioner.

i. MSK proposal.

- a. Andy said that he received MSK's proposal to conduct the study of our village roads for \$10,000. After further discussions with MSK on the scope of the study, he received a revised proposal for \$5,000.
- b. Jim moved to authorize Andy to engage MSK to conduct the study as revised and Charlie seconded the motion.
  1. Ron questioned whether the trustees could spend \$5,000 on a non-budgeted item and suggested that we contact attorneys

at the Vermont League of Cities and Towns or village counsel concerning our authority to do so.

2. The trustees voted unanimously to authorize Andy to engage MSK to conduct the study subject to confirmation that we can spend \$5,000 on a non-budgeted item.

ii. Monument Avenue sidewalk replacement project.

- a. In response to concerns raised by state about the planned sidewalk's impact on trees along the path of the new sidewalk, Andy provided the project manager drawings showing that the new sidewalk would be located further east of the existing sidewalk, which would reduce its impact on the trees.
- b. He hasn't heard back from the state, but expects the drawings will alleviate their concerns.

iii. In response to concerns about the cost of plowing and maintaining village roads, the trustees discussed the possibility of having the Town of Bennington take over the plowing and/or maintaining of the village roads. The trustees authorized Andy, Charles and any other trustees wanting to be involved to have informal discussions with the town on the matter.

c. Tree Commissioner

- i. Jim reported that the Bennington Museum may have cut down more than 20% of the trees on its property. Ron will ask Dennis McCarthy to investigate and determine whether the Museum needed to obtain a permit to do so pursuant to the Village Zoning Bylaws.

d. Parks and Sidewalks Commissioner

- i. Greenery was added to the bulbs
- ii. A \$50,000 grant to improve the appearance of downtown was discussed. Susan inquired about grants we can apply for in regard to beautification. It was suggested that the Trustees contact the league of cities and towns.

e. Police Commissioner

- i. Andy worked 44 hours this past month. 28 property checks. 13 tickets. Fines of \$2025.

e. Treasurer

- i. \$4000 is due to Jerome Construction for plowing during the month of December.
- ii. The cost of snow plowing and salt distribution was \$12,000 for January and a small part of December.
- iii. We still have two outstanding property tax bills.

## **5. Warrants**

Andy motions to approve the warrants. Jim seconds the motion, and the motion is passed unanimously.

## **6. Old Business**

- a. No old business was discussed.

## **7. New Business.**

- a. Charlie would like to see the water fountain on the north island restored to operation.
- b. Certificate of Highway Mileage Response was signed by the Trustees.
- c. Boundary and Annexation Survey Response will be completed by Ron.

## **8. Executive Session**

- a. Jim moved to enter Executive Session to discuss probable civil litigation. Andy seconded. The trustees approved the motion unanimously.
- b. A plan of action was devised during the Executive Session.

## **9. Adjourn**

Andy moved to adjourn at 8:43. Jim seconded the motion, and the trustees unanimously approved the motion.