

Village of Old Bennington
Trustees Meeting Minutes
July 2, 2019

Officials present: Trustees Andy Buchsbaum, Susan Wright, Ron Rabidou, and Jim Warren as well as Clerk Steven Anisman and Treasurer Kathy Wagenknecht.

Officials absent: Trustee Charles Edson

Residents present: Jill Jones, Suzanne Buchsbaum

1. Opening. Ron Rabidou called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

2. Minutes.

- a. There were no changes.
- b. Ron Rabidou moved to approve the draft minutes for the June 4, 2019 Trustees Meeting, Andy Buchsbaum seconded the motion, and the Trustees unanimously approved the motion.

3. Citizen Comments. None

4. Reports of Commissioners.

a. Road Commissioner.

- i. Andy Buchsbaum met with Jason Dolmetsch of MSK Engineers to review the scope of work for the road assessment report. Jason and his road consultant from Connecticut toured the Village and will have a draft report at the end of July.
- ii. Mr. Babcock had reported a near-miss accident on Fairview Rd as a result of potholes. Lionel Bowdoin was contacted, there is a plan to patch the holes for some amount between \$500 and \$2,000; it was verbally approved by Andy Buchsbaum and will come out of the roads budget.
- iii. Sidewalks – The grant application for the Phase II west sidewalk has been submitted to the state with the help of Jill Jones. The Trustees are optimistic regarding its consideration.
- iv. Streetlights - Five streetlight bulbs have been replaced recently. In the future, streetlight issues should be addressed to Susan Wright.

b. Tree Commissioner.

- i. Jim Warren reported a large piece of a tree in front of 42 Monument had fallen onto the sidewalk, this will be addressed by the homeowners. All trees are the responsibility of property owners, even if beyond the sidewalk.
- ii. Jim Warren cut back some shrubs to allow the traffic sign by the Walloomsac Inn to be seen.
- iii. Ron Pembroke indicated that most two inch deciduous trees cost about \$900 on average for installation and maintenance, which limits what can be accomplished within the \$2,000 tree budget. In the future, the Trustees will try to focus these funds towards the common green rather than individual homes. If trees are to be planted on individual properties, residents have traditionally been responsible for removing stumps. All decisions regarding specific trees are at the judgment of the Trustees.

- iv. In future years, individual property tree replacement may no longer be covered by the Village, with a focus moving towards maintenance. An assessment/survey may be considered in the future for informational advisement. A tree report would be useful to outline the scope of the project to maintain the trees on the green/common areas.
 - v. There is a dangerous dead tree on the corner of Fairview and Walloomsac, on the 7 Fairview property, that may need to be taken down as it appears to pose a threat to the intersection.
 - c. **Parks and Sidewalks Commissioner.**
 - i. The garden around the marker is being maintained, which is much appreciated; it is unclear whether the Village has a budget to help support these plantings.
 - ii. The plantings and maintenance of the flower barrels on the Caswell's private property are billed \$45.90 to the Village annually; this is being reconsidered for the future. If the Village is supporting that cost, the Trustees feel they should have some input into what flowers are selected. Kathy Wagenknecht really likes marigolds.
 - d. **Police Commissioner.** No report. Jim Warren spoke with Officer Corey, the car was temporarily out of commission until an alternator, a power module, and a front axle could be replaced; the ultimate cost of repairs was ~\$1,500.
 - e. **Treasurer.**
 - i. Multiple expenses were paid, details are in the Treasurer's Report.
 - ii. Some overdue taxes have been outstanding for many months despite multiple letters. A registered letter will be sent to confirm receipt. Penalties continue to accrue.
 - iii. Kathy Wagenknecht presented the warrant list. Ron Rabidou moved to approve the warrant list, Jim Warren seconded the motion, and the trustees unanimously approved the motion.
- 5. **Old Business.** A gift for Donna Berry had previously been discussed. A certificate was tentatively agreed upon in appreciation for her 50 years' service, and possible verbiage was reviewed. Perhaps a serviceberry bush would be appropriate. Final decision to be deferred to next month.
- 6. **New Business.**
 - i. Village meeting signs are posted in two sites around the Village; these are occasionally removed or affected by the weather. Bob Bullington has suggested we obtain weatherproof enclosed notice boards. Ron Rabidou will ask the Vermont League of Cities and Towns whether physical paper postings are still necessary in the digital era.
 - ii. In the context of a recent motor vehicle accident, Andy Buchsbaum suggested highlighting the curb at the S curve that narrows Elm St, to make it more visible and less likely to be struck by motorists. The Trustees will plan to move forward with that marking.
- 7. **Adjournment.** Andy Buchsbaum moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:11pm, Jim Warren seconded the motion, and the trustees unanimously approved the motion.