

Village of Old Bennington  
Trustees Meetings Minutes  
May 5, 2020

Meeting held via telepresence using Zoom.com

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

Officials absent: None.

Residents present: None.

1. Opening. Ron Rabidou called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.
2. Minutes.
  - a. There were no changes to the posted minutes.
  - b. Ron Rabidou moved to approve the posted minutes for the April 7 Trustees meeting, Andy Buchsbaum seconded the motion, and the Trustees unanimously approved the motion.
3. Citizen Comments. There were none.
4. Reports of Commissioners.
  - a. Road Commissioner.
    - i. Andy Buchsbaum presented the report. The project manager for Phase 2 of the sidewalk project has contacted Andy; additional surveying still needs to be done, but it is being postponed by the coronavirus pandemic; a video regarding working safely in groups has been produced by the state needs to be reviewed by any contractors; Jerome is already in compliance prepared with those guidelines.
    - ii. The Bank St Grant proposal was discussed with Chris Taft via e-mail; because of COVID-19, the funds that would normally be allocated for grants may not be available this year; this may postpone the project.
    - iii. A contractor who works for Verizon has called; he has the ability to lay fiber optic cable underground, and would like to install that from the intersection of Bank St/ Monument Avenue, north to the Circle, then west to Walloomsac. Conduits would be placed on the grass off the road, in the right-of-way. Permits may be necessary; we asked that any disruptions to the grass and roads be repaired. Charles Edson mentioned that conduits exist that were installed for this purpose; however, there may no longer be space available. Andy will review this with Bob Bullington before providing an official response. There was no immediate objection by the Trustees as long as proper procedures are followed and permits are used correctly.
  - b. Tree Commissioner. Jim Warren got a letter from Elizabeth Warner requesting names of potential contractors to evaluate and potentially remove trees; some work appears to have been completed. Andy mentioned that 3 black locusts that were overhanging Monument Avenue were removed; there was no objection by the trustees.
  - c. Parks and Sidewalks Commissioner.
    - i. Susan Wright presented the report. Donna's bench was discussed, and the funding remains under discussion. Previous benches have been privately funded,

and people have requested the same approach here. Susan will need assistance organizing and coordinating a fundraiser. Jill Jones will be contacted to provide help. Susan has discussed the project with a stone mason. She is hoping to use some of the marble pieces from the sidewalk project, but they may not be available in the near future if the sidewalk project is postponed, and they are probably quite small. The trustees felt it would probably be reasonable to use some of the stones in front of Laumeister's house if he approves; Susan will evaluate them with the stone mason, and she will start by performing an inventory. The project cost will be \$909 for the bench (including shipping), and \$200-300 for the mason. A bronze marker would be an additional \$120-160, for a total ~\$1,300. Some monies have already been pledged; Susan will try to make sure sufficient money is collected prior to orders being placed.

- ii. Susan Wright got a quote for \$4,500 for re-setting the stones around the monument on the central island. There may be another fundraising project needed for this in the future. The trustees requested that the bench project be completed first.
  - d. Police Commissioner. Charles Edson presented the report. Officer Andy Corey worked 92 hours. 0 tickets were issued during the coronavirus pandemic, when warnings were issued instead, and 57 property checks/ watches were performed. Tickets will be issued again shortly.
  - e. Treasurer.
    - i. Multiple expenses were paid, details are in the Treasurer's Report.
    - ii. One quarter of the annual highway funds was paid by the state; this is approximately \$3,250 per quarter.
    - iii. A letter from Myanmar was received from Tzaims Luskus – he is unable to return to the US, so is touring Asia. He sent a small payment that is much less than the amount owed.
    - iv. Advertising for zoning hearings led to a significant expense for newspaper advertising.
    - v. A check to reimburse monies that Officer Andy Corey has spent out of pocket will be provided to him.
    - vi. Without a budget yet approved, accounting continues in keeping with last year's actual spending.
    - vii. Kathy Wagenknecht presented the warrant list. Ron Rabidou moved to approve the warrant list, Charles Edson seconded the motion, and the Trustees unanimously approved the motion.
5. Annual Meeting Planning. The Vermont Secretary of State has issued further guidance. A ballot can be distributed (or drive-up voting, which would not be practical) to citizens to allow elections. In order to allow citizens to follow the issues, a detailed report would need to be generated explaining the various line items. An outdoor meeting is being considered. A poll of the citizens to help determine a plan might be an option rather than postponing the annual meeting indefinitely. Work on the budget and annual report are deferred until a plan is decided upon for the annual meeting.
6. Old Business. There was none.

7. New Business. Charles Edson got a note from Paul Doucette; a member of the coast guard is retiring and is unable to have the reception at the coast; they requested permission to have the reception at the Monument grounds. This will be discussed with Bob Bullington.
8. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 7:51pm.