

Village of Old Bennington
Trustees Meeting Minutes
October 1, 2019

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: Jill Jones, Richard Poeton

1. Opening. Ron Rabidou called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.
2. Minutes.
 - a. The previous minutes incorrectly indicated that the salt proposal was still pending, although it had been submitted. Jason Dolmetsch's name was previously spelled incorrectly.
 - b. Ron Rabidou moved to approve the draft minutes for the September 3 trustees meeting with errors noted as above, Andy Buchsbaum seconded the motion, and the trustees unanimously approved the motion.
3. Citizen Comments. Jill Jones raised a concern that students from the Bennington School are going missing and vandalizing local homes. The superintendent had previously spoken to the Village after a previous violent incident involving the boys. Richard Poeton raised a concern that no protocol is in place to notify residents when students are on the loose. Charles Edson mentioned that the prior owners had an arrangement in place to notify the local police, although the arrangements with the new owners are not clear. The School is not in the Village, which limits our influence. Jill Jones will speak to the administrators at the School to try to open communication, and perhaps the Trustees will host them at the December Village meeting (the November meeting will likely be taken up with the roads report).
4. Reports of Commissioners.
 - a. Road Commissioner.
 - i. Andy Buchsbaum has signed an agreement form with the Agency of Transportation for the sidewalk project. A certificate of insurance of \$10,000,000 for the Village has been obtained and will be submitted.
 - ii. We are awaiting our annual proposal for salting and plowing from Jerome Construction.
 - iii. The Road Condition Assessment for the Village of Old Bennington has been received and distributed to the Trustees. It is quite lengthy and includes details of each road including photographs and descriptions, and a summary table with pavement condition, maintenance priority, and construction priority - followed by recommendations for that road with significant detail and cost analyses. A more succinct version was requested and will be available shortly. Bank St, Fairview, Elm, and Catamount were the highest priority - the total for all work on just those four roads would be between \$500,000 and \$800,000 over time. Patching and sealing on other roads is likely to be cost effective in terms of

minimizing future damage and the price of future repairs. The report will be placed on the website, and Andy Buchsbaum will prepare a brief summary. State, bond, grant, bake sales, or other monies may need to be pursued, and outside guidance may be necessary as we begin to figure out financing options, which are beyond our current means. Andy Buchsbaum and Charles Edson may meet with Rob Faley to discuss options. Full details and long-term plans need to be reviewed before a final plan can be presented to the public. Jason Dolmetsch of MSK Engineering will attend our next meeting to answer questions about the report, to further discuss our options, and to assist the Trustees in beginning to formulate a long-term plan. A special meeting may be necessary to present the plan to the Village. Ron Rabidou will discuss these issues with our state representatives.

b. Tree Commissioner.

- i. Jim Warren presented an update. Lucy Baldwin has asked to have a tree removed. 40 Monument Ave is doing some tree removal on their property and the plan appeared to be appropriate.
- ii. A tree fell down at the bottom of Monument and took down wires with it, but has mostly been cleared by the electric company.

c. Parks and Sidewalks Commissioner.

- i. Susan Wright presented an update. She will address a streetlight that is out in front of 32 Monument Avenue (as reported by Margaret Schwarzkopf via e-mail).
- ii. Ron Rabidou indicated that the herbicides and pesticides occasionally applied to the Village greens appear to be standard formulations that require a brief time of no traffic, although the hazard is low. They are applied once or twice a year.

d. Police Commissioner.

- i. Charles Edson presented the report. Andy worked 99 hours, performed 51 property checks, and issued 23 tickets worth \$3,524 in fines.
- ii. The front end of the police car may need work on the tire-rod ends and the ball-joints.
- iii. Dr. Mahler's property, in which police vehicles and equipment have been stored, has been sold, but the new owners are willing to allow us to store the police car there. Alternatively, Jamie Jerome of Jerome Construction has offered to allow us to park the police car there when needed.

e. Treasurer.

- i. Multiple expenses were paid, details are in the Treasurer's Report.
- ii. Two properties remain behind on their taxes. Letters have been sent, although some have been returned to sender.
- ii. 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. A gift for Donna Berry had previously been discussed in appreciation for her 50 years' service. Susan Wright has researched benches; a cast stone bench would potentially be affordable at less than \$1,000. A federal style bench was selected. Private

donations or a bake sale may be sought to underwrite the cost, perhaps with installation expenses to be paid by the Village.

- b. Charles Edson will remain the representative for Bennington County Regional Commission. Some meetings are not handicapped accessible.

6. New Business. There was none.

7. Adjournment. Ron Rabidou moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:24 pm, Andy Buchsbaum seconded the motion, and the trustees unanimously approved the motion.