

Bakersfield Regular Select Board Meeting
Monday, March 11, 2024
7:00pm

The meeting was called to order at 7:04pm by Josh Goss.

Members present: Josh Goss (chair), Lance Lawyer, John West, Nicky Cribb, Todd Cosgrove

Members absent: none

Previous minutes: Lance made the motion to accept the previous minutes as written, John seconded the motion and the motion carried with a vote of 3-0, Nicky abstaining as she was not present at the previous meeting, and Todd having not yet arrived.

Warrants signed:

Selectmen's order #5-2024	\$12,455.17
Road Commissioner's order #10&11-2024	\$16,132.41
Selectmen's order #6-2024	\$1,424.54
Road Commissioner's order #4-2024	\$415.04

Finance: Tom met with the board and gave them updated finance reports. Tom asked the board about how they would like to see certain categories on the reports. Lance asked Tom to provide the checking account balance for the Cutting Fund, the balance on the RDAG fund and the estimated returns from Charles Schwab, when that comes in, to estimate for scholarship funds. Tom asked other questions about budget line items, etc. Tom and the board discussed the update coming up from Quick Books. Tom and John are going to look into the details of the update package and if our current fee will be credited toward the upgrade purchase.

Lance made the motion to authorize John to make the decision regarding the Quick Books upgrade. Todd seconded the motion and the motion carried with a vote of 5-0.

Library- The board asked Wendy, the current secretary of the H F Brigham Library, and Nicky if the library had used their ARPA funds to purchase a computer. They said that they did but they had about \$100.00 left. The board said that they should use that up, as the town wants to use the ARPA balances and eliminate ARPA from their accounts. Wendy had questions about memorial donations being used as donations that are not used within the year donated and therefore must be voted on by the town, in order for the library to keep them. The board recommended that the library buy books or something else needed for the library in the name that the donation was giving for.

Wendy gave the board a handout about a Public Facilities Initiative Grant for small, rural public libraries from the Vermont Department of Libraries. Wendy said that they hope to possibly get funds for an ADA restroom on the library's main floor and may even be able to expand the library. They want to inform the Select Board that they will be applying for the grant this fall and hope to have

an award in 2025. Wendy said that the architect will be getting a plan drawn by April and they plan to have the asbestos flooring taken out in May, new flooring put in and the walls painted. Wendy said they are using Alex for this grant and there is a webinar this fall. She said that we are making sure that we have our ducks in a row and have our plans ready. Wendy said that hopefully they receive enough funds to, as the library doesn't have a back door, put one in.

Roads- Josh said that he received one road complaint on Pudvah Hill Rd and he spoke to Mac and the individual and the problem was cured the next morning. Josh said that he drove over the Class III section of Pudvah Hill today and it is completely passable. Lance said that we are in better shape than most towns are right now. Todd said that he still hasn't heard from the road crew about any roads that have bad spots to give a head's up for in Emergency vehicles.

Nicky said that it would be good to get information from the Road Crew out to the public as it's important that the public knows what we are doing and why. She said it's the perception that feeds gossip that we don't care and aren't doing anything. Josh said that the one thing that we try not to do is engage with the Facebook crusaders. Simple questions such as 'when is the next Board meeting' or 'the number to report a road complaint' are fine to answer. Josh said that we know the roads are bad and that there are people saying that the road crew and the Select Board aren't doing anything, but no one comes to the meetings. Lance said that we had a gentleman who came to a meeting with a list of complaints and suggestions. He was polite and that was helpful and the board could explain some things. Nicky said that at Town Meeting, it was suggested that we have an email tree or some kind of digital notification to get the word out. Josh said that Franklin County Fire Alert has a page that sends out Public Service Announcements and you can like it or put a smiley face, but you can't comment. Nicky said that she would be glad to look into that.

Todd asked about the resident who asked for stone for his road at Town Meeting and said that he has paid for all the gravel put down on his road and done the work. Lance said that particular section of road is a Class IV section and he said that we need to continue with our Class IV Road policy. Todd said that we need to get back to that resident.

Lance said that we had another complaint that the roads were not plowed wide enough. Lance explained that the roads were not solid enough to hold the plow up, so it was not possible to go wider. Lance said we have to pray that mud season is almost over.

1990 Grader sale- Josh said that he looked online for graders for sale that were made in the mid 80's to mid 90's and they were going from \$30,000.00 to \$55,000.00, which is much better than the \$15,000.00 we were offered for trade-in. Josh suggested posting it for sale for a minimum \$45,000.00 sealed bid. He asked Tami to ask Mac for pics of the grader and a brief description and then get it advertised. Josh said that he was going to reach out to Sheldon and see if they were interested.

Board Business-

Select a Select Board Chair- Todd nominated Josh for Select Board Chair, John seconded the motion and the motion carried with a vote of 4-0, Josh abstaining.
Select a Select Board Vice-Chair- Todd nominated Lance, John seconded, and the motion carried with a vote of 4-0, Lance abstaining.

MERP Update- none

Vacant Officer Appointments-

Town Agent- Nicky said that Sam may be interested in this position.

Two Cemetery Commissioners- waiting for appointments from the Cemetery Commission.

Re-appoint NWCUD representatives from Bakersfield- Heather Jewett and Brenda Churchill. Josh asked Tami to confirm by written consent from both parties and get back to the board.

Bakersfield elected Constable discussion- Todd said that he thought that we would be stepping into a big mud pile with risk of excessive cost and liability. He said the constable already has the authority to do what we want them to do. Josh said that we don't have any law enforcement and there are not enough police to cover the area. Todd said that it would be cheaper to contract with the State Police or the Sheriff. Josh said we had this up to vote 3 times and it never passed.

Lance read from the VLCT Handbook for Town officers:

"The role of the town constable varies from town to town and depends on her or she is elected or appointed, and whether the voters have elected to limit his or her law enforcement powers. At one end of the spectrum, the town constable is the town's local law enforcement officer, with powers of search, seizure, and arrest within the town. One the other end, the constable only has the power to serve civil process, assist the health officer in the discharge of his or her duties, destroy unlicensed dogs, kill injured deer, remove disorderly people from town meeting, and collect delinquent taxes if no tax collector is elected. As of July 1, 2012, all constables are now required to have training to exercise law enforcement authority."

Lance said that since our constable does not have the training, it eliminates the top half of the paragraph. Todd said that he would get the state statute to get a clear definition as the statute recently changed, to see if the constable needed the Level one training to issue tickets.

Brigham Academy Update- Todd commended Lance on his professional response to the questions regarding Brigham Residence at Town Meeting.

Lance said that he had a meeting with Kathy Lavoie and Paul Dreher on March 8. They went over some updated drawings. Lance said that they are still waiting for a report from Waite Engineering to finish requirements for the grant. Lance

said that Kathy Lavoie, Tim Smith and the advising engineer will be attending the April 22 Regular Select Board meeting to give some the board some ideas. The May 13 Brigham Residence Public Meeting will be at 5:00pm, prior to the Regular Select Board Meeting. Nicky asked if the meeting could be later for people that are not home from work by that time. Lance said that this was the time that these people can be available. Lance said it will be a zoom meeting and it will be recorded.

The board discussed zooming next year's Town Meeting with our own equipment. Todd said that 62 people attended Town Meeting this year.

John made the motion to adjourn, Todd seconded the motion, and the motion carried with a vote of 5-0.

The meeting adjourned at 9:02pm.

Meeting minutes recorded by Tami Brennan.