

Bakersfield Regular Select Board Meeting  
Monday, August 10, 2020

Meeting was called to order by Josh at 7:00pm.

Members present: Josh Goss, Sam Cribb, Gary Denton

Members absent: Lance Lawyer

Residents/Guests present: John Snarsky, Brenda Churchill, Doug Nelson, Mac Newitt, Kathy Westcom, Abby Miller, Clause Sheridan, David Westcom, Tami Brennan

Motion was made by Sam to approve July 27, 2020, Select Board meeting minutes. Motion was seconded by Gary and approved by a vote 3-0.

Warrants signed:

Selectman's Order # 19-2020	\$4316.32
Road Commissioner's Order# 11&12-2020	\$7122.87

John Snarsky shared his concern regarding the need for mowing the roadside on State highway 36. His concern is that vision is blocked creating a major hazard. The Select board stated that the State is to take care of the State highways and to call our State Rep. James Gregoire regarding road mowing on State roads. Kathy Westcom gave John the number to reach James Gregoire.

A letter of resignation from the position of Town Lister, sent to the board from Linda Stanley, was read by the board. The board accepted the resignation request and discussed procedures to fill the vacancy for Lister. Abby will put an announcement of the Lister vacancy on the Town Webpage and Town Facebook page, requesting that interested parties send a letter of intent to the Select Board.

Paul Stanley asked the Select Board for a decision regarding the previous postponement of 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks to a possible September date. After discussion about where to set off the fireworks in order to provide for social distancing and whether people would mingle outside of their cars, in anticipation of a rise in COVID infections this fall, the board decided to not have fireworks this fall and to save the money approved and allotted by voters last town meeting for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks in 2021.

The residents of Skinner Hill Rd, (Town Rd#13), appeared at the Select Board meeting with the request to discontinue the Class IV section of Town Rd #13, as well as the Class III section of the road at the north end of Town Rd#13, Skinner Hill Rd., converting the Town Rd into a Private Road, which the residents would upkeep themselves. Doug Nelson, Claude Sheridan, Kathy and David Westcom appeared physically at the meeting to present the request and a letter of agreement from Steve and Patricia Jones, was read aloud by Kathy to the Board. Skinner Hill residents, Phyllis Ruhl and Gary Collins are also in agreement with the request. The request is in response to the loud behavior of ATV riders at all hours of the night, damage to the roads and trash

left on the roadsides. Claude reported a group of around 10 riders racing down the road at 2:00am the other night, stating that they don't care about the road, they don't pay taxes here. The Select board asked if any other residents would be affected by discontinuing the road and the group confirmed that they would be the only ones affected. After requesting a letter of agreement from Gary Collins and Phyllis Ruhl, Sam made the motion to approve the request, the motion was seconded by Gary and the request was approved by a vote of 3-0. The Select Board secretary will draft a letter to Bakersfield Town attorney, Michael Gawne, for the Selectmen to sign, requesting that Mike begin the legal process for discontinuing Town Rd#13. Then a letter will be sent to all residents, followed by a site inspection and possibly a hearing. When Skinner Hill road becomes a private road, residents will be responsible for maintenance and will have rights to gate the property, post signs regarding No trespassing or whatever they decide, at which time trespassing will be clearly unlawful and easily ticketed.

The change of ATV ordinance was discussed by those in attendance. Changes would be to close all roads on the west side of Rt 108 to ATV's. More complaints from town residents regarding ATV's were brought forth. People have observed Patrols checking for registration, but not ticketing. The Select board has spoken with the 4-wheeler club, the State police, the Sheriff and the Game Wardens. Clearly, we need State support. The change in the Bakersfield ATV ordinances will clarify the legal use of ATV use in Bakersfield and make it easier for authorities to enforce the law and ticket those who break it. The proposed ATV ordinance has been posted to the Town website in hopes of feedback and suggestions from residents before the Select Board votes to approve the ordinance.

Josh said that Shaun at the Bakersfield Town Market agreed to sell the mandatory ATV sticker required for ATV use in Bakersfield. Riders not purchasing the sticker or displaying it in full view, could be ticketed and issued a fine up to \$250.00 for each offense. The money would come to the town. The Select board reminded Town residents that the 4-wheeler Club had a contract with the Sheriff's office to patrol this area, so to continue to call the Sheriff's office with all complaints. For riders not in compliance with Town or State ordinances, fines range from a minimum of \$150.00 to a maximum of \$800.00. The town would also be able to set a range for fines in regards for multiple offences...i.e. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Abby spoke regarding Property taxes and asked to be put on the agenda for the August 24<sup>th</sup> Select Board meeting to discuss the 2021 Town Budget. The Grand List was completed yesterday and Abby gave the Select Board a packet and the Select Board signed to set the tax rate.

Abby also presented a letter to be sent with the tax bills regarding the decision by the Select Board to waive all penalties and fees on late taxes until noon on 12/01/2020, due to possible hardship created by the COVID epidemic.

The Select board approved and signed the tax rate.

It was also reported that power companies were now allowed to disconnect services due to non-paid electric bills and Towns were beginning to move forward with tax sales that had been delayed due to COVID. Bakersfield expects to move forward with tax sales beginning possibly in January.

Abby also brought forward the recommendation that, due to the fact that some residents will delay payment of property taxes until the end of November, and that the law states that the Town has 20 days after the tax due date, which is Oct. 5, 2020, to transfer the tax money due to the school approved in the budget, the town may be anticipating a deficit in funds needed to transfer to the school by the required date. The State has set up a program for Towns to borrow in anticipation of property tax collections. Municipalities can borrow the money from the State and the CARES act, at 0% interest, to be paid in full when all taxes are collected. This is provided on a first come, first serve basis and Abby recommended the Town begin the application process so that approval can take place should we need to borrow funds until all tax monies are actually paid. The Select board agreed and Abby will have the application ready for the August 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.

#### Road Report-

The Excavator arrives tomorrow. The new town truck is delayed due to a COVID shut down of the factory in Canada. The Body is estimated to arrive in September and the Truck in October.

Lance and Mac met with the engineers and they visited all the FEMA sites, updated numbers, and contacted Chris Brunell. Typical response from Chris is 1-2 months. Waterville Mountain Rd. should be back to two lanes by winter. Some sites will have a contractor working on them. Lost nation work starts tomorrow. The town will try to reclaim any materials that were displaced.

FEMA estimates that to replace the historic bridge on Goat Path road, it will cost a minimum of \$400,000-500,000 to a max of around a million, of which 91-92% would be paid by FEMA from the Federal and State level. For the town to buy 2 acres from a farmer and create an access off 108, instead of replacing the bridge, would be totally paid for by the town, so the replacement of the bridge with FEMA reimbursement would cost much less for the Town.

Discussion also suggested that we could possibly apply for a historic preservation grant to possibly pay the Town's 8-9%.

Pot holes are beginning to come back. Mark to do another round of grading. And there is the need for grading the banks that the ATVs are carving out.

The Board to table the Communications-Northwest Planning until next meeting. Heather Jewett and Elisha Panko to be put on the agenda.

A question was asked about a bill received for fuel for the school generator. Kathy consulted the original agreement with the school about fuel and maintenance for the school generator. The School is to pay for the fuel and the town pays for the maintenance service agreement. Mac to make sure we have a

maintenance schedule with Milton Cat and will get a contract for the Select Board to sign.

Mac to ask Jason Curtis about mowing the field by the gravel pit.

Josh gave an update on the Ugly Stump by the Brigham Academy. Discussion with some Village Elders informed Josh that the custom for each graduating class of the Academy was to plant a tree with a time capsule beneath the roots. Most likely there is a 150-year old time capsule underneath or even within the base of the stump so careful digging and searching would be the plan. More discussion to take place about how to go about this potential historic event:)

Sam made a motion to adjourn at 8:20pm. Gary seconded and the motion passed with a vote of 3-0.

The next Bakersfield Regular Select Board meeting to take place on Monday, August 24, 2020 at 7:00pm.

Meeting minutes recorded by Tami Brennan.