

Bakersfield Regular Select Board Meeting
Monday, August 24, 2020

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

Members present: Lance Lawyer (chair), Josh Goss, Terri Gates, Gary Denton, Sam Cribb

Members absent: none

Residents/Guests present: Robin Farrar, C.J. Farrar, Paula Pier, Michael Pier, Heather Jewett, Chris Maynard, Alicia Panko, Larry Krygier, Abbey Miller, Mac Newitt, Tami Brennan

Motion was made to accept the August 10, 2020 Select board meeting minutes, with the correction of the spelling of Claude Sheridan's name under Residents present, by Sam, seconded by Gary and passed with a vote of 3-0, with Lance and Terri abstaining because they were not in attendance at the August 10th meeting.

Warrants signed:

Selectman's Order #21-2020	\$1065.87
Road Commissioner's Order #13&14-2020	\$12,781.68
Selectman's Order #20-2020	\$5,139.89
Selectman's Order #02-2020	\$28.74

Alicia Panko requested that the Select Board ensure that King's Hill Rd be maintained to the 1.3-mile marker, which she believed to be at the brow of the hill and not the bottom. Josh looked on the 911 map which showed the trailer at the bottom of the hill to be at the 1.27-mile marker. The concern of the Select board and Road Commissioner regarding the maintenance, was to have a place that it was possible for the Town plow truck to safely turn around. The town would have to obtain permission from a property owner to excavate and place several loads of gravel to create a turn around. Josh looked on google maps to evaluate a reasonable place where a turn around could be placed and would speak to the property owner to see if he was willing to allow it. Chris Maynard, also of King's Hill Rd, attended to share the same concerns. The Select board assured Alicia that they hear and understand her concerns and will work to get the road able to be maintained, but at the same time the Road crew is currently stretched with the FEMA work, restoring the roads being monitored by FEMA, and as yet no money from FEMA has come in, but they would definitely get to King's Hill road as soon as they were able to do so.

Heather Jewett approached the board regarding a Communications grant being offered to municipalities through the Cares Act and the Unification District, to enable towns to set up access to broadband internet in rural areas currently without adequate access, ensuring students/remote workers, etc., the ability to work and learn from home during this transition required by the pandemic. This project would upgrade all resident's internet and would be provided at no cost to the town or residents. To successfully access a Zoom meeting requires

at least 10 gigabytes of speed, of which many of the current internet services available to town residents, falls short. She urged the Select board to sign the Application right away, giving her permission to become the Town's representative in this matter, along with Michael Pier, who agreed to be an alternate representative. Heather pointed out the Fairfield and Enosburg have already applied and the monies are provided on a first-come-first-serve basis, and that implementation was fast moving because of the present need. The Select board signed the form, enabling Heather and Michael to represent the town in this matter.

Michael and Paula Pier attend to ask questions regarding the proposed updated ATV ordinance. They ride their ATV, going slow, about 20 miles per hour on Lawyer Rd and County Rd, to enjoy seeing the countryside and look for deer, and had questions as to how the new ordinances would affect them. The board assured the Piers that town residents would still be able to ride in Bakersfield. The new ordinances would affect out of town riders most of all. According to the new ordinances, the vehicle needs to be registered, resident drivers need to have valid licenses, and register for a Bakersfield ATV Rider sticker to be openly displayed, (if the Town decides to require the ATV sticker), which would be required of all ATV riders in Bakersfield, including town residents but would be issued to town residents free of charge.

Robin and C.J. Farrar came to the board with ATV concerns and questions about the proposed new ordinances as well. One of their biggest concerns were the young ATV drivers, as young as 8 or 9, they see fly by. They brought the same safety concerns as other Bakersfield residents, about walking on the roads they live on, or riding their horses, with the behavior and speed of the groups of ATV riders on those roads.

The Select Board advised them to continue to report to the State police and Sheriff of any complaints. The Squeaky wheel theory. The town has voted down proposed contracts with State police for a higher level of monitoring and enforcement by outside authorities, and Bakersfield has no town constable appointed, so Select Board action is limited. However, updating the Town ATV ordinances to clarify limitations of ATV use and access to town roads should make it easier for the Sherriff to ticket offenders. Josh has had some feedback from residents regarding the proposed ordinances and would welcome all concerned or with questions or suggestions to contact him or any member of the Select Board.

Larry Krygier attended with a request on behalf of the Boy Scouts project of preparing a plot for planting a Pollinator garden in the Spring using a \$1500.00 grant for such a purpose. The Fire dept has given permission for such a garden to be planted on property close to the back of the school. Larry asked if it was possible for the Town Truck to transport 12-14 yards of compost from Hudak's in St. Albans this week. After discussion about such a possibility, it was decided that since the truck was needed by the town, especially this week since

we are currently renting an excavator and working on road repair, and the project is not a town project and would be using paid town labor, equipment and fuel, and that a private vehicle would be a better choice. Lance volunteered the use of his dump trailer, and suggested Larry contact Matt Tabor or Gary Rounds because they might have the equipment needed to help.

Larry also brought forward the subject of Charging Stations with Electric hook-ups for recharging Electric Vehicles. He said there was still State money available to help towns install Charging Stations and that it would require that a suitable site be chosen and someone on the Select Board to head up the project. Josh said that he would look into it and make sure there would be no cost to the town, and to see if the town would get a portion of any monies collected at the Recharging Stations.

Abby Miller, the town treasurer, began with an update as to the status of the Town's application to the state to borrow, at 0% interest, monies needed to pay the school the money that is to be collected from property taxes due on Oct. 5, in case there is a shortfall in the money collected by the tax due date because of the grace period given by the Select board in light of the COVID impact on residents, removing penalties and interest of late tax payments collected by noon on December 1, 2020. Of the almost 2 million dollars collected from taxes, only around 600 thousand stays with the town, the rest must be paid to the school within 20 days from the tax collection due date, which is Oct 20th. Regarding her attempt to apply for the loan, Abby reported much confusion among state contacts, as well as banks regarding this relief program, including even where and how to submit the application. She is waiting for many return calls and emails and banks are seeking information as well and will keep her posted.

Abby gave the Select Board hand-outs detailing the actual Town expenses and Road budget expenses paid for the last 3 years, as well as the current year to date, to aid in the discussion of the proposed 2021 budget. The board discussed current line items and expenses covered in various categories and projected future expenses, as well as streamlining budget and expense reports. Abby is to attend the second scheduled Select Board meeting each month to discuss the 2021 budget.

Tami will get the necessary info from Mac regarding an ad to be placed in the St. Albans Messenger, requesting bids for 2021 Roadside mowing in Bakersfield, then will draft and submit the ad to the Messenger.

The Select Board discussed a \$4600.00 bill to the Town, received from a town resident, regarding plowing part of their road. Little information accompanied the bill to substantiate the chargers. This was tabled for a later date.

The Board decided to add discussion regarding the Bakersfield Town Noise Ordinance to the agenda for the next Scheduled Select Board Meeting on Sept. 14, 2020.

Road Report- The Select Board signed an access permit for John Collins. The report on FEMA Damage, produced by Tyler Billingsly of East Engineering, was presented by Lance and Mac. The subject of replacing the bridge on Goat Path road was again revisited, and the board agreed that replacing the bridge with FEMA paying 91.5% is far more in the town's best interest than buying land from a neighboring farmer and placing a road to bypass the bridge, fully paid for by the town. The State has very specific regulations as to how to a road can approach a State highway, making that project much more expensive then expected. Gary made the motion to accept the East Engineering FEMA report as written, the motion was seconded by Terri and the motion to accept passed with a vote of 5-0.

Sam made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:25pm, Gary seconded the motion and the motion was passed by a vote of 5-0.

The next Regular Select Board meeting in scheduled to take place on Sept. 14, 2020, at 7:00pm.

Meeting minutes submitted by Tami Brennan.