

Bakersfield Regular Select Board Meeting
Monday, February 8, 2021
7:00pm

Meeting was called to order at 7:02pm by Lance Lawyer.

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

Members absent: none

Residents/Guests present: Mac Newitt, Kathy Westcom, Roger Lindala, Brenda Churchill, Mark Doremus, Tami Brennan....via zoom: Sarah Jo Marcotte, Linda McCall, Todd Cosgrove, Melanie Riddle

Motion to accept the minutes from the January 25 Regular Select Board meeting, with the correction of the vote on whether or not to include the article considering cannabis on the ballot this year changed from 4-0 to 4-1, was made by Lance, seconded by Terri and passed by a vote of 4-0...Sam having technical difficulties at the time.

Warrants signed:

Road Commissioner's Order #5&6-2021	\$11,699.65
Selectmen's Order #3-21	\$3,169.27
Road Commissioner's Order #2-2021	\$1,258.79

Kathy Westcom presented an issue with the article on the warning placed by the Select Board regarding the vote put to the town on whether to change the position of Town Clerk from an elected position to a position appointed by the Select Board. The article stated that if the article passed, the change would take place at the end of the forthcoming elected 3 year term. Kathy informed the Select Board that according to State statutes, as soon as a vote of approval takes place to change the position of Town Clerk from elected to appointed, the term of the candidate elected on Town Meeting Day, expires in 45 days. The Select Board doesn't have the power to delay the change to the end of the three-year term.

Kathy informed the Select Board that it would be good to check with the VCLT directly for laws, facts, and procedures, in how things operate legally. The Select Board said they were glad to know of that resource. Tami asked if the article on the ballot as written, since it states that it would take effect in 2024, is legal. Kathy said that it is legal but inaccurate. Tami said that it seemed that the way it is written could be misleading to the voters. The Board said that it would be important to explain the article to the voters at the informational meeting to be held on Feb 24th and Feb 26 via zoom.

Kathy also said that before the next Select Board Meeting, there needs to be a Civil Authority meeting.

The Select Board wanted to confirm and make clear to the residents of Bakersfield that when the Select Board voted not to mass mail ballots, the state

had not offered to pay for the expense, which is significant. If anyone wants an absentee ballot, all they have to do is call and it will be mailed right out to them.

Terri asked if the Town Clerk office was open to the public and the door unlocked. Kathy said the Town Clerk's office has been open to the public and the door has been unlocked since after the initial shutdown by the governor in the early Spring. The only people that need to make an appt are those researching for real estate and lawyers since they are in the office for an extended period of time and the appointments allow for social distancing in the Vault and in the public area.

The auditors are planning on finishing the town audit by this Wednesday and then after a proofread, the Town Reports will be printed and available at the Town Clerk's office and the Brigham Library by Monday. The new town zoning administrator now holds hours at the Town Hall on Thursdays from 3:00pm to 5:00pm and on Saturdays from 1:00pm to 3:00pm., so residents can pick up a Town Report during those hours as well. The library is open on Mon/Tues/Wed from 2-5, Thursday 2-6, and Saturday 9-1. The Town Report will also be uploaded onto the Town website.

Lance said that Heather Tanner had called to ask him some questions about the Town Clerk position that he couldn't answer and he had referred her to Kathy. Kathy said that she would be glad to answer any questions that Heather had.

Mark Doremus came to speak with the Select Board because he had read in previous meeting minutes that someone was going to contact him as the NWSWD representative regarding having the NWSWD pay for the electricity they use during the recycling/garbage drop off day and had not done so. He wanted to make sure that the Select Board was aware that the NWSWD did not have a lot of money. It is a non-profit organization and the only electricity that they use is to run the cash register for about 4 hours a week. Mark said that he had emailed Kathy a copy of their yearly report to include in the Town Report.

Lance noted that the land that the NWSWD actually operates on, belongs to the State and only a tiny piece belongs to the town. Lance also commented that the way the NWSWD has the sight arranged now is so much better than it used to be...very smooth and efficient. He has heard no complaints and he's very happy with how it worked out and was pleased that they were able to come together and work it out. Mark said that between 150-170 people use the site each weekend. Lance said that before NWSWD was there, most of that stuff ended up on the roadside. Terri asked if there was going to be a place where you could bring metal and Mark said that Blouin Brothers already has one in Enosburg and he thinks all of Franklin County uses it. Lance asked about tires. Mark said that tires always cost. Lance asked if there was any way that

NWSWD could give us a break if we get slammed again with tires on Green Up Day. Mark said that he would check and see. Mark also mentioned that not all the products that have that little recycle triangle printed on them are actually recyclable.

Sarah Jo Marcotte said that she would be happy to help set up some directions to help make it clearer to participants how to use chat, etc. during the zoom informational meeting.

Todd Cosgrove shared that the Fire Dept was in support of guardrails being installed up on East Bakersfield Rd and also the steep hill beyond Murphy's to guard against the steep drop to the water there. He added that there have been some bad accidents in these spots.

Mac reported on the pagers that the Road Crew has been testing out this past week. He said that they had tested them out in all areas in town while they were plowing and there was no place that they couldn't receive the page. They had tried having the test pagers on all the same number to try to reduce the expense. But when Mac got a page, everybody got it as well. Mac said they really needed two numbers. One for the prime number that would be notified of a circumstance needing attendance by the road crew. Then the other two pagers would share the second number and be contacted by the primary number when needed. They discussed how the primary number would be accessed by the public. It will be posted on the Town website and Mac will field the calls while on call. Mac would be on call from Nov 1st to April 1st, and then after April 1st, Mac would not be required to carry the pager. Terri asked how emergency contact with the road crew worked before. Lance said that the on-call time had been unpaid and people called the Select Board and then the Select Board member fielded the call to Mac. Once we get the two pager lines set up, we only need to set up the greeting to heard when someone calls the number posted on the Town website when they need to alert the Road crew of a situation. The board asked Mac if it would be helpful to have the pagers year-round, to make it easier to contact the guys, no matter where in town they were. Mac said that would be helpful. Since we were talking a small difference in cost, the board said to get two pager lines and set it up to try for a year. Tami is to arrange this.

Mac said that the roads were good and that there was a meeting tomorrow morning with the FEMA rep and Tyler the engineer and Lance and Abby and Mac. FEMA has replaced Rufus as the FEMA primary contact for the town. Rufus has made FEMA proceedings extremely slow.

Tyler answered questions asked by FEMA and hopefully we should begin to receive some money from FEMA soon, since Trobridge Rd is done and some other smaller projects.

Terri said that she got a call from Branon's saying that the roads were perfect and that they were very happy. Terri said that Hyde's Hill was icy around 3 or

3:30 after the little squall went through. Mac said that that area gets the sun in the afternoon and can melt the sand right into the ice. He said that the guys put sand down every time they go up there. Lance said that Sharon had wanted the Road Crew to know that she was very happy with her roads and to keep up the good work.

The bill for the Dispatch came for 16,080.00 and will be tabled until after the vote on Town Meeting Day.

The Select Board discussed a request for a donation to the Paul Bruhn Fund through Preservation trust and tabled that as well.

Lance thanked Euan Bear for her letter requesting a mass mailing of ballots and explained that the vote had occurred before the state had offered to reimburse the cost for the mailing. If we had been notified earlier that the state would be contributing to the bill, we might have done things differently, but this year is not a traditional meeting and because of the timing, this is as good as we can do.

Melanie, the town zoning administrator had a question for the board in regards their previous discussion to buy a new computer for the position and wanted to know if we could move forward on that. Melanie had found a HP laptop, on sale for \$569.00, that has a disk drive which makes it easier to access tax maps that are on CD. Lance said that we could move forward after the budget gets voted on and that if the budget passes, the board fully intends to make sure that she has the equipment that she needs.

Linda McCall asked for the Historical Society grounds and parking lot be included in the restrictions regarding ATVs in the Bakersfield ATV ordinance, so that ATVs will not be able to park and ride there. After checking the wording of the ordinance, Josh agreed that the wording did not include the Historical Society property and would add it to the ATV ordinance.

Linda also referred to the email that she had sent the board in response to reading in the minutes of the discussion as to who owned the town green, the town or the Cemetery committee. The email included an extract from Elsie Well's book on the history of Bakersfield and referred to the 1804/1806 entries of when Joseph Baker, Esq. offered and conveyed the 5 acres for a burial ground and a Town common for the town to put structures on for town use. She said she remembered in the past there were members of the Cemetery commission who believed that the Common/Park was part of the cemetery and placed a "Maple Grove Cemetery" sign at the front southwest corner of the Park. They were advised of their error and the sign was removed. Linda said that she would get the book and page numbers of where the land was deeded.

Linda also mentioned the cemetery fence statue. Josh asked where Linda was suggesting that the fence should go, conceding that the park belongs to the town. Linda said it's not so much about the fence itself but that the fence used to go from East Bakersfield Rd to the Hearse House. And then along 108, there used to be a fence there and it was to be replaced after the sidewalk was put in, but it was not.

The agenda for the next Regular Select Board meeting was discussed and Sarah Jo Marcotte will be added to the agenda to discuss how the use of the park at Christmas worked out this year.

Brenda Churchill has been acting as host and managing the zoom participants on the technical side of things throughout this meeting and was asked how things worked out. She said that the formula they were using seemed to work out well and that Roger and Sarah would be there to help so things looked good.

The Town Meeting informational meeting agenda was discussed by the board and it was determined that the agenda would set forth as follows. That the board would begin at Article 4 of the ballot warned and continue going through each article, line by line, to discuss and answer questions on each article. When the meeting begins, zoom participants will be speaking to Brenda or Sarah Jo and they will both pass the questions that they receive on to the Select Board. On Wednesday, the 24th, beginning at 7:00pm, the Select Board will begin at Article 4 and proceed as far as possible, if they finish going through all the articles for discussion and someone has more questions, they will answer any questions on previous articles discussed. They will continue the informational meeting on Friday, the 26th at 7:00pm. The Select Board urged the town residents to pick up a Town Report and read through it before the informational meeting.

Roger said that they would be recording the meeting and the recording of the Feb 24th meeting will be available to view the following day, Feb 25, on Northwest Access TV and he would give the town a link to put on the town website for residents to click and watch before the Feb 26th meeting.

The informational meeting will be warned in three places and in the newspaper, the Facebook page, the town website and the Bakersfield Strong website along with the zoom link.

If you can't be at the Feb 24th meeting, you can watch the recording of the meeting on the 25th on Northwest access TV and then join the second meeting on Feb 26th.

Josh made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:15pm, the motion was seconded by Gary and passed by a vote of 5-0.

