

Bakersfield Regular Select Board Meeting
Monday, February 22, 2021
7:00pm

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

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

Members absent: none

Residents/guests: Roger Lindala, Brenda Churchill, Sarah Jo Marcotte, Abbey Miller, Tami Brennan. Via zoom: Linda McCall, Tyrone Shaw, Heather Tanner, Rodney Allen, Melanie Riddle, Elizabeth Horne

The motion was made by Lance to accept the Feb 8 Select Board Meeting minutes as written, seconded by Josh and approved by a vote of 5-0.

Warrants signed:

Selectman's Order #4-21	\$12,268.08
Road Commissioner's Order #FEMA	\$2000.00
Road Commissioner's Order #01-2021	\$29,835.51
Selectman's Order BCC #02-21	\$15.89
Road Commissioner's Order #7&8-2021	\$13,550.81

The board revisited an earlier discussion on whether to have the Road Crew use the Town truck, rather than personal trucks for road inspections, but had not actually put the decision to a vote. Josh made the motion that all road inspections, in the winter and after storms in the summer months, be made using the town trucks, so that anything discovered could be addressed immediately instead of having to go back to the town garage and get the truck to perform the needed road maintenance. The motion was seconded by Sam. Lance asked the board to consider that the town truck was pretty expensive and if they didn't put the extra mileage on the truck by using it for road inspections, the town might get an extra year out of it. There was some discussion comparing fuel usage and mileage expense. Then the motion was restated by Lance...that all road inspections, by the Road Crew, be made using the town truck, the road crew having the truck ready for all foreseeable issues, so that any discovery needing to be addressed can be addressed immediately. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

The board considered tabling the warrant for the BCC because they were not sure what it was for. Lance said that he believed it was a reimbursement for a zoom subscription needed in order to conduct meetings for the BCC and that it would come out of their account. Then the remaining board members agreed to sign.

Josh made the motion that if Article 4 on this year's Town Meeting warning passes, that the board appoint the person elected for the position of Town Clerk on March 2, to fill the position of Town Clerk for 3 years. Lance seconded and restated the motion as...Only if article 4 passes, the board intends to

accept the will of the people by ballot and to appoint the person elected to the position of Town Clerk for the term of 3 years. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

Sarah Jo attended to discuss with the Select Board how the Christmas Project on the Town Green had been received and the electricity expense. Josh began my thanking Sarah Jo and stating that they had gotten so many compliments on how beautiful the town looked, and not just from residents, other drivers who stop at the store, etc., and that it brought a positive vibe. Sarah shared that she too had received a ton of positive feedback and that on the Bakersfield Strong page, the video of the Town Green at Christmas had reported over a thousand views and she had been asked how to share the video with people out of state. Terri asked if Sarah had considered using live trees, but Sarah said that live trees bring logistical challenges, and you can't guarantee their survival so are not a very viable option at this time. And that people seemed willing to do it as it is. When people adopted the trees, they were told that the trees would be lit until the end of January and then all ornaments must be taken down. At present, about 50% of the trees still have their ornaments on. Sarah sent a reminder out this week asking that the remainder of the ornaments still on the trees be taken down by this coming weekend. Lance said that the electric bill for the season costed less than \$60.00 and that it was his opinion that the town could bear the cost and that Sarah Jo should not be financially responsible. Lance said that the decorations added a lot to the spirit of the town and Lance thanked Sarah Jo and all who helped her. Sarah said that they could meet again to consider next year at the beginning of the holiday season and that she had had more people ask to participate in next years display.

Information regarding the Informational Town meeting and zoom protocol- Josh explained that anyone joining the Select board meeting tonight would see that there were 2 hosts that would receive questions from the people joining the meeting by zoom, to organize and forward those questions to the Lance, the moderator. People attending via zoom would have their microphones remained muted to avoid inadvertent feedback discovered by last week's test with Sam, whose microphone was giving lots of movement feedback, making it difficult to hear and understand him. When it is time for a participant to speak to the board, they will be unmuted so that they can be heard.

The Board will be discussing items 4-22, line by line. The Board asks that those attending the informational meeting via zoom on Wednesday night, to come prepared with their town warrant and questions prepared and that it would be ideal to answer questions regarding each article once during the meeting and not have to repeat something already discussed. The meeting will begin at 7:00pm and last until 9:00pm. Anything that they don't get to at the Wednesday meeting will be addressed at the continuation meeting on Friday, Feb 26 beginning at 7:00pm. If the board is able to address all the articles at the first meeting, then they will begin reviewing the articles from the beginning and revisit any additional questions on each. The Feb 24 meeting will be

recorded my Northwest access TV and will be available for viewing the following day, Feb 25, so a viewer can be up to date if they plan to attend the continuation of the Informational meeting on Feb 26. The link for viewing the recorded meeting will be on the Home page of the Bakersfield Town website. Sam asked about how they should address the usual time at the beginning of Town meeting when the moderator asks to review the minutes from the previous town meeting and ask for them to be corrected and accepted. Sam said he felt that time was important and that they usually got some good feedback from at this time. People also had a chance to voice corrections in the Town report. Abbey Miller said that there had been a type-o on her report last year that she had to let people know to correct before the meeting began. Lance said that they could take a small amount of time to consider corrections but that the focus of the meeting is to discuss items on the budget, and that we want to make sure we have the time to accomplish this. Josh said that as the board goes through each item, line by line, corrections could be addressed at that point as well. Josh said that "normal" is not something that we're really going to be able to make happen this year, but that he hoped people will joining in to discuss and the board hopes to get it as normal as possible in people's living rooms. Since there is to be no town meeting this will have to be addressed at the beginning of the Feb 24th meeting and be the first order of business, accepting tentatively on the 24th and then finally at the meeting on the 26th.

Abbey asked the board if they each received her email that she sent them to clean things up at bit with next week begin her last week as Town treasurer. She said that she and Mac were knee deep in FEMA negotiations and asked if it was ok with the board if she continued her involvement with the FEMA project. She said that they were a year and a half into this claim since the storm in 2019 and it finally looks like monies may begin to be reimbursed. They had just had another FEMA meeting this afternoon and they finally have a new FEMA rep, Paul Sharon, who is in VT and really knows what he's doing and that things are moving along. They plan to have weekly or bi-weekly meetings/updates. Some roads are still being held up by FEMA mitigation. Next Tuesday, Mac and Abbey are to meet and go through all the town has paid thus far into the project...draws from the FEMA loan, pulling invoices and payroll, all FEMA expenses and project numbers, all that Tyler the engineer has submitted, as well as working on extensive workbooks required by FEMA for the projects. Lance said that the town had nothing to do with the groupings of the roads that make up one project, which have made it extremely difficult to complete a project and get reimbursement funds. Lance said that he believed the town had spent around \$220,000.00 so far. Abbey said that the town had spent around \$100-120,000.00, just in the last few months on the projects. Lance reminded that they had been told by FEMA that Abbey and Mac were to be the two FEMA contacts for the town. They were told that no Select board member could fill that position. Lance has been allowed to attend meetings, etc.

Josh asked Abbey if she had a rough idea of a timeline to completion. Abbey said that the town was filing for an extension for a year. The current deadline to have all projects finished is this July, which makes it impossible since weather prevents work up here. Goat path will probably take a year and explained that the bridge had been split into two projects. Paul had sent a new project number of goat path so that now they would be able to send the needed information for that. The removal of the bridge was \$90,000.00 done by Tatro. Whitney and Jordan are in mitigation for culverts and Abbey said that today we got the green light to get bids. Waterville Mtn Rd is to have a shallow 3-sided bridge.

Josh asked Abbey if the FEMA timeline was acceptable for her involvement together with her new job. Abbey said she was certain that she would be able to manage both. Terri thanked Abbey for her service to the town and wished her good luck in her future job. She presented Abbey with flowers from the Select Board.

Abbey thanked the board. And she also reminded the board that new signature cards and finalization with Select Board members and the new treasurer with back up signatures if the treasurer is not available needed to be done. Also setting up authority for loans, new and maintaining old ones...regarding TD Bank, the library, and Community Bank accounts. All needs to be done by March 3rd. Abbey said that she has dealt with Hope for municipality loans with Community Bank and the town will need to do another TAN loan. Abbey recalled that last year, the town was able to draw immediately off the TAN loan, but this year, there is a 30-day waiting period so there is a need to get to Hope asap to get that going. There is currently \$32,000.00 in the road account and the gravel pit payment is due. Abbey said she held off putting it on this week's warrant because the account does not have the funds to cover it. There is not state aid until April. And the other half of the Fire Dept payment is due soon, so to make sure the new treasurer stays on that.

Josh asked about reimbursement money from FEMA, and Abbey explained that the town has set up a LOC loan to draw from to use to pay the town projects that FEMA is to reimburse. The town only draws out what is needed to pay the bill so when the town get the FEMA reimbursement, it will go to pay the debt incurred on the LOC loan. And the town's part of the expense will be 7½%, which will come to about \$75,000.00. A lot of the Road budget cash crush is FEMA related.

Abbey brought forth the problem of having sufficient auditors for next year. Courtney plans to be employed next year and not available and Jason Bapp's term is up, and he is not able to run since he is no longer a Bakersfield resident. He can, however, be appointed. There are currently no persons on the ballot running for town auditor. If there is no one elected, then the Select Board is allowed to appoint. Jason said that he was willing to be appointed for next year if needed. Pat Debevec intends to stay in Ohio caring for her elderly mother until no longer needed there. Abbey said that Jason and Courtney did

the audit alone this year and it went very well and quite fast...there was a lot to look through.

Abbey also said that there was the additional need for an audit conducted for January and February 2021, since there will be a change in treasurer.

Abbey also asked if the board needed her to attend the informational meeting via zoom to answer questions. The Select Board said yes that would be good.

Abbey also asked the board if they wanted her to train the new treasurer.

Lance said that it was important that the new treasurer had some guidance and if Abbey would be willing to spend some time with the new treasurer it would be greatly appreciated. Abbey said that Vera had put a binder together, but the software has changed and property taxes are still difficult, mostly because of the slow interaction with the State. She said the time to train would depend on the new treasurer. Lance said that the town had paid Vera 25.00/hour to train Abbey and asked Abbey if that would be satisfactory as a wage for her to train and also for her FEMA work. Abbey said yes.

Lance made the motion to pay Abbey \$25.00/hour to train the new treasurer and for the FEMA project. Lance said that Abbey's wages on the FEMA work would be reimbursable from FEMA. Gary seconded the motion and the motion passed 5-0.

There was feedback from Heather Tanner and Linda McCall that it was hard to hear via zoom, and that the Select Board could not be understood. If the Select Board could not remove their masks, then they would need to speak closer into the mic or do something in a hurry before Wednesday night's meeting.

Josh said that the equipment they were using is top of the line, provided by Northwest access TV, free of charge, and that if we were using the town's equipment, we'd be screaming from the rooftops. It's not an ideal situation this year, but this is what we have, and we have to make it work the best that we can. This is not a permanent situation. He also pointed out that each person attending has a chat button in the center at the bottom of their zoom home screen. Participants can click that button and a chat box opens up that people can type a comment or question into, to be seen and read by the host and the select board and to read comments input from others. He reminded all that no one is trying to leave anyone out of the loop, and they will endeavor to do better.

There is no Road Report because the guys are out plowing the roads. When asked if anyone had received any road complaints/comments, Gary said the roads look good with lots of sand and Terri said that she had noticed more material on the roads.

An application for a road access permit from Rock Allen on Gambler Rd, was read and it was reported that Mac saw no problem with it. Mac had done a site visit and it is for agricultural use for his sugaring operation, below Ramsey's house. Lance and Josh felt it was appropriate to sign the permit and the access

permit was signed by the board to be forwarded on to Mac. Terri asked if this permit had to be posted and warned with the work delayed for 30 days like a building permit and she was told that this type of permit doesn't have to be warned or work delayed.

Lance signed a Boundary and Annexation survey, stating that there were no boundary corrections in town during the year 2020. The previous year, there had been a boundary adjustment because of Carl Zen making an adjustment to his Current Use Permit.

Set up for the zoom meeting will begin at 6:00pm on Wed, Feb 24th, and the zoom meeting to begin at 7:00pm. Sam is to sign in via zoom at 6:30 to test.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Josh at 8:18pm, seconded by Gary and passed with a vote of 5-0.

Meeting minutes recorded by Tami Brennan.