

Bakersfield Regular Select Board Meeting
Monday, June 28, 2021
7:00pm

Meeting was called to order at 7:01 by Josh.

Members present: Josh Goss (chair), Lance Lawyer, Brenda Churchill, Terri Gates

Members absent: Gary Denton

Residents/Guests present: Debra Mason, Audrey Haselton, Mac Newitt, Katie and Dan Forand, Linda McCall, Mary Lumbra, Heather Jewett, Ewing Fox, Eddie Woods

Lance made the motion to accept the previous minutes from the June 23 Special Meeting, Brenda seconded the motion and the motion passed by a vote of 3-0. (Terri having not yet arrived)

Warrants signed:

Selectman's Order #14-21	\$31,582.59
Road Commissioner's #4&5-2021	\$11,123.28
Road Commissioner's #FEMA	\$270.20

Audrey gave the board an updated financial report. The board asked her if she was able to locate the information about the Select Board expense shown on the previous report and Audrey said that it was from the Bakersfield Volunteer Fire Dept's payment plan, the first payment and it should have been recorded to the town, and the installment from 2020 had been posted to the Select Board. It has been rectified. Audrey said that Kathy instructed her to change the expense to the town. Audrey said that the other debts were from 2020, but they belong where they are. The board asked if it was easier this time and Audrey said it was a lot easier and that Kathy has helped her. The ATV sticker amount has been updated to \$2130.00 to date and that money is solely from out of towners.

Audrey asked the board if they had decided what we're going to be doing for tax season? That it's getting close, and they have to set up a budget and set the tax rate. Audrey gave the board a copy of the Hold Harmless Estimate provided to her by Sue Sonski. Audrey will be working with Susan on Wednesday afternoon about how to access their system. Audrey said that it was pretty self-explanatory. The Hold Harmless Estimate recommends a tax rate to cover the town budget but not the school.

Josh asked Audrey to explain the Estimate Sheet. Lance said that the board has been spoiled in the past because the treasurer has done all this for us in the past. This is the basic information to set the municipal tax rate, based off the numbers that the town voted on. But not the school tax. The state sets the school tax rate in the middle of July. Josh said this is a learning curve for all. Josh said that the board would look this over also. Josh asked if there was anything that Audrey had to report or needed. Audrey said there was nothing that she could think of, just as long as we're moving along on taxes, so they are accurate and on time. Tax bills usually go out the end of July or beginning of

August, but we can't set anything until we get the school tax rate from the State.

The board said they were not quite ready to hire an assistant. Audrey said that she doesn't see the need for an assistant. She would just be looking for a fold, review, and stuff person. To review and make sure tax bills are accurate. Terri asked about what Audrey meant about making sure they are accurate. She said to Audrey that that person would be you. Audrey said, yes, that someone had to review them and make sure they were all accurate and that would be her. So, she just wants someone to stuff and fold and help on collection day for taxes.

Terri asked if Audrey was getting training from Kathy. Audrey said that Kathy was very talented, if she gets stuck, Kathy comes over and helped me print the reports. Terri asked Audrey if she has signed up with the State for classes at all. Audrey said that the training is unique to our office and that the State can't train me for my job. She has the procedural manual now. It's learning the system and passcodes and she doesn't want to change the passwords before I know how to access everything. Kathy has helped me change all the passwords. Josh asked if Audrey kept a log with the passwords and she said yes. And he asked if she kept it locked up and she said yes.

Audrey said that she spoke with Kathy regarding training with Fairfield and Enosburg, but they both use Memorex and not Quick Books, so neither one would work. It's just getting used to the files and getting the files to work. That the reports are done when they have to be done. Knowing when payments need to be paid, which is nothing the state can help me with.

Josh checked in to see if there was anything Audrey needed. Audrey said that Kathy has helped me out, it's been a Godsend. She is coming along and it's working out and minimizing mistakes made.

Terri asked if the library was taken care of. Audrey said yes and no. The library prefers to have us scan in their warrants and send them so that they have a record. We can't scan with our copier so that method won't work. Lance said that that will change soon with our new copier. Audrey said that Kathy showed her how to do it through email and that's been working smoothly. I came in this morning and there was a warrant on my desk, and I emailed it to the library and it worked great. The board thanked Audrey for the update. Terri asked Audrey if she was registered with the State. She said that the state said something about needing to be registered. Audrey said she didn't know about that but will look into it. Terri said that she would send Audrey the email with the contact info regarding registering.

Hold Harmless Estimate attached to the minutes.

Josh said that the ATV group will not be joining us tonight but there was one person here to give input. Debra Mason said that she lived on Joyal Rd and that she was here to update herself as much as give some input. She said she has been enjoying the brief respite from heavy ATV traffic by her house. She knew there had been discussion and that other people had been upset, but Debra wanted to know what the board did to ease things and hopes that they

will keep on going with it. The board explained that they had implemented a \$10.00 fee to buy a sticker to use the town roads. Any ATV owner can purchase a sticker and ride. We updated our ATV ordinances on our town website. In deciding to charge a fee for our sticker, VASA informed us that if we charged anything for the sticker, they would not support the town. Debra asked what the town lost. Josh said that the ATV roads in Bakersfield were taken off the VASA site map and VASA was supposed to have a sheriff patrol the roads. The board decided that they would like to try this year with the stickers and the \$10.00 fee, and see how it went, so VASA pulled out. Josh said that what we are seeing in the respite form ATVs, is the ripple effect of not being on the VASA website. The roads are still open with a Bakersfield registration sticker and we're looking for feedback, whether people like it or don't like it. The only thing VASA was providing was Sheriff Dept patrol. Josh asked Debra if she ever saw a Sheriff and she said never. The board said that they are not sure if there is anything we're missing.

The game wardens still patrol. There were a couple of game wardens about two weeks ago, and they had 7 or 8 vehicles lined up and it was assumed that they were checking driver's license and insurance. Game wardens do enforce laws and ordinances. They are not issuing tickets for the town, but they are free to issue their own. It was noted that all ATVs seen this year have been respectful, polite and it has been much better. Deb said that she had not had complaints until last year when convoys of 20-30 ATV riders at a time would go by and go round and round. She said that she had chosen to live on a back road for peace and quiet, especially on the weekends. She said she doesn't see any benefit to the club stuff. She can understand locals, but this has been above what any of us have ever dreamed of at first. Josh said that NH has a good ATV system and until the State steps up and gets involved in a system, it's not going to change. So far, the benefit this year is that the town has recouped \$2100.00 that will go directly to the road budget to be used specifically to repair ATV intersections and grading due to ATV issues, and we didn't have that before. Debra said that no amount of money is going to compensate property owners with what they have to deal with excess ATVs.

Brenda clarified that the VASA that made the decision is the State organization, not the Northwest 4wheelers, who are a local organization under VASA. VASA said that they will come to a meeting to discuss in the fall. The board said that they will continue to look forward to feedback from residents. Debra said that she hoped the board didn't back down. The board said that we didn't stop them, they just decided that they wouldn't ride because we were charging. Debra said that one way to address this is to speak to our legislature because it's a quality-of-life issue. The Select Board said anyone listening or concerned, call your legislature and Debra added, talk to your Select board.

Heather Jewett presented a power point presentation for an update on NWCUD research and efforts to bring open access universal broadband internet service to our area. Heather started by screen sharing with the Select Board, so they were able to see her presentation on the monitor. Brenda said that COVID has

changed everything we do...kid's school, working at home, etc. Brenda explained that open access meant the anyone can be a provider, so it would not just be Comcast or Consolidated. Heather said that the fastest internet is fiber optics, and they are still promoting for fiber access. Heather said that a couple of years ago, there was a mass outage on her road, and they were without internet for 7 weeks. The military could not get hold of her husband, etc. The crew that eventually restored their internet were from Texas and their comment was that they had not seen the technology used here for 50 years. Heather commented on the NWCUD survey results, and that Bakersfield's response came in second for participation. She said she was very impressed with Bakersfield. She said that we have to show that we are not going to be left behind. She said the State of Vermont requires every home to have 25 or 50 mbps but less than ¼ of the residents get that. She said that Starlink service customers are getting 100. Heather said that three years ago, she could get Netflix with no problem, but now because of changes in technology and screen resolution, it's hard to get Netflix and she can't even run a Zoom. Heather said that NWCUD is looking for a program manager and a bookkeeper. She also said that Franklin County was thinking of merging with Lamoille and that in her opinion it would be a good thing, that bigger is better. She said that none of them get paid, that it gets hard. They are meeting every week and merging would help carry some of the weight.

Heather's power point presentation will be posted on the Agenda and Minutes page.

Roads- Terri had a question on a warrant as to the charge for work bid tag. Mac said that it was for the FEMA ad published for bids. Tyler, the engineer working for the town, placed the ad.

Also, the work safe sign expense to set up on job sites. Mac said that there were more signs coming and signs for Skinner Hill. Terri asked if the town can get one for the end of the Avenue. She said that there is one on the Egypt side but not on the other side. There used to be one there, but it's gone.

Lance told of an incident on Hennessey Road. Mark went up to Hennessey Road to grade, rake and chloride the road and the town has had a history of issues with objects being put in the town right of way by a resident on that road. Mark considered that there may be issues, so before he headed up to do the work, he alerted Mac and Lance and Mac called the State Police to inform them of possible issues. The State police said it was short notice, but they would try to get someone up there. The State police were called by both parties with complaints. The State police are to visit the residence tomorrow and that the town is to give them 2-3 days' notice before working up there in the future. In front of the residence, within the town right of way, there were two lawn mowers and a post with about 30 tires, and Mark cleared them out and moved them out of the way, with the grader. The resident said that they were put there to keep cars out of the ditch. Terri asked if the town should invest in guardrails. Mac said that the items were in the travel portion of the road, and the resident has already started putting stuff back. And the resident also has a

homemade spike strip within the town right of way, almost in the travel portion. Mac said that the resident has dug away the road by the ditch, so he narrowed the road. The resident's mother came to the town office and was quite vocal. The officer asked if the town wanted a restraining order placed on her for the town office.

Lance said that Mac had signed off on the demolition for Goat Path bridge which means the FEMA money should begin to come in, which would be about \$75,000.00. And about \$30,000 to \$40,000.00 for Jordan and Trobridge, when it gets approved. The FEMA money will go straight to paying on the FEMA loan, and not into the General fund. Lance said that he and Mac are still working on the workbooks diligently, but they keep asking them for different things, or rather the same information in a different format.

Mac said he had another day or two left on chloride and that they had had a delay in getting chloride again. For the last three years in a row, it's been hard to get chloride and that they've previously talked about getting a second tank to be able to have two loads on hand. Mac said the town usually goes through 3 loads of Chloride a year and we just got our third load last week. Each load is 5000 gallons. When the roads start to get dusty, particularly bad because of wheelers, we can put some down to keep down the dust.

Terri asked about the guardrails for E Bakersfield Rd. She said that she thought the board had approved them. Josh said that they had approved looking into it. Getting a quote and looking into used ones. The board decided that by the next meeting, they should present a cost and a time to get them installed for the Pecor side of E Bakersfield Rd, that has the bank that goes into the water.

Terri said that Alan Holbrook called her and said that nobody has answered his call about the road over by his house. He called Terri on Sunday and said the road was a mess. He said that he had talked to Lance and Mac. Mac said that he hasn't talked to Alan for months. He last heard that Alan said don't send a grader over because the road was perfect. Lance said he hadn't received a message unless it had gotten erased. Terri said that she would check with Alan for the details about the location. Mac wondered if Alan was talking about the road that goes over to King Rd., that hasn't been a town road for years. Lance said that he and Mac were at the Townhall most days and if someone drives by and sees their trucks to stop in. Josh said that he drove around the roads the other day and the roads look great.

The board asked when they were going to begin paving 108 and Mac said that they had to put more gravel down before they start paving.

Mac said that the guys took down a tree on Waterville Mtn. Rd. Mark cut off the top and Dan put the bucket underneath it.

There was a complaint about the dead trees on E. Bakersfield Rd. by the cemetery, that are within the Town right of way. Mac said that all the trees there are having problems. Five or six are completely dead. The Cemetery Commission took care of the ones in the park. The trees are on Cemetery land but in the town right of way, so the board is to invite the Cemetery Commission to the next Select Board meeting to discuss it. Tami to invite the Cemetery

Commission. The board discussed local tree removal services...Gary Parent, Shane's crew, Cold Hollow Tree Service. Terri to ask John from GMP, if the trees were a danger to lines and get the information for the meeting.

The board discussed the letter from Jan Ketchum regarding the hospital committee about whether the town should eliminate the office since other towns don't have them and it's an antiquated position. Brenda said that Jan's letter said that VLCT has not had the position required by the state for some time. Terri asked if it was because we had no one interested. Brenda said no, and that Jan had done due diligence with VLCT and discovered no job description and that not many towns have this position as a viable position.

Fire Dept. Contract- Josh said that the Fire Dept contract had been tabled because of a miscommunication/misunderstanding. The Select Board thought that the FD was going to go over the present contract and would get back to them and the FD thought that the Select Board was going to go over the contract that they had presented and would get back to them. The FD said that the contract that they had presented to the board was the finalized and that it contained the barebones budget needed for operation. They said that the FD is completely a volunteer FD, and they all are taxpayers as well, so they had scrimped and saved. The 5-year contract runs from 2023-2027 with an increase each year, from \$83,814.00 in 2023 to \$101,876.00 in 2027. Terri asked if we always did a 5-year contract. Josh said that he believed that we did.

Brenda made the motion to approve the contract as presented by the Fire Dept, for the years 2023-2027, beginning with the budget amount of \$83,814.00 in 2023 and ending with the budget amount of \$101,876.00 in 2027. The motion was seconded by Lance and passed with a vote of 4-0.

ARPA- Lance said that the town could receive \$139,025.00 from the ARPA (America Rescue Plan Act) from the federal government but the town needs to request the funds within 30 days. Tami said that the funds need to be requested within 30 from the date that the state accepts the funds from the federal government, which they expected to be around the 23 of June, but they would have to contact VLCT to get the date, and the request for the ARPA funding has to be done on the web portal. The first step is that the board has to appoint a representative that can act, accept and sign a contract between the town and the government regarding acceptance of funds and agreement to report annually where the funds were spent to ensure that the projects they were spent on, comply with the requirements listed for the monies use. The representative has to be a town official, such as Select Board member or town manager, who has authority to sign a contract on behalf of the town. Terri made the motion to appoint Josh. Josh said that the board needed to have discussion first. After some discussion, Josh suggested that Brenda consider being the Rep for the town for ARPA management. Tami said that there is a 56-

minute video presented by VLCT with specific instructions on how things are to be done and there is a ARPA contact at VLCT, specifically hired just the ARPA management with municipalities, as well as a Regional Planning Commission to contact in regard to confirming that proposed projects qualify. The funds must be spent by the end of 2026, and one of the major recommendations from each of the 5 people presenting the video is to have patience with your spending. The state will have a billion dollars set aside, from the 2.3 billion that they will receive, specifically for water, sewer and broadband infrastructure, so they encouraged municipalities to wait and see where the state was going to spend this money to save the town spending on a project that the state is willing to pay for. Brenda said that she would watch the video and consider being the rep for the town and would get back to the board. Tami said that someone needs to call and find out when the state accepted the funds so the board is aware of the timeline, and that the board may need a special meeting to appoint a rep if the next regular Select Board meeting does not give them enough time to meet the request deadline. Tami said that watching the video will explain a lot and make the board familiar with the contacts you will need at VLCT to manage all this. The Select Board said that they would watch the video.

Outside audit- Josh said that they have made no headway on this but it needs to happen. Josh asked Terri if she reached out to Jason Bapp's organization and she said that she did, and it would be \$16,000.00. Josh said that we would need to put that before the voters. Josh said that the board needed to get three quotes to compare.

Brenda updated the board on the video situation. She said she had Ewing Fox, the tech savvy person manning the meeting's recording for tonight, check out our system to see what was missing and needed still to be acquired. She said within a few weeks to a month we'd be up and flying on our own. Then we will train somebody to run everything.

Josh said that Brenda's thought that the Select Board having it's own laptop to use for projects and for future purchases is a good one. For managing projects such as ARPA. Lance said it would have been great to have one to manage the FEMA paperwork. He's been using his old laptop which really is not up to the job, and it should be done on a town computer instead of a personal one.

Ewing, who was working the video recording for the zoom meeting along with Eddie Woods, said that to have a laptop capable of running the zoom/youtube recording and for the Select Boards use, he looked on amazon and would estimate around \$1,300.00 to \$1,500.00 and that he would do the configuration set up for free, which is usually about half the cost of the computer. He said that because so many companies had gone remote due to covid and provided their employees with laptops to do their job, which has left inventories low, that laptops have risen 30%. The laptop Ewing was looking at during the meeting was new, but it was a 2-year-old model and the cost had risen 30% over what you would have paid for it last year. Brenda said that she

was buying the laptop that she had purchased for the town, back from the town, to allow the funds to go toward a stronger computer. The board told her to make sure that Kathy gave her a bill of sale when she pays for the computer, so that there is a paper trail. Brenda said that we also needed some additional cabling which would cost about \$270.00. The board had already approved a budget of \$1,500.00 for the video system and this stronger computer and cabling will put us over that by about \$400.00.

Lance made the motion to accept and approve spending \$400.00 above the \$1500.00 previously approved budget. Terri seconded the motion and the motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

The board discussed and altered the Road Crew job description. The board is to read over the updated job description before the next meeting and after discussion will make a motion to accept at the next Regular Select Board Meeting.

The updated job description is attached to these minutes.

Lance made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:46pm. Brenda seconded the motion and the motion passed with a vote of 4-0.

The next regular Select Board meeting to be held on July 12, 2021 at 7:00pm.

Meeting minutes recorded by Tami Brennan.

Audrey, I received this email. Probably you already know about this, but now you may have 2 copies. Sue Hensh

Bakersfield

Town Code : 6024

District 0

Hold Harmless Estimate – FY22 Estimate

This is to notify you that your FY22 hold harmless payment for land enrolled in Current Use is estimated to be \$ 76,240.

Please note that these numbers are estimates and are subject to change as corrected or new information becomes available.

This payment is designed to hold the municipality harmless from loss in municipal revenue resulting for the assessment of property at use value. 32 V.S.A. §3760. The numbers used in the calculation appear below.

A. District tax rate set by municipality:	0.5586
B. Total municipal listed value as of April 1, 2020:	118,082,800
C. Total exempt reduction due to use value enrollment:	13,836,700
D. Adjusted Muni LV assuming no enrollment (B + C):	131,919,500
E. Total municipal taxes assessed:	659,611
F. Previous hold harmless payment:	67,244
G. Total funds to be raised assuming no enrollment (E+F):	726,855
H. Tax Rate assuming no enrollment (G/D*100):	0.5510
I. HOLD HARMLESS PAYMENT (C*H/100):	76,240

Your Hold Harmless payment will be based solely on the municipal tax rate unless the current use land is also located in a district on which your municipality levies an additional rate (“sub-municipal tax district”). In cases where current use land is known by PVR to be in sub-municipal tax districts, an estimate for payment for that sub-municipal tax district is also enclosed. If any additional sub-municipal tax districts should be used in the Hold Harmless calculation, the town must notify PVR in writing not later July 16, 2021 in order for an additional sub-municipal tax rate to be applied.

If you have questions concerning the calculation, please contact casey.ohara@vermont.gov at the Division of Property Valuation and Review

Payments will be issued on or about November 1, 2021.

Town of Bakersfield, VT

June 28, 2021

HIGHWAY FOREMAN

DEPARTMENT:

Town of Bakersfield Highway Department

GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

Supervises and directs the operational activities of the Highway Department with special emphasis on the construction and maintenance of Town Roads and infrastructure. Must be available for snow plowing, winter road maintenance and emergency call out work. May be required to work nights, weekends and holidays.

SPECIFIC DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- the proper construction and maintenance of all roads and drainage systems
- the construction, maintenance and repair of all infrastructure as directed
- procure and stockpile salt, sand and salt/sand mixture as required for winter road maintenance
- inspect and clean culverts and drainage ditches
- install and maintain road signage
- perform highway and sidewalk right of way brush clearing
- maintain accurate records of activities, hours worked, equipment and material utilized
- insure that all Town Highway vehicles and equipment are at all times in safe operating condition
- perform & record routine vehicle & equipment maintenance and repairs, including oil & filter changes, lubrication, tire changes and light repairs.
- procure equipment parts and supplies as required

- promptly arrange for professional repairs when necessary
 - maintain current and accurate maintenance records of all equipment
 - operate equipment and vehicles for the plowing, loading and removal of snow
 - prepare weekly time sheets for all department employees, submit to the Select Board
- Maintain a safe and clean work environment

SUPERVISION RECEIVED:

Works under the direct supervision of the Road Commissioner of Bakersfield, in his/her absence, the Select Board, while exercising independent judgement in the daily routine of the department.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED:

Supervises all Highway Department employees.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- High School graduate or equivalent combination of education, experience or specialized training
- Must be able to operate all Highway Department Equipment
- Must possess a Commercial Driver's License with all proper endorsements
- Must be able to expend considerable physical effort such as shoveling, digging, lifting, pulling and carrying of heavy objects under varied and, sometimes, adverse weather conditions.
- Telephone at place of residence or Working Cell Phone
- Knowledge of OSHA, VOSHA and other safety regulations pertaining to the operation of equipment and construction and maintenance activities described

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT:

Must have the ability to cooperate and establish effective working relationships with subordinates, co-workers and supervisors.

Must maintain a good character profile with the public during all working hours, while performing any assigned duties.

Must be able to meet and deal with the public.

Must be able to clearly and concisely express ideas in writing and orally.

Town of Bakersfield, VT

June 28, 2021

EQUIPMENT OPERATOR/LABORER

DEPARTMENT:

Bakersfield Town Highway Department

GENERAL STATEMENT OF DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

Operates a variety of equipment, to include heavy equipment, used in the construction and maintenance of Town Roads, infrastructure, buildings and grounds. Also performs skilled and general laboring work in the construction and maintenance of Town Roads, infrastructure, buildings and grounds. Must be available for snow plowing, winter road, sidewalk maintenance and emergency call out work. Must be available to work nights, weekends and holidays.

SPECIFIC DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- operates a variety of earth moving, excavation, road maintenance, infrastructure construction, maintenance and repair and building equipment
- perform general housekeeping, cleaning and maintenance in active Town buildings
- operates equipment and vehicles for the plowing, loading and removal of snow
- spread sand, gravel, chloride and asphalt
- operate vehicles in transporting employees, materials and equipment
- performs hand work in the construction and maintenance of Town Roads, infrastructure, buildings and grounds
- inspect all equipment prior to, and immediately following, use.
- performs, and assists with, mechanical repairs of equipment and vehicles

- cleans and maintains equipment and vehicles
- cuts, trims, prunes and sprays trees and bushes
- mow grass, cut weeds and brush

SUPERVISION RECEIVED:

Works under the direct supervision of the Town of Bakersfield Highway Department Foreman, in his/her absence, the Road Commissioner and/or Select Board.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED:

Laborers and other workers as assigned by the Highway Foreman, Road Commissioner and/or Select Board. Must be able to continue their assigned jobs in the absence of the foreman and to take initiative in performing routine duties. In addition, may occasionally be required to supervise lesser skilled workers in specific operations.

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Must be able to operate all Highway Department Equipment
- Must possess a Commercial Driver's License with all proper endorsements
- Must be able to expend considerable physical effort such as shoveling, digging, lifting, pulling and carrying of heavy objects under varied and, sometimes, adverse weather conditions.
- High School graduate or equivalent combination of education, experience or specialized training.
- Minimum one (3) years prior experience operating light and heavy equipment to include or equivalent backhoe/loader and other similar excavation and earth moving equipment.
- Telephone at place of residence and/or Cell Phone

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT:

Must at all times maintain a good character profile with the public, while performing any assigned duties.

Must have the ability to cooperate and establish effective working relationships with co-workers and supervisors

working relationships with co-workers and supervisors.

Must operate all equipment in a safe manner

See Employee handbook