

## Bakersfield Town Regular Select Board Meeting

Called to order at 7:03 by Lance Lawyer.

Members present: Lance Lawyer (chair), Sam Cribb, Gary Denton, David Houston

Members absent: Josh Goss

Residents/Guests present: Jeremy Wilkins, Rosalie Williams, Eriona Williams, Marc Allen, Mac Newitt, Jason Luneau, Marc Luneau, Paul Luneau, Abbey Miller, Kathy Westcom, Tami Brennan

Warrants signed:

Selectman's Order #4-2020 \$6,969.43

Road Commissioner's order #01-2020 (Bridge) \$32,662.00

Road Commissioner's order #01-2020 (New Equipment) \$29,472.79

Road Commissioner's order #7&8-2020 \$31,661.24

Motion made to accept the Feb.10 Select board meeting, and the Feb 18 Budget Informational Meeting, made by Sam, seconded by Lance and approved by a vote of 4-0.

Lance and David met with the bankers, along with Abbey Miller, to begin proceedings to borrow a Tax Anticipation note for between \$120,000.00 and \$150,000.00 until taxes are collected the first week in October.

The town made the final payment on one truck and has four annual payments left on another truck. Research is being done on the best deals available to trade in Mac's truck toward a new one.

Jeremy Wilken's brought forth a plan to charge a Road Impact Fee of \$200.00 dollars for each of the 705 Bakersfield Real Estate parcels, not attached to taxes, and payable before October, to give the town available monies for the first half of the year and to begin the shift toward more timely funding schedule so that the town wouldn't have to borrow from a bank and pay interest. He believed that would have a lower impact on the residents and could be continued for a few years until the schedule adjustments had been made. The Select board said that they would research with VLCT to see if an impact charge like that would be legal. Jeremy also asked that if the \$150,000.00 line item for the purposed Budget Funding Schedule Shift got deferred, could the amount be amended and voted on at the time of the deferred vote. He was told that when you defer a vote on an item, the deferred item put to the vote, has to be the same question as the one that was deferred, when it is put to the vote. If you want to have a vote on a different amount, you'd have to vote down the current purposed amount, draw up a new article with a different amount and have a new 30-day warning. Jeremy also asked about the reason for the State Police line item for this year and the board told him that it was a response to the numerous complaints and fears of residents living on the main roads regarding the cars that race through the village while their children have to walk to and from school. The concern prompted a State Study and the State

determined the need to reduce the Speed limit through the village. Since this carries little weight without enforcement, the board researched a plan to have 20 hours a month of police enforcement to alleviate the fears of main road residents, to put before the town at Town Meeting. Back road safety issues and Main Road safety issues are both Town concerns. Jeremy also shared his thoughts that the change to the fiscal year was probably the way to go. The board wanted to make it clear that changing to a fiscal year might be what the town chooses, but for all to remember that the first year of funding for the 18-months to make the shift, is funding the entire budget for the six extra months, not just the road budget, which would be a much greater tax amount collected for the one-year adjustment.

Marc Luneau, Paul Luneau and Jason Luneau brought to the board the concern that the difficulty of heavy rains and a perpetual beaver dam, was making access to their property inaccessible. One 2-foot culvert has washed out and the other 3ft metal one is broken into two parts and filled with gravel. They have tried over the past few years to trap and remove beavers and the more they do, the more beavers come. They even considered changing the course of the water flow but learned that the State water district wouldn't allow a change. The Luneau's noted that the water flow has greatly increased through the last two years. According to town road statutes, Class IV roads have to be passable for one season a year. The Luneau's have contacted a wildlife biologist who deals with private land owners and would be willing to visit the site, to get a recommendation as to how to deal with the beavers, and are expecting to hear from them sometime in April. Lance thought that since one of the culverts needing to be replaced was a 3 ft. one, according to State regulations, they would need to have a hydrologic condition analysis performed. The board agreed that the Luneau's were not asking anything unreasonable and that they would work out with them what needed to access the property, as soon as the snow got out of the way. Lance said that when the biologist did the site visit that he would like to join as well.

Rosalie checked into see about the progress of removing the snow that the swing of the plow had pushed up against her barn, which has frozen, blocking access to a door. Mark is going to take the truck up and try to carefully remove as much as possible with the blade as to not do any damage to the barn. Also, in the future to try to push the snow toward the south side to avoid build up close to her barn. Mac and Marc said that they would be down tomorrow to work on it.

Abbey wanted to know when we would have an estimate of what the road repairs would cost and an amount of what FEMA is willing to reimburse. The town will need an interim loan to cover road damages until FEMA pays. FEMA doesn't front-pay, it is always a reimbursement. Her concern is to have the Town take out a loan to make the large road repairs and then have FEMA not give enough reimbursement, leaving the town with a large loan to pay. Lance

said the timeline was unsure. We haven't been assigned a manager from FEMA yet, but hopefully when the manager is in place, we should get some answers as far as figures go, so we can plan, even though we wouldn't see the monies for 6-12 months. Marc had some ideas of how to repair roads to a safe passable level with our local resources to buy us the time we need to wait for FEMA info.

The board looked at a Berkshire town report to see another example of format, in an effort to make the information in the Bakersfield Town report, more user friendly.

Research findings were also presented regarding the practice of surrounding towns as to how they fund Health insurance for their Town Road crew. Sheldon, Richford, Enosburg, Berkshire (also adds a 5% town match contribution toward a retirement account), Fletcher, Cambridge/Jeffersonville, Fairfield, Underhill, and Richmond, all fully fund their Road crew Health insurance. Jericho offers employees a choice between a fully funded higher deductible plan and a 90/10 split for a platinum plan as well as \$1250.00/single, \$2500.00/family yearly contribution to their Health reimbursement account.

Hyde Park does an 89/11 split for a platinum plan with a \$500.00 deductible and provides a fully paid \$25,000.00 life insurance policy as well as providing all uniforms, laundering and boots to the road crew. Montgomery does an 80/20 split and reported dealing with a high turnover in their road crew. Highgate pays \$750.00/mo. toward a plan of their choice, with a 4800.00/yr buyout a month if they don't purchase ins. through the town and reported a higher turnover in recent years but they expect the present crew to stay. Swanton funds 83½/16½, and Waterville completely contracts out their road maintenance to one man.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.

Town meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 3, 2020, beginning at 10:00am. The next Regular Select board meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 9, 2020 at 7:00pm.

Meeting minutes recorded by Tami Brennan.