

Board of Trustees Meeting  
Tuesday, September 12, 2023  
7:00PM Village Depot Offices

The Village of North Bennington Trustees held a meeting for business on September 12, 2023, at 7:00 pm. This meeting was held in person and by video and telephone conference via Zoom. This is in accordance with H.681 (section 6.); addendum 01-20/Act 92.

Trustees Rogers, Creedy, Mullineaux, and Lowary along with Treasurer Buggee, attended the meeting in person.

Also, in attendance – Camille Kaufman, Alisa DeTufo, Mike Pierce, Keith Cross, Zoning Administrator Chris Damon, Norm LeBlanc, Robert Novak, Jeff Grey, Rob Woolmington, Elizabeth Schumacher and Jenna Brown.

Also in attendance via Zoom were Trustee Patterson, and CAT - TV

Trustee Rogers opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

#### Citizen Comments:

- Rob Woolmington was present to discuss Lake Paran. He discussed the organization. The importance of keeping the lake open as a lake is a priority. Conservation easements were discussed. Public access easements were discussed. Public and private concerns were discussed. Paran Recreations should grant easements to the village and the Board of Trustees. This will help to secure the lake. Paran at that point should deed the lake/area to the Village of North Bennington. An operating agreement between the organization and the village would also be a secure step for all involved. All of the above would create a more stable structure. Mr. Woolmington is very happy to help with this project. Paran Recreation Director Alisa Deltufo discussed the stewardship of the lake and its past history and current status. Ray Mullineaux made a motion to pursue with interest, the conversation and proposal by Rob Woolmington. This was seconded by Matthew Patterson and so voted.
- Paran Recreations Director Alisa DeTufo was present to request an alternate use of a previously funded ARPA award. \$68,200 of funding was awarded. \$61,140 has been spent. \$7,060 which is remaining, will be spent on a storage unit and HVAC system repairs. Ms. Deltufo wanted to let the trustees know what the remaining funds will be spent on and have their authorization to do so. Authorization was given.

#### Approval of minutes:

- A motion was made by Trustee Mullineaux to approve the minutes from the August 8th meeting. This was seconded by Trustee Patterson. Motion passed unanimously with an abstention from Mary Rogers. A motion was made by Trustee Mullineaux to approve the minutes from the August 15<sup>th</sup> continuation meeting. Motion passed unanimously with an abstention from Mary Rogers and Scott Creedy.

#### Warrants and Bills:

- A motion was made by Trustee Mullineaux to approve the September Warrant for a total \$111,817.68 and seconded by Trustee Creedy. Motion passed.
- Discussion of the Late August warrant details was conducted. A motion was made by Trustee Patterson to approve the Late August Warrant for a total of \$24,738.92. This was seconded by Trustee Mullineaux. Motion passed.
- A motion was made by Trustee Patterson to approve the August Payroll Warrant for a total of \$19,524.87 and seconded by Trustee Mullineaux. Motion Passed.
- All votes were unanimous.

#### Highway Report:

- The Overlea Road culvert project is now almost complete.
- Welling Road ditching has begun. This is through grant funding.
- Superintendent Leblanc discussed the most recent storm and areas within the village that were damaged and required substantial cleanup.
- The Wacker (sidewalk tractor) is in need of replacement. Highway Superintendent Leblanc explained what needs to be done. Treasurer Buggee explained how this new piece of equipment would be funded. Trustee Creedy made a motion to proceed with the purchase of a new Wacker. This was seconded by Trustee Rogers and so voted.
- Bids were discussed for preliminary work on Hall Street. A motion was made to accept the bid from MSK Engineering for \$26,000.00. This was seconded by Scott Creedy and so voted.
- The Park Street project will be put on hold for now.
- Tree Warden Jeff Grey and Trustee Rogers updated the Trustees on the tree and vegetation removal on bridges BR-71 and BR-72. Four requests for proposals have been requested.
- Tom Fels and Mary Rogers have begun looking at boxes that are currently stored in the Depot. Matthew Perry and Mary will look through more boxes next week. Mary Rogers has contacted the state archive department and will meet with a person from that department in the near future.

#### Fire Department:

- Chief Cross feels that the chimney repairs are a priority. A second quote for chimney work was presented and distributed. The quotes were not comparable. The Trustees will look at the chimney proposals at a future meeting.
- Ray Mullineaux has discussed his meeting regarding the boiler at the firehouse with West Oil. Several repairs need to be made if the entire unit is not replaced. Chimney exhaust pipes were also discussed. A motion was made to authorize Ray to contact West Oil to proceed with the boiler work. Ray will continue to work with the fire department on the chimney issues.
- A motion was made to authorize an October 7<sup>th</sup> coin drop for the Fire Department. This was seconded and so voted.

#### Treasurer Report:

- The fiscal year end was June 30th 2023. Budget v Actual was generated. Trustee Rogers and Mr. Buggee will finalize the year-end funds.
- There are five total delinquent outstanding parcels at this time.
- Options for auditing are being looked at.
- Tax bills will be going out this week. There is a large increase in the education rates for North Bennington. Homestead has gone from 1.5628 last year to 1.6090 this year and non-homestead has gone from 1.7146 to 2.0023. This is all based on CLA. Many people may not understand the

reasoning for this, so Treasurer Buggee is proposing we put the follow 3 articles on our website and maybe a link to the state site showing the rates.

- <https://vtdigger.org/2023/01/15/with-property-values-soaring-vermont-towns-need-reappraisals-but-experts-are-in-short-supply/>
- <https://vtdigger.org/2023/03/29/house-passes-bill-that-would-give-tax-department-control-of-property-appraisals/>
- [https://www.benningtonbanner.com/local-news/pownal-bennington-dealing-with-reappraisal-orders/article\\_7fb7144c-3877-11ee-a71a-db1f48363bee.html](https://www.benningtonbanner.com/local-news/pownal-bennington-dealing-with-reappraisal-orders/article_7fb7144c-3877-11ee-a71a-db1f48363bee.html)

Development Review Board:

- There is a meeting next week., Tuesday, September 19<sup>th</sup>.

Planning Commission:

- There is a PowerPoint that Mary will show at some point, regarding the new Zoning Bylaws that Kim Hall is rewriting.
- Wednesday, September 20<sup>th</sup> will be the next Planning Commission meeting

Water Department: None

New Business:

- Camille Kaufman and Elizabeth Schumacher were present from the Lake Paran Organization to discuss the results of the grant funded Health Survey. Camille and Elizabeth reviewed the results of the survey and answered questions. Their surveys and results will be posted on the Village website.
- Trustee Rogers explained a resilience forum that will be held by the Conservation District on 9/23 at Lake Paran.

Old Business:

- Robert Novak reviewed his letter to the banner regarding traffic within the village and comments that resulted from that article. He distributed these comments and reviewed these in brief and will continue with the struggle.
- Outside of a formal meeting, the following request was made by Shira Sternberg Kol and denied by the Village of North Bennington Board of Trustees: Would it be possible for Nefesh (formerly known as Kesher Shalom) to use the Lincoln Park space for a candle lighting for Hanukkah this year? Hanukkah is December 7th-15th. A local artist will be making the menorah. We would have it lit every night with a public lighting that people are invited to one of the nights.

Trustee Mullineaux made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 PM. This was seconded by Trustee Creedy and so voted.

Lorine Elwell  
Village Clerk  
Village of North Bennington