

Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, April 12, 2022
Village Depot Offices/ 7:00 PM - Virtual Meeting/Open Meeting

ANNOUNCEMENT: The Village of North Bennington Trustees held its regular meeting for business on April 12, 2022 at 7:00 pm. This meeting was held by video and telephone conference only via Zoom. This is in accordance with H.681 (section 6.); addendum 01–20/Act 92

The Village Depot was open for in person meeting as well. Treasurer Buggee and Trustees Rogers, Mullineaux, Creedy and Lowary were present in that space as well. Residents Mark Boudreau, Jennifer Fels, Dana Rosycki, Jennie Rosycki, Nbfd Members, Ed Harrington, Andrew Cencini, Andy Myers and Mike Pierce were present in the Depot space. All others attended the meeting via Zoom including Allison Strohl, BCRC Representative and Hazard Mitigation Grant Specialist and Chris Oldham, Executive Director of The Park–McCullough House.

Vice Chairman Matthew Patterson opened the meeting at 7:00 PM. A motion was made by Tara Lowary to elect Mary Rogers as Chair of the Board of Trustees. This was so voted.

Trustee Chair Mary Rogers asked for nominations for Vice–chair. Tara Rogers nominated Matthew Patterson for Vice–chair, this was seconded by Mary Rogers and so voted.

Trustees Present: Matthew Patterson, Tara Lowary, Mary Rogers, Ray Mullineaux, Scott Creedy, Highway Superintendent Norm Leblanc, Treasurer Doug Buggee

1. PUBLIC HEARING

The purpose of the PUBLIC HEARING was to continue to review and discuss the ARPA Funding requests from McCullough Library, Village School of North Bennington, Paran Recreations and Vermont Arts Exchange. Some decisions, but not all, will be made at this meeting. ARPA regulations were reviewed.

2. Resident and former Trustee Mark Boudreau discussed several projects that are in need of funds in the Parks & Recreation Department. He specified Welling Field as high on the list of priorities. He noted that we need to maintain what we have and listed several areas of concern with Lion’s Park, the buildings and grounds in the parks and the overall general status of this department.

3. Park McCullough House Director, Chris Oldham was present to request ARPA Funding in the amount of \$25,000 for the purpose of repairs to the Carriage Barn.
4. An overview of each request was again presented as to why they were requesting the funds:
 - VAE – No discussion
 - Paran Recreations – After much discussion of the request from Paran Recreations, a motion was made and seconded to allocate \$45,200 at this time, to Paran Recreations, for the purpose of repairing/replacing the sewer/water pump system at a cost of \$5,200 and for the hiring of an outreach coordinator at a cost of \$40,000. This was so voted. Trustee Mullineaux would like to know why the current pump system failed. This will be looked into.
 - McCullough Library – Jennie Rosycki, Librarian, reviewed her request and amounts of that request. She explained their current income and financial status. Trustee Patterson asked if this funding is given now, is it possible for the library to accept a decrease in regular funding in the future. Library Trustee Jennifer Fels stated that a decrease in funding would mean a decrease in staff and services. It would simply not be possible.
 - Tara Lowary made a motion seconded by Ray Mullineaux, to allocate 100% of McCullough Library's ARPA Fund request, totaling \$71,000. This money will help to pay for the HVAC project at the library. This was so voted.
 - Village School of North Bennington – After much review and discussion, a motion was made to fully fund the Village School of North Bennington's ARPA Funding request of \$120,000. This was seconded and so voted.
 - At this time, it was decided that all other requests for ARPA Funding would be discussed at a later date.

A motion was made by Tara Lowary and seconded by Matthew Patterson to approve the March 8, 2022 minutes. This was so voted by all Trustees, Patterson, Rogers and Lowary. Trustees Mullineaux and Creedy abstained.

A motion was made by Tara Lowary and seconded by Matthew Patterson to approve the March 15, 2022 Public Hearing minutes. This was so voted by all Trustees with the understanding that additional residents, present at that meeting, will be added to the attendance sheet.

A motion was made by Matthew Patterson and seconded by Ray Mullineaux, to approve the April warrant and to pay the bills. This was so voted by all trustees.

A motion was made by Matthew Patterson and seconded by Tara Lowary, to approve the extended March warrant and to pay the bills. This was so voted by all trustees.

A motion was made by Matthew Patterson and seconded by Tara Lowary to accept the April 2022 Payroll warrants. This was so voted.

Citizen Comments: A resident has requested that additional lighting be installed at the Lion's Park. It was noted that the park is only open from dawn to dusk and that this would not be necessary. However, motion sensors for this area may be looked into.

At this time, a motion was made and seconded to open the second Public Hearing – Hazard Mitigation.

This was so voted.

Bennington County Regional Commission representative Allison Strohl discussed and reviewed new hazard data collected (storm information, erosion, other problem areas in the community.) Allison will meet with Norm regarding several questions that she has. She has spoken with Southshire School, Bennington College, National Hangar, Water Street Apartments and Whitman’s Feed Store.

* What are the hazard priorities in the community? Several intersections will be looked at to see if any hazards are present.

* Allison will present a DRAFT Hazard Mitigation Plan before the middle of June.

At this time, a motion was made and seconded to close the second Public Hearing – Hazard Mitigation.

This was so voted.

Treasurer’s Report – Former Treasurer Mary Rogers was present at this meeting. Treasurer Doug Buggee was present as well.

- The following reports were presented to the Trustees prior to the meeting. They are as follows.
- Payroll Warrant - pdf
- Village Warrant - excel - with tab for expense details
- March Cash Balances - pdf
- The Budget vs Actual Report was reviewed.
- Mary continues to train Treasurer Doug Buggee in the areas related to her former position.
- Trustee Rogers discussed ARPA Funding and requests that have been received from several local entities.
- The West Oil contract and status of payments/credits/usage was discussed.
- The new Paydata system was discussed.

Highway Department –

- Norm LeBlanc reported on the public parks, needs at these parks and multiple vandalism incidents that have recently occurred at these parks. Among other things, a new fence needs to be installed at the Nor-Shaft Lion’s Park and new fabric and wood chips need to be placed under the swings.
- Spring clean-up has begun.
- Areas in the back of the firehouse need attention. There are several safety issues that will be looked at.
- Superintendent Leblanc reviewed the status of the Overlea Road Project.
- Mr. Mullineaux reported that there are cars driving on the ramp at McWaters Park. Norm will place logs to block drivers from doing so.

DRB News — None

Planning Commission- NONE

Water Board - NONE

Fire Department News –Chief Ed Harrington, Andrew Cencini, Andy Myers and Mike Pierce, were all present from the North Bennington Fire Department. Chief Harrington discussed the need to replace Firetruck 55 at an approximate cost of \$400,000. He described the type of truck that is needed and noted that if ordered today, there is a two-year build out, at which time, the money would be needed. Treasurer Buggee inquired about finances and how the department raises money besides the allocations received from the village.

Trustee Rogers stated that planning/funding meetings need to take place. Treasurer Doug Buggee, Trustee Tara Lowary and Chief Ed Harrington will begin meeting to discuss these issues and come up with a plan.

Trustee Patterson stated that the fire department has failed to communicate their plans and needs. This needs to change as it makes it very difficult to plan for these requests.

The Chief will look into a new truck and keep the Trustees posted on his progress.

Trustee Rogers noted that significant renovations are needed at the firehouse. There will be a committee formed to look at the structural needs of the building.

Chief Ed Harrington reviewed a “special project” that the fire department would like to complete. The department has successfully raised \$5,000 towards this project and is requesting \$2,000 from the Village of North Bennington. Matthew Patterson made a motion to allocate \$2,000 for this “special project”, seconded by Scott Creedy and it was so voted.

New Business – Trustee Rogers discussed a request from Bennington College President, Laura Walker. A motion was made and seconded to accept the following resolution: The Trustees of the Village of North Bennington wish to express our support for Bennington College’s proposed computer and environmental science education program that will create new STEM education opportunities at the College, while addressing regional environmental concerns. This was so voted.

- Trustee Rogers discussed a community wide Green-up Day event to be held on May 7th. A motion was made and seconded to allocate \$200 to this event and it was so voted. The \$200 will support an activity/refreshment for children who are part of this special day.

Old Business –

- Trustee Rogers discussed the ongoing issues with the “wall” on Park Street. She has met with past and current Trustees and Norm Leblanc, Highway Superintendent, to gather more information so that options can be presented to resolve this issue. Updates will be given at the May meeting.

- The erosion situation in the location near Southshire School is being addressed.
- Currently, Trustee Rogers and Superintendent Leblanc are preparing a road inventory that will be presented upon its completion.

Matthew Patterson made a motion at 9:45 PM to adjourn the meeting. This was seconded by Tara Lowary and so voted by all trustees.

Lorine Elwell
Village Clerk
Village of North Bennington