

Minutes of the January 26, 2009 Meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

Present: Neal Fox, Bill Richards, Joe DeFreitas, Delbert Cloud, Shirley White, Geneva Gaiko, Eric Benson, and Debra Leahy.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chairman Neal Fox, the Board first reviewing and approving the weekly payroll and payables. The minutes of the January 6, 2009 meeting of the Board of Selectmen were approved by motion of Bill Richards, seconded by Joe DeFreitas and unanimously carried.

Chairman Fox welcomed Shirley White and inquired if she had particular matters she wished to discuss with the Board. Ms. White replied that she wanted to explain the programs being offered through the Quin-Town Senior Center, which she proceeded to do. She then emphasized the importance of support from the Townspeople of Bethel, since a number of senior citizens do participate in the programs offered. The Board assured Ms. White that an appropriation amount of One Thousand Dollars will be included on the Warning for Town Meeting for voter consideration. Ms. White thanked the Board and departed at approximately 6:15 PM.

Delbert Cloud advised the Board that the Stagecoach stop will be relocated to the White Church parking lot as of February 9, 2009. Cloud also provided the Board members with a copy of a press release re. Robert Hyde's assumption of Town crew foreman duties, which the Board found appropriate for publication. Letters of appreciation were signed for the three members retiring from service on the Human Services Advisory Committee after having provided many years of assistance.

In reviewing the agenda for the Planning Commission's meeting of January 21, 2009, note was made of the public survey which the Commission hopes to do during 2009. It is hoped that information gathered can be useful in many ways in addition to future updating of the Town Plan, and it was agreed that both the Selectboard and the Bethel Business Association might wish to participate in the construction of some parts of the questionnaire.

A January 12, 2009 letter from Champlain Consulting Engineers was reviewed, this pertaining to that company's preparation of permit applications for upgrading water and sewer systems at the Town Hall as part of that rehabilitation project. The Board members unanimously endorsed a letter to the Department of Environmental Conservation confirming that sufficient capacity exists in both systems to provide for the upgrading.

By motion of Bill Richards, seconded by Joe DeFreitas and unanimously carried, the following RESOLUTION was approved by the Board:

“WHEREAS, the Town of Bethel has worked with the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Commission to identify hazards, analyze past and potential future losses due to natural and human-caused disasters, and identify strategies for mitigating future losses; and,

WHEREAS, the Bethel Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan (in the Town Annex section of the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan) contains several potential future projects to mitigate damage from disasters with the potential to occur in the Town of Bethel; and

WHEREAS, a duly-noticed public meeting was held by the Bethel Selectboard on January 26, 2009 to formally approve and adopt the Bethel Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan as an annex to the Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Selectboard adopts the Bethel Town Annex and the associated Two Rivers-Ottawaquechee Regional Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan.”

A January 6, 2009 letter from the Vermont Department of Health was next reviewed, this advising that the Board must recommend a potential appointee for the position of Town Health Officer. This matter will be taken up at the Board's next meeting.

The Board then reviewed recommendations from the Class 4 Road Committee re. additional class 4 roads which have been confirmed as “legally existent” prior to February 10, 2006 by that

Committee's research, and which could be submitted to the Vermont Agency of Transportation for mapping on the Town Highway Map subject to the Selectboard's concurrence that such should be done. Various maps were examined, as well as the research of the Committee inclusive of the original "lay-outs" for the subject roads. After due consideration, motion was made by Bill Richards, seconded by Joe DeFreitas and unanimously carried, that the following roads should be submitted to the Mapping Division of the Vermont Agency of Transportation for addition to the Town Highway Map:

- (1) A road commencing on the southerly side of Town Highway #41 (Dartt Hill Road) approximately .07 mile westerly of the intersection of Town Highway #41 with Town Highway #43 (Brink Hill Road) and running in a southerly direction .13 mile to intersect with the "Rochester Stage Road."
- (2) A road commencing on the easterly side of Town Highway #41 (Dartt Hill Road) approximately .2 mile southerly of the intersection of Town Highway #41 and class 4 Town Highway #42 (Pauls Peak Road) and running in a northeasterly direction .15 mile to intersect with the "Rochester Stage Road."
- (3) A road commencing on the easterly side of Town Highway #26 (Quarry Road) approximately .39 mile easterly of the intersection of Town Highway #26 and Town Highway #25 (Sanders Road) and running in a southeasterly direction .3 mile to intersect with Town Highway #6 (Christian Hill Road).
- (4) A road commencing on the easterly side of Town Highway #31 (Campbell Road) approximately .47 miles northerly of the intersection of Town Highway #31 and Town Highway #54 (Bryant Road) and running in a southeasterly direction .57 mile to intersect with Town Highway #41 (Dartt Hill Road).
- (5) Being two segments of highway which connect with previously mapped segments of Town Highway, collectively being the "Old Whittier Road": (a) commencing near the presently mapped southerly end of Town Highway #58 (Whitcomb Hill Road) near the Bethel/Stockbridge Town Line and continuing in a northeasterly direction .05 mile to intersect with Town Highway #57 (Whittier Road) and (b) a road commencing at a point on Town Highway #57 approximately .1 mile easterly of the intersection of Town Highway #57 and Town Highway #58 and running in an easterly direction approximately .49 mile to reconnect with Town Highway #57.

The "Certificate of Highway Mileage Year Ending February 10, 2009" was then approved and unanimously signed by the Board, with addition of the mileage for the above-referenced class 4 roads.

As per appointment at 7:30 PM, Chairman Fox welcomed Eric Benson. Mr. Benson advised that he wished to present some project ideas being developed by the Bethel Business Association, and to hopefully obtain the Board's support for them. He first explained the plan of developing a hiking trail on the "Branliere" Town Forest land. He suggested that much of the site work might be possible to do in conjunction with forestry management work the Town would wish to have done to make effective use of the property. It was agreed that Delbert Cloud would research the Town Forest files on the subject property, and provide information to Mr. Benson to help evaluate the feasibility of the idea, the Board members being supportive of the concept.

Debra Leahy then spoke of a project being developed by the School District, as the basis for a grant application to the AOT "Safe Routes to School Program." A project team must be formed, and certain participants are required, among them a representative of the Town legislative body. Joe DeFreitas volunteered to help with the effort.

Eric Benson added that the Bethel Business Association is also hoping to replace the aging benches which are situated along the streetside in various locations. He showed pictures of stone benches which have been placed in some communities, and wondered if the Board would be receptive to such form of replacement. The Board members concurred that the idea was good, and welcomed further information regarding costs, etc.

The Board then reviewed a draft of the Warning for the forthcoming Annual Town Meeting. The text appeared to reflect all matters of business correctly, and the Warning was approved and endorsed by the Board members per motion of Bill Richards, seconded by Joe DeFreitas and unanimously carried.

A draft of the Town Report, inclusive of Town General Fund and Enterprise Fund budgets, was also examined and found to be complete and suitable for printing. It is anticipated that the School District's report will be combined for printing and mailing.

The Board also reviewed documents pertaining to potential bonding for certain water system improvements. After due consideration, the following RESOLUTION was unanimously approved by motion of Joe DeFreitas, seconded by Bill Richards and unanimously carried:

“RESOLVED, that the public interest and necessity demand that certain public improvements be made, viz: replacement of water system mains on River Street (Vermont State Route 107) and areas adjacent to the so-called River Street Bridge to include a new sleeved main beneath the railroad tracks connecting the new water main to the water system along Main Street in the Town of Bethel, said improvements estimated to cost Three Hundred Seventy Five Thousand Dollars (\$375,000.00).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the cost of completing said public improvements, after application of funds available from the United States of America and/or the State of Vermont, will be too great to be paid out of the ordinary annual income and revenue of the Town of Bethel; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a proposal for providing such improvements and the issuance of general obligation bonds of the Town in an amount not to exceed Three Hundred Seventy Five Thousand Dollars (\$375,000.00) to pay for its cost of the same, should be submitted to the legal voters of the Town at a Special Meeting thereof to be duly called and held on March 5, 2009; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all acts relating to the proposition of incurring bonded indebtedness and the issuance of general obligation bonds of the Town of Bethel for the purpose of financing such improvements, as well as the construction, maintenance and operation of such improvements within and without the corporate limits of the Town be in accordance with the provisions of Chapters 53, 89, and 120 of Title 24, Vermont Statutes Annotated; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the attached Warning and form of ballot be adopted for use in connection with consideration of the above-stated propositions of making said public improvements and incurring bonded indebtedness therefor.”

The Warning for a Special Meeting to vote on the subject question was then approved and endorsed by the Board members. A “Sample Ballot” was also determined appropriate for the purpose.

The following communications were reviewed and placed on file: (1) a Report from the Johnson Company re. its findings pertaining to settling of the scales at the transfer station, (2) notice from the Vermont League of Cities and Towns re. the “Local Government Day,” (3) the January 2009 newsletter from the regional planning commission, and (4) a Permit issued to David Rogers for development of property on class 4 Town Highway 15.

With no further business to attend, motion to adjourn was made by Bill Richards, seconded by Joe DeFreitas and unanimously carried, the time being 9:46 PM.

Neal Fox

Bill Richards

Joe DeFreitas