

BEACON FALLS BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Monthly Meeting
January 13, 2014
MINUTES
(Draft Copy-Subject to Revision)
(Recorded on Olympus DP-201 filed by date)

First Selectman C. Bielik called the Regular BOS Monthly meeting to order at 7:30 P.M. with the pledge to the flag.

Present: First Selectman C. Bielik, Selectman P. Betkoski, Selectman D. Sorrentino and approximately 15 town residents.

C. Bielik began the meeting noting the first several orders of business were a few “housekeeping” items on the agenda and the first on the agenda was a resolution from State of CT Dept. of Emergency Mgt. of Homeland Security. C. Bielik continued to read the resolution.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Beacon Falls Board of Selectmen may enter into with and deliver to the State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security any and all documents which it deems to be necessary or appropriate;

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Christopher J. Bielik, First Selectman of the Town of Beacon Falls, is authorized and directed to execute and deliver any and all documents on behalf of the Town of Beacon Falls and to do and perform all acts and things which he deems necessary or appropriate to carry out the terms of such documents, including, but not limited to, executing and delivering all agreements and documents contemplated by such documents.

The undersigned further certifies that Christopher J. Bielik, First Selectman of the Town of Beacon Falls now holds the office of Title of the First Selectman and he has held that office since November 18, 2013.

C. Bielik noted that they now need approval by the BOS and he entertained a motion.

P. Betkoski motioned that C. Bielik take the position of State of CT Dept. of Emergency Mgt. and execute the resolution as read. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

C. Bielik noted that the emergency plan is updated every year and that he has just spoken to E. Rodrigues about this. He noted they should hopefully be finished by the end of the week.

C. Bielik read another resolution.

“RESOLVED: That Christopher J. Bielik, First Selectman, is empowered to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of the Town of Beacon Falls a Contract with the Connecticut State Library for a Historic Documents Preservation Grant”.

P. Betkoski motioned that C. Bielik takes the position to execute and deliver in the name and on behalf of Beacon Falls and executes the motion for the CT State Library Historical Document. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

This resolution comes from the Town Clerk and we are actually getting a grant for this and the resolution allows the First Selectman to sign off on it.

C. Bielik read the third resolution.

RESOLVED, that the Honorable Christopher J. Bielik, First Selectman, is hereby authorized to sign the Agreement entitled “Master Municipal Agreement for Construction Projects”.

P. Betkoski motioned to execute the resolution that authorizes C. Bielik to sign the “Master Municipal Agreement for Construction Projects”. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

C. Bielik explained this came from the state and is something that has to be executed every year.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

John Smith, Bethany Road, Chairman of Inlands and Wetlands, explained that he had given the Selectmen a document that was an inquiry by the previous building inspector to FEMA regarding clarification of the foot plan and detention ponds and that some are owned by the town and some by residents. He noted that he would like to invite the Selectmen to their next meeting which will be the 2nd Wednesday of the month. The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday February 12th, 2014. J. Smith noted that he would like to discuss this at the meeting and possibly set up a workshop.

J. Fitzpatrick, Planning and Zoning Commission, asked if the agenda could be modified to insert his briefing after public comment.

P. Betkoski motioned to modify the agenda to insert Planning and Zoning Commission briefing directly following Public Comment. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

C. Bielik also noted that he would like to modify the agenda to include a presentation from J. Rodrigo regarding Riverbend Park.

P. Betkoski motioned to add a presentation of Riverbend Park by J. Rodrigo to the agenda following J. Fitzpatrick's presentation with support by R. Minnik. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

(5A) – Presentation by Joe Fitzpatrick

J. Fitzpatrick, Burton Road, Vice Chairman of Planning and Zoning Commission explained that they fought hard to keep the transportation initiative in the plan with the proposal to add 2 full exits to Route 8 in Beacon Falls in order to make the Industrial Park more appealing for businesses to come in and out of it. J. Fitzpatrick made a lengthy and detailed presentation using maps and satellite pictures of the Route 8/Beacon Falls corridor.

He noted that some people feel this project is not needed, will never be built or is too expensive however he was presenting the upside of the entire project. He noted that if we follow the plan to add 2 exits to Route 8 to connect to the Industrial Park with the southbound exiting just under Lopus Road. He explained the configuration with Pent Road, Lancaster Drive, Lopus Road, Pines Bridge, etc. to open up the entire Industrial Park to Route 8 noting this will make the Industrial Park much more inviting to businesses to come in. He noted that one of the problems is that currently the industrial park is somewhat choked due to 2 one lane bridges to get there (you also have to go all the way through town to get there). He noted the Depot Street Bridge also has a weight limit.

He talked about a letter from O&G Industries who submitted a letter prior to the Public Hearing that explained how they tried numerous times to sell their property and the plan be presented addresses the entire Industrial Park. He noted that this plan would allow downtown Beacon Falls/Main Street to be a “walking” town.

J. Fitzpatrick also explained that this plan is also a good argument for an interchange to connect Beacon Falls to the Oxford Airport. Route 42 could actually run directly to the airport. He continue to show maps and where and how the plan would affect basically the region also noting that they would like to make it so that people in the Industrial Park will be able to sell their property, bring more businesses in to town and to also help off-set resident taxes.

J. Fitzpatrick noted that this is the 2nd Board that he has presented to and he plans on presenting all the Boards. He is hopeful to get approval from all boards and the town and then bring it to the state level noting that this project will not only support Beacon Falls but surrounding towns as well (regional basis).

C. Bielik noted that the best way to sell anything in this current economic climate it is very important to show how this will impact/improve/help multiple municipalities in the region. He

also noted that they need to identify a champion to take this presentation/plan to all the local businesses also in the town of Oxford. He noted that this is an ambitious plan but worthy of pursuing at least the preliminary stages. He noted that this is a project that is not going to come with a cheap price tag on it. However, we should start lining things up and make our best pitch to people who will be able to affect the change.

J. Fitzpatrick noted that the time line would be at least 10 years. He noted that with a lot of effort on the town and different boards, there will be a public hearing. They are looking for approval from all the boards in a form of a letter. They will then need to get some support from the state and then US Senators and Congressmen to get support funds for this project.

P. Betkoski noted that he commends J. Fitzpatrick on all his efforts and his concern is how they will be/have spent on Navis and Young and is there a cap? He noted that they will need the blessing of the Council of Governors. He also noted that he thinks there is some money left in escrow from past efforts. P. Betkoski noted again that he just doesn't want to see the project getting over their head with the Engineering fees before they go any further. J. Fitzpatrick noted that so far they have only designed the map.

C. Bielik noted that he will allow some limited public comment at this point realizing that this is just the first step and there will be plenty of opportunity for a lot of discussion as we get further into the project.

R. Minnik, 147 Cedar Lane, Land and Use Committee and Land Stewart, noted that Land Use may be the place that they should begin. He suggested that they also get COG involved to help them get the plan "clean" – he also noted the RPC and that the RPC has already been paid for. He also noted that there are still some funds left in the Route 67/42 project.

C. Bielik suggested they start by presenting to all the boards with J. Fitzpatrick noting that he would like these presentations to board complete in the next month.

J. Fitzpatrick also pointed out that currently all the exits on Route 8 are on the east side of the river and these new proposed exits would be on the west side of the river noting that they would also take pressure off the Pines Bridge "artery".

M. Krenesky, Maple Street, noted that in the Original Downtown Plan it was discussed on how to open up the town to the Industrial Park noting that it's nice to see that it has gotten this far. He also noted that this proposal will drive traffic away from downtown merchants so be prepared. J. Fitzpatrick explained that the business owners in the industrial park are also town of Beacon Falls businesses (one does not have priority over another).

L. Green, Feldspar Ave., noted that when he was a State Representative, they did do a traffic study and skid analysis due to a roll over problem. Recommendations were made to re-build a section of Route 8. He noted that this may be a Segway.

It was noted that there are a lot of potential resources available for this project.

5B Riverbend Park

J. Rodrigo, Bonna Street, Parks and Rec Commissioner, began his presentation regarding a \$100,000 grant received to gain more access to the river. He noted that this grant has been 9 years in the making. He noted that four primary guys are on the Commission to apply this grant property and efficiently and expand Riverbend Park. (J. Rodrigo, D. Sorrentino, R. Minnik and R. Egan). He continued to explain that there are several properties abutting Beacon Falls town owned property and his first suggestion would be to approach a couple of the land owners and see if they can make a deal for Beacon Falls to take over their property with a swap that would forgive their back taxes and then the property could be quit deeded to the town. The property owners are Daniel & Corrine McCurrey and William Greenberg. He explained that one of the home owners was forced to move their home by the town due to a flood plain issue in the 90's. He noted that they have not paid their taxes since then (approximately \$20,000 is owed in back taxes). The other property also owes back taxes and is actually of no use to the land owners. They will never be allowed to build on it, etc.

J. Rodrigo's presentation continued explaining all the pieces of land that would allow more access to Riverbend Park and river access and also all the possibilities of any other land was acquired. He explained that this avenue would be their first choice of grant money use however, if the parties involved were not willing to swap their land for forgiveness of tax money, their next plan would be to access the river through Volunteer Park. It was noted again that the grant money was giving to us to allow people more access to the river.

R. Minnik explained that if they were to move forward using the grant money towards the property that the town already owns, one plan would be to put big rocks in the narrow section of the river so that people can pull up their kayaks and canoes. He noted that this would then allow people to take a short kayak ride or a long one because there is a place in Seymour on the river where people can also pull up their paddle boat. He noted that the same person at DOT is still there and still on this project and that the Army Core of Engineers was also part of the selection committee.

R. Minnik is asking that C. Bielik have a resolution for the grant approval. J. Rodrigo will be calling on the property owners on Wednesday and if they are not in agreement with the proposal, they will continue to move forward with plan B.

C. Bielik motioned to adopt a resolution to forgive back taxes due from Daniel and Corrine McCurrey and William Greenberg in lieu of a quit deed for their property. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. C. Bielik and P. Betkoski voted aye. D. Sorrentino abstained from the vote as he is part of the committee. Motion passed.

J. Rodrigo continued his presentation noting that he would like to continue pursuing grants and would like the BOS to approve hiring Lisa Low and Associates as a grant writer at \$125 per hour with a 10 hour max. This grant would be for the Housatonic Watershed Rehabilitation Grant.

P. Betkoski motioned that the Town of Beacon Falls retain Lisa Low & Assoc. as a grant writer at a fee of \$125 per hour with a maximum of 10 hours for the Housatonic Watershed

Rehabilitation Grant. C. Bielik 2nd the motion. P. Betkoski and C. Bielik voted aye. D. Sorrentino abstained (he is a member of the watershed committee). Motion passed.

It was noted that the river access will be open to everyone (not just limited to Beacon Falls residents like Matthies Park is)

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

D. Sorrentino motioned to approve the meeting minutes of January 7, 2014. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

After review of the monthly meeting minutes from December 9, 2014,

P. Betkoski motioned to approve the December 9' 2014 monthly meeting minutes as presented. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

RESIDENT TROOPERS REPORT

D. Sorrentino motioned to accept the Resident Troopers Report. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT

D. Sorrentino motioned to accept the report. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

Discussion: it was noted that results have not yet been received from the recent testing however there does not appear to be any areas of concern.

FIRE MARSHAL REPORT

P. Betkoski motioned to accept November and December's Fire Marshal Report. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

FINANCE MANAGERS REPORT

P. Betkoski motioned to accept the report and forward it to the BOF for their review. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

TAX COLLECTORS REPORT

D. Sorrentino motioned to accept the tax collectors report and forward to the BOF for their approval. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

Discussion: Maryanne Holloway, Tax Collector, explained that Naugatuck Valley Savings and Loan has a plan in place that Beacon Falls Tax payers can pay directly to them. She noted that while it is not a huge amount of people that take advantage of this (11 people paid through NVSL) she is still in favor and happy to comply with any way or how that makes it easier for people to pay their taxes and for the Town of Beacon Falls to collect taxes. She noted that they will continue to try it again in June.

TREASURERS REPORT

P. Betkoski motioned to accept the Treasurers report and forward it to the BOF for their review and approval. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

TOWN CLERKS REPORT

D. Sorrentino motioned to accept the Town Clerk's Report. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

LIBRARY REPORT

P. Betkoski motioned to accept the Library report. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

Discussion: S. Dowdell explained that there are still receiving bids from DocuSource and will get a couple of more regarding Xerox machine renewals for the town hall. C. Bielik noted he will be discussing this with the BOF on Tuesday.

CUSTODIAN REPORT

D. Sorrentino motioned to accept the report. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

D. Sorrentino motioned to accept this report. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

TOWN NURSE REPORT

P. Betkoski motioned to accept the Town Nurse Report. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. A letter from E.J. Smith was received and discussed earlier in the meeting.

2. An email from C. Brome was received regarding the cross walk and that this subject was not on “old business” at last meeting. C. Bielik read the email and also noted that this item will stay on the “old business” until the matter is resolved.
3. A letter from the State of CT OPM was received regarding a \$47,000 Locip grant that was received for the fire house roof replacement
4. A letter from CL&P was received regarding 3rd party electricity. C. Bielik noted that he met with R. Cherhoniak to discuss this proposal and they decided to wait a month before a decision is made as it was noted that the prices seem to be going down right now.
5. An email from G. Sanapore which was forwarded by R. Minnik was received in regards to allowing motorized remote control boats at Matthies Park. It was discussed that there doesn't seem to be a problem with this request they just have to figure out fees and who will monitor it.
6. A letter of resignation from E. Riley Edwards from the Library Trustees was received.

D. Sorrentino motioned to accept E. Riley Edwards resignation with regret. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

7. A letter of resignation from Finance Manager M. Gomes was received. C. Bielik read the letter and noted that M. Gomes requested that his last date of employment with the town be January 19th. C. Bielik noted that he felt this was an aggressive date and was going to ask M. Gomes to stay on a bit longer for ease in transition.
8. A letter from M. Fernandez, Planning and Zoning Clerk was received asking for additional funds to be put in the Clerk's budget so that she can continue purging old files. Bielik agreed that the files should be purged however noted that he will wait until he receives a letter from the Commissioner of P&Z requesting these funds and accountability then they will go through the proper procedures to see if the BOF will approve a transfer for this item.
9. A letter from a Tech Support inquiry for the position of Webmaster was received.
10. A letter from Derek Polange was received stating his interest in a position on the Parks and Rec commission. C. Bielik read the letter and noted that currently there is not an open position but there may be soon. When an opening becomes available, they will contact him.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. Audible Cross Walk – C. Bielik spoke with Public Works Foreman and Assistant Foreman regarding this issue. He noted that there is a piece of equipment that is out there that could possibly solve this problem for the people in Beacon Mill as well as the people who need it to cross the street. They are planning a trip to Wolcott to take a look at one that is already in place and then they will look at the costs. This item will stay under “old business” until it is resolved.
- b. Town Clerk – L. Green, Town Clerk, discussed the status of renovations needed at the town hall clerk’s office. He noted that there are issues with the heat and air conditioning in the Town Clerks office and also moisture issues in the vault. He noted that the previous administration began addressing this project and would like to put it back on the map for the new administration. He would like the dialogue to begin on these issues again. L. Green noted that there is currently \$10,000 for this project but he does not want to use this money until they are informed of the entire project via a study on the entire building. He noted that he did get the A/C working and a couple small issues that only cost \$1000.

C. Bielik noted that they can begin discussing this project again.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Riverbend Park – This was discussed earlier
- b. Vote on Waiving of Town Fees with Regard to a Joint Radio Site Project with the Oxford Fire Dept. and the Beacon Falls Sewer plant’s scada at the High School football field to continue with the projects as the electrical/phone pipe runs from Cl&P’s pole on Rimmon Hill across the towns right of way on the side of the road to the concrete pad that sits on the School’s property.

P. Betkoski motioned to waive fees with regards to the Joint Radio Site Project. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

APPOINTMENTS

None.

BUDGET TRANSFER REQUESTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

S. Dowdell, Wolfe Ave., asked the status of the retention walls on Main Street. C. Bielik explained that it's a two part project and during the first part, they discovered asbestos therefore the 2nd part of the project was more involved. Due to the weather, the project has been delayed however it was noted that people work working on it today.

E. Groth, Laurel Ridge, Inquired about the pilot money received that the state had for the Burn School and do they also have the money to pay their taxes to the town as well. C. Bielik noted that he will call the state to find out the status on this.

E. Groth, Laurel Ridge, asked the status on the Lewis house noting that while standing there with no heat, it is deteriorating daily. He noted that the committee for this project was put into suspense.

E. Groth, Laurel Ridge, asked for an update on the Ladder truck. C. Bielik noted that he had sent a request to the town attorney asking the status and has not yet heard back.

M. Krenesky, Maple Ave., noted that if the town does not take action on the Lewis house it will in fact deteriorate. He noted that the town should not consider selling this property because they will never find a piece of property with that kind of location for the price they paid. M. Krenesky noted that he would be willing to be on a committee for this property. He noted that if something is not done soon, it will certainly have to come down.

P. Betkoski asked if there are any reports on this property from work already done. It was noted that there should be a lot of information on this in that there were committees who worked on this.

M. Fernandes, South Circle, noted that a "standing" decision had already been made on this piece of property 2 administrations ago. She noted that the decision that was made still stands and this project does not have to begin at square 1.

K. McDuffy, Haley Ridge, noted that P & Z's recommendation was to demolish this building.

C. Bielik noted that he will do some research on this.

M. Holloway, Dolly Drive, ask that if the building is demolished, is there anything inside the building that could possibly be auctioned.

E. Groth, Laurel ridge, noted that he contacted 2 or 3 antique dealers and they did express interest in some of the building contents.

M. Holloway, Dolly Drive, expressed her sincere appreciation and thanks for putting the 2 public comments back into the agenda of the BOS meetings. She noted that it is so helpful and really and truly appreciates it.

C. Bielik responded that to be fair, putting the 2nd Public Comment back into the agenda was actually done at the last meeting of the previous administration.

S. Dowdell, Wolfe Ave., wanted to comment on Public Works for doing such a good job on all the roads during the recent storms. C. Bielik noted that he did put that in his monthly newsletter as well as he agreed with S. Dowdell on jobs well done by the Public Works.

L. Classey, Munson Road, recused from clerk to speak, suggested that since all the Finance reports are forwarded to the BOF for their approval and filed by the Finance Clerk with the Town Clerk's office, then the BOF clerk should be the only one filing the reports with the town. This will reduce on redundancy and paperwork filed in the Clerk's office plus allow for more efficiency in procedures.

L. Classey, Munson Road, also suggested for the record, noting that K. Wilson uses these minutes for tasks, that any correspondence sent to the First Selectman, be filed directly from the Town Hall. This will also allow for more efficiency and will keep the correspondence in the town hall. It was noted that all minutes are now filed via email so it really doesn't make sense efficiently for the clerk to drive back to the town hall just to file correspondence.

C. Bielik agreed and noted action will be taken on this right away.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn was made.

P. Betkoski motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:09 P.M. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:09 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Classey
Clerk for the Board of Selectmen