

BEACON FALLS BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Regular Monthly Meeting
February 10, 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.

C. Bielik then asked for a moment of silence for Mr. Roger Brennan, a former Fire Chief and pillar of Beacon Falls who recently passed.

Present: First Selectman C. Bielik, Selectman P. Betkoski, Selectman D. Sorrentino and approximately 8 town residents.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1/11/14 Special Meeting – P. Betkoski motioned to approve these minutes. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

1/13/14 Regular monthly meeting – D. Sorrentino motioned to approve these minutes. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

2/6/14 Special Meeting – P. Betkoski motioned to approve these minutes. D. Sorrentino 2nd for discussion.

Discussion: The minutes were approved with a modification to the “appointment of Kathy Brown” there was not a position open for her at this time however her name will be made available for the next slot that opens up.

All voted aye with the modification.

Public Works Report – None

Discussion: It was noted that they have been busy and will provide 2 reports next month

RESIDENT TROOPERS REPORT – None.

C. Bielik noted that the Resident Trooper has been out of work with a bad back and he noted that he was just informed of this so he has made arrangements for communications to be improved going forward. It was noted that when the resident trooper is not in work, the State Police who cover the Route 8 corridor will cover in Beacon Falls when needed.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT

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

Discussion: P. Betkoski asked if all the testing has been complete. It was noted that testing has been complete but reports have not yet been submitted.

FIRE MARSHAL REPORT

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

It was noted that the towns do a good job covering for each other with mutual aid.

FINANCE MANAGERS REPORT – none

It was noted that they hope to have a new Finance Manager in place by next month's meeting.

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.

TREASURERS REPORT

M. Krenesky noted that some checks are sent to the police department made out to "police department town of Beacon Falls" and the bank will not accept them. There is a \$51 difference this month because of this issue. He plans to coordinate with the police department Clerk so she will deposit those checks in the future and in turn write a check to the "town of Beacon Falls" at the same time.

M. Krenesky noted that J. Rodrigo from Parks and Rec would like to begin accepting payment to park and rec activities on-line and a pay pal account has been set up. C. Bielik asked that this info be passed on to the webmaster for inclusion in the website.

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 and forward it to the BOF for their approval. 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 will be a shortage in this budget line item due to Masha's pay out. C. Bielik asked that he be kept apprised.

CUSTODIAN REPORT

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

C. Bielik noted that while it is not yet on the report, he was informed of a furnace problem.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

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

TOWN NURSE REPORT – None. This is a quarterly report.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. C. Bielik read a letter from Jose Alves (who was present) requesting a late fee penalty be removed from his tax bill. Mr. Alves explained that he has been a resident since 1987 and has paid his taxes on time since then but had a family emergency and had to leave town without notice. His taxes were paid on the 6th but would like the \$109 late fee removed. C. Bielik answered that he had researched the laws pertaining to this and unfortunately a family emergency is not a consideration for waiving late fees. He noted that had there been a snow storm and the town hall closed, then they would be able to refund the late fee.

D. Sorrentino motioned to deny waiving the late fees assessed to Mr. Alves taxes. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

C. Bielik apologized to Mr. Alves.

2. A letter from C. Edwards was received asking to waive a late fee on his taxes as he noted that on Feb. 3rd when he went to pay the taxes the Town Hall was closed due to a snow storm. C.

Bielik noted that this was a legal reason to be able to waive the late fee as the Town Hall was unexpectedly closed.

D. Sorrentino motioned to waive the late fee assessed to C. Edwards. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

3. A letter from S. Dowdell was received asking that the town turn on the water at the Lewis house from April through October for the community garden. It was suggested that they make sure the pipes aren't leaking.

D. Sorrentino motioned to allow the Lewis House water to be turned on for the community garden. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

4. WRHS sent a letter regarding the Melbourne Scholarship. It was noted that when the scholarship was created, the terms were to always keep \$10,000 in this account. There were several years that the scholarships were not able to be given out due to not enough funds. As of recent they have been giving out these funds again but the time will be limited in that the funds will be depleted back to the \$10,000. It was noted that if the scholarship remains as it is today, they have 4 more years of 2 \$1,000 scholarships. It was suggested that maybe a voluntary donation request be put on Beacon Falls motor vehicle tax bills to hopefully build this account up again but it was decided that the BOS would like to continue for now keep the scholarship as it is – 2 \$1,000 scholarship awards per year.

D. Sorrentino motioned to maintain the scholarship as is. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

5. A letter was received by Lou Manillo that he can no longer act as Municipal Agent for the elderly.

Peter Betkoski motioned to accept L. Manillo's resignation with regret. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

6. A letter from Bernie Dionne was received requesting to be the Municipal Agent for the Elderly.
7. An email from Region 16 business manager was received noting that the shift of students from Beacon Falls to Prospect has shifted in Beacon Falls to net a .4% increase in Beacon Falls share of Region 16.
8. An email from J. Rodrigo was received asking to accept his resignation from the Parks and Rec, Safety and Ethics Boards since he is now on the BOF.

Peter Betkoski motioned to accept J. Rodrigo's resignation from all three boards with regret. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

9. A pamphlet regarding a bowl-a-thon supporting domestic violence services was received. The BOF will discuss attending.
10. An email from Ann O'Dell was received asking to be on the Library Board of Trustees. This will be discussed under appointments.
11. A CCM pamphlet was received.
12. A notice from the library regarding the night of scrabble was received. It will be held on March 27 at 6PM at St. Michaels.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. Audible Cross Walk – C. Bielik noted that they had planned to go to Wolcott to look at a system in January but it was postponed due to snow. He noted that he will keep this item on the agenda until it is addressed.
- b. Fire Truck Purchase – C. Bielik explained where we are currently with the fire truck issue noting that they did receive legal advice that they can go forward with purchasing the truck however the BOF had great reservations in that they felt the intent of the vote was that the Town's People voted to exhaust efforts to receive a grant prior to the purchase. After a lengthy discussion, a vote was taken on what the BOS should do towards moving forward with this issue.

P. Betkoski motioned to hold an informational town meeting to explain the situation of the purchase/or not of the fire truck with the date to be determined. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

P. Betkoski motioned to add under New Business Jeff and Brian Smith's presentation. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

NEW BUSINESS

Brian Smith/Jeff Smith Presentation

Brian Smith gave a presentation explaining that he would like approval to install dog waste bags at Mathies Park and on the Main Street Walkway. He explained this is for his senior project and he will approach local businesses for donations to start the projects with 8000 bags. It will be up to the dog walkers to do the right thing and use them and discard of the waste in the trash cans that are available.

A discussion continued with how this will work but it was noted that this is a good idea. Brian explained that depending on how much money he can get donated from local business, will depend on how many bags he purchases. With so many bags purchased, the dispenser comes

free. He also noted that the more bags purchased, the cheaper the bags. The intention is that the storage of the bags will be kept at the Public Works Department. Brian noted that his intent is to discuss this with Public Works and Parks and Rec.

D. Sorrentino motioned that the BOS supports Brian Smith's senior project. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

D. Sorrentino asked that Brian Smith consider installing one at Toby's park also.

Brian Smith noted that if possible, he will also include Toby's Park.

APPOINTMENTS

P. Betkoski motioned to appointed Bernadette Dionne to the Municipal Agent for the Elderly. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion.

Discussion: It was noted to B. Dionne is not a Beacon Falls resident. C. Bielik noted that he has already looked into this and that it is more than acceptable legally to allow a nonresident to full this position and it especially makes sense as she is already the bus driver and spokesperson for the seniors. It was noted that more and more towns are going this route as it make sense to have someone who knows the seniors so well act in their behalf.

All voted aye.

Julianne Groth, 13 Laurel Ridge, asked that when vacancies come up, how do other people know there is a position available, is it posted on the website?

C. Bielik answered that his normal procedure is to contact the Chair of both the RTC and DTC that a position is available in hopes that the Chair's will pass this on to their constituents. He noted that going forward he can post this information on the website also.

P. Betkoski motioned to appoint Ann O'Dell to the Library Board of Trustees. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

J. Rodrigo, 32 Bonna Street, noted that Derek Polange is still interested in a position on the Parks and Recreation Board.

P. Betkoski motioned that they re-open the appointment session of this meeting to appoint D. Polange to Parks and Rec. D. Sorrentino 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

Appointments

D. Sorrentino motioned to appoint D. Polange to a position on Parks and Rec. P. Betkoski 2nd the motion. All voted aye.

BUDGET TRANSFER REQUESTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

G. Komarowski, 15 2nd St., asked that if they are planning on providing water to the community garden from the Lewis House then they need to be sure they drain the pipes properly at the end of the season.

M. Krenesky, 22 Maple Ave. noted that he has yet to hear the BOS publicly state that the article in the newspaper regarding the trial balance discrepancy has been corrected. C. Bielik noted while this falls under the BOF, the issue was basically resolved (found out to be a non-issue as all funds were found) prior to the newspaper article making the paper. The issue has been rectified and there was no wrong doing and no missing funds.

J. Rodrigo, 42 Bonna St., noted that in all the years he has spent on various boards and attending all meetings he has never seen an audit be presented half done. He noted that this was very irresponsible of the BOF and it has put many towns' people in a panic and has generated other letters to the editor for no reason. The newspaper reported what they had heard correctly but the BOF was at fault for having a presentation before the audit was even complete. He noted that the BOF made a big mistake with this issue. His concerns are that with something like this going into the paper, maybe we scared away potential businesses and/or citizens by reporting a financial mess that didn't exist.

E. Groth, 13 Laurel Ridge, inquired about why the Town of Beacon Falls plowed Oak Drive. C. Bielik noted that the Town of Beacon Falls did NOT plow Oak Drive. M. Pratt noted that he personally/volunteered and plowed Oak drive noting that he saw it needed it and he knew they needed to get out. He noted his truck does look sort of like a town truck but it is his personal truck.

E. Groth, 13 Laurel Ridge, asked if the Fire Truck should end up going to a town vote, how a referendum would be forced. C. Bielik answered that he believes it would require the standard – a petition containing 200 names.

M. Pratt, 25 Ave. B, Resident – noted that his road, Avenue B, is in bad shape regarding the snow and that 2 cars can't pass and it would be tough to get a fire truck through. C. Bielik explained that it's been a bad winter and that he held a meeting to transfer more money to snow removal. He also noted that the guys are working hard and that the last storm was taxing in that it was heavy wet and then turned to ice. It taxed the employees and the vehicles and that they are still in clean up mode. M. Pratt insisted that they could still be pushing the snow back further.

M. Pratt, Fire Chief, asked why the fire station parking lot is not getting plowed. He noted that the fire guys had to plow the lot the last few storms and over the last 2 years they did not have to do it themselves. C. Bielik noted that the previous administration decided to not refill one of the

vacant positions so the staff is now down to 6 guys instead of 7 and he also noted that they have a new Director of Public Works, a new assistant Foreman and also a new employee.

– C. Bielik noted that they are still working on clean up. M. Pratt noted that there are 3 guys sitting at the Sewer Plant that could get into a truck and plow with the 3 plow trucks that are sitting at Public Works. C. Bielik noted that he will take that into consideration. P. Betkoski also noted that they are addressing this issue.

M. Pratt, Fire Chief, was under the impression that the Fire Department, BOF and BOS were going to work together before going forward to the town regarding the ladder truck. C. Bielik noted that no action that was taken this evening affected those plans.

M. Opusinski, 132 Back Rimmon, was under the impression that it was approved that they were to go ahead with the purchase of the fire truck. C. Bielik explained that due to the reservation of the BOF with the wording that they will have an informational town meeting to educate the public on all that has taken place and what the town's options are.

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