

TOWN OF BROWNVILLE
BOARD OF SELECTPERSONS MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, July 16, 2024 at 6:00pm
American Legion Post #92 ~ 67 Railroad Ave. Brownville

1. Call Board of Selectpersons Meeting to Order at 6:01pm by Byron Weymouth

- a. **Selectpersons Present:** Byron Weymouth, Shelly Ekholm, Jimmy Hartin, Kevin Emery, Gary Chapman
- b. **Employees Present:** Felice Lyford, Jessica Wyman, Philip Cook, Richard Gallagher
- c. **Residents/Others Present:** Steven and Glenna Dean, Gloria Ekholm, Roscoe Green, Justine Dominy, Lance and Mary Farrar, Stan Belvin, Lori and Kenny McKenzie, Jenn and Rick McMahon and kids, Andrea Witham, Ronald and Rebecca Galuppo

2. Action on prior meeting minutes from June 18, 2024

Motion to approve the minutes from 6/18/24 as presented.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

3. Review of the Treasurer's Warrants (Payroll, Accounts Payable, Water/Sewer)

4. Building Permit Applications: None to be considered at this time.

5. Quit Claim Deed – Foreclosure Buyback – Mr. Fortin paid his outstanding and current taxes, water & sewer bills by the deadline given and needs a quit claim deed releasing the Town's interest.

Motion to sign the quit claim deed as presented releasing our interest to Gerard Fortin for property foreclosed on 12/6/23 that we received payment in full for all taxes, water/sewer on July 1, 2024, for property located at 3 Whitten St.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

6. 2024 Tax Commitment: There were lots of changes that needed to be made due to our sales ratio being at 78%, so increases in value were needed across the board to keep us in compliance with state standards. Lorna added to the land base lot values and increased 25% of the majority of buildings with the exception of waterfront on Schoodic and Ebeemee that were more significant. Sales and current listings more than support those increases.

Motion to set the 2024 tax mil rate to 18.3 and sign the real estate and personal property tax commitment documents when finalized.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

7. Railroad Underpass Project Update

Felice met with representatives from the surety, their consultant, engineers, the contractor and our engineer earlier Tuesday at the underpass site. They documented the work site as well as the condition of the wall. They noted that the current stabilization of the wall cannot make it through the winter season.

Questions came up about the temporary street lights. The Town has taken over the rental on them, where they are needed for safety. The town is paying for them right now, and are waiting for the insurance to come through.

Residents spoke about concerns that we do not have an alternate route out of town. Steven Dean mentioned that he thinks that the railroad should help with a second way out of the Junction. It was brought up that the railroad is private property and most likely would not open it up due to their own safety concerns, liability and homeland security regulations. Rebecca Gallupo stated that the town should reach out to the media about the railroad not willing to help the town achieve a second way out, with headlines such as *CP unwilling to help small town*. Steven thinks that the state and federal government should be brought in as well. Byron mentioned another option of going down the railroad bed into Williamsburg, but the cost to create a full-size road and maintain it would be very costly, as it would need to be year-round.

8. Department Updates

Administration

- 2024 Budget included in the Board's packet. No questions.
- Tax Acquired Properties Updates – Gerard Fortin, as noted above, paid his accounts in full. The mobile home in the park is due to be demolished the week of 7/22. Awaiting some final details from versant and water shut off- Adam Coover will be doing the demo, and Bolsters will be providing the roll off containers All other properties have been mowed and security checked.
- Spencer Rd Project – Currently on hold while we work through the issues with the same contractor for the underpass project.
- Public Comment and Board Meetings – Tabled.
- ARPA – The office had the new phone system installed this week. Shortly before the changeover they were experiencing issues with the phone lines working properly. We continue to work with the provider/vendor to troubleshoot.
- Third Quarter Safety Committee Meeting was held 7/10. They have reviewed accident/injury reports from the prior 6 months as the 2nd quarter meeting was cancelled due to conflicting schedules. The committee has been discussing the growing concerns for safety related to the large crowds brought in by the Holiday Train as it is becoming increasingly difficult to staff the event with volunteers, fire and public works staff. Shelly brought up possibly trying to get a committee started to help get more volunteers. She also asked what the town has previously paid out for the event. Felice is going to look into it and get a number for the board by the next meeting.
- The new windows are in at the town office. They function well and look wonderful.
- Tax Abatement Recommendation for 2023 - From our Assessors' Agent for Scott Graves, part of M17 L22 (Acct #452) on Kineo Ave, to correct the acreage from 1.34 to .25 for the amount of \$202.02. This has been corrected for the upcoming year.

Motion to abate Scott Graves, part of M17 L22 (Acct #452) on Kineo Ave, to correct the acreage from 1.34 to .25 for the amount of \$202.02.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

Public Safety

Fire/EMS

- There was a total of 39 calls in June; 26 Fire, 13 EMS.

- Paramedic Program is up and running and going well. There have been several calls where the skills were utilized because the responding ambulance did not offer ALS care and the patient needed it.
- They have added Megan Beard, licensed EMT to the department. That brings the current Licensed EMS personnel to 13. They are entering into our recertification process for most of the members, this is a bi annual process with both their National Registry and State License.
- The bathroom renovation project is to be done by Dennis Carver for the construction portion and Mike Lapointe for the plumbing portion. We are hoping to start this week, or next. They have brought a porta toilet on site already.
- Jeff Durant has offered to build additional shelving for the large Connex that is at the Junction station. He is donating his time, and they are only paying for materials, this will be covered through their operating budget.
- Fire Chief is asking for your support and approval to purchase a set of lifting air bags. BFD does not own these critical pieces of equipment. Lifting air bags are utilized to lift & stabilize heavy objects, for example: car accidents, building stability issues and obviously wall collapse. Over the years the department has relied on Milo Fire to provide this equipment when it was needed. During the recent incident on Railroad Ave they learned that Milo FD's equipment was not serviceable and we couldn't utilize them for that incident. Shawn has met with the chief officers and they strongly believe we need to obtain this equipment for Brownville. The next closest equipment is in Dover, and they cannot wait for the travel time from Dover when/if this equipment is needed again. Fire Chief is requesting to purchase the air bags for \$10,997.00 from the Fire Small Equipment Capital Reserve fund. Although Shawn would much rather keep this fund intact and utilize it towards replacement costs for SCBA in the future, the current need is too great. After the 2024 allocation of \$10,000 to the reserve, there would be about \$30,000 available in that fund.

Motion to approve the request to spend up to \$11,000 from Fire Small Equipment Reserve to purchase a set of lifting air bags.

Motion: Gary Chapman No second

After a brief discussion Gary rescinded his motion, and the Board decided to table this until more of their questions can be answered by Shawn. Kenny McKenzie asked for the townspeople to be able to vote on this. He doesn't feel that the town needs these, and that we should just continue to rely on our neighboring towns for support.

- A local property owner has offered to replace the residential garage door openers, remotes and all associated labor for the Junction Station overhead doors. He is going to install commercial grade equipment that is designed for the door size and usage that our doors get. We have been experiencing chronic problems with one opener. He is willing to donate all equipment, material, and labor to complete this project. This is an approximate \$6,000.00 donation.
- Shawn has been asked to sit on the radio implementation committee for Piscataquis County radio upgrades.
- Made it to the second round of review for the Gloria MacKenzie Foundation Grant- \$51,000 for upgraded EMS equipment for the Fire/EMS department.

EMA

- The recent incident on RR Ave, raises the issue once again about secondary access into the Junction area. Shawn has a call into Senator Collins office to inquire about possibility of CDS grants to assist with any potential access possibilities.

Code/Health

- Continue to see an interest in building permits in the accessibly challenging areas of town.
- KVHC project is progressing well and the new addition should be open for the public in September/October
- New licensed tattoo parlor on High St.

Animal Control

- Chosen applicant took full-time position elsewhere and regrettably would not have time to do both ACO and the full-time job. There has been other interest expressed by local residents, and we are awaiting submission of their applications.
- Dog Kennel at PW Garage – conceptual stage to add either concrete floor or blocks and a roof for shelter from weather/sun.

Public Works

- Public works has been assisting with the underpass project stabilization and post-accident work.
- The new operator, Brian, that was hired last month had to resign due to a potential serious injury that occurred outside of work. We have hired a temporary full-time operator, Ed Hafford, who is also a new member of the FD. We will re-evaluate his status in the coming months.
- Cemetery Well House – Still in conceptual stages. Will also need an electrician for the pump.
- Cemetery maintenance & damaged stones – Rick is working on getting some quotes/ideas for this project.
- Whetstone rest area roof replacements will start once the mowing slows down in the cemeteries.
- We had a large tree in the right of way on Meulendyk Ave that we needed Tucker's Tree Service to take down. Part of the tree fell during a storm, and Tucker's came the next morning and got the rest.
- They will be grading roads this coming week – Russell Rd, Front St and Treatment Plant Road are first on the list. We did have storm runoff damage on Lakeview Rd, Front St (+ trees) and Quarry Ave this week when we received 4-5 inches of rain. Lakeview Rd actually was temporarily closed while the crew evaluated how much of the road had washed away under the pavement.
- Rick is still working on info for refurbish of the Volvo.

Parks & Rec

- Crystal is still hanging in there with us. We have not received any applications for her replacement yet. There has been one person take the app, but has not been returned.
- The flood damage work is slowly getting done and items are being replaced. Crystal waited for weeks for the Home Depot order that included equipment

and appliances. Halloween decorations are coming in (they lost almost all of them). The side doors need to be replaced (contractor) and the garage door is on order with Overhead Door Co. The older riding mower was determined to be unfixable. Getting quotes for a new one and a used one to see how the insurance company would like to handle that portion of the claim.

- Swim lessons started.
- Brownville Days Committee is in their final planning stages. Due to the status of the underpass, they have decided to change the parade route that would have ended on RR Ave in the Jct. to Davis Field. Due to possible state work being done on the Church St bridge in the village, the fireworks are being planned in the Main Rd area by Dennis Green's house. Lots of children's activities (bounce houses, water slides etc.) are planned as well.

Water/Sewer

- We did hear back about the application for BRIC grant for the water reservoir generators project and were not selected for that particular award (that was the 90/10 split); however, Felice did get our HMGP application in last week and it's being reviewed by MEMA at this time.
- Phil and Chris are working on installing some of the new meters. They were not able to receive the whole allotment at once, but we did get a small shipment that will suffice for now. They held the closing with Androscoggin Bank on Tuesday 9/9 for the lease/loan portion of \$35,000 for that project, as discussed at the May meeting. They are holding the funds in an escrow awaiting arrival of the full shipment and invoice for same.

PSWC

- The new Administrator started this month. She met with Felice and Jessi twice to do payroll. She seems to be catching on quickly. They had their monthly meeting at the transfer site/landfill. Things are looking great out there. Much improved over the last year. They still struggle with the loader being out of service more than operational. Discussion about adding pole barn style canopies over the containers to avoid extra weight due to rain, snow and ice.

9. Open Session

- Rebecca and Ronald Galuppo – Their house is on Horseshoe Pond Rd, where feet away is considered to be Ebeemee Twp. The taxation for unorganized territories is considerably less. They feel that they are not receiving fair services from the town to justify the amount of taxes that they are paying. They feel that the town should do more for economic development. Possibly bring in an economic developer to help bring more business into town.

10. Executive Session pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(E) – Consult with legal counsel – Not needed at this time; however, there is legal notice out to the contractor for the Underpass Project which gives a deadline to respond/cure that falls beyond this meeting date. We may need to have an emergency meeting between now and the next regular meeting if decisions need to be made on how to proceed, with counsel present.

11. Set Next Meeting – Regular Schedule falls on Tuesday, August 20th

12. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:42 p.m.

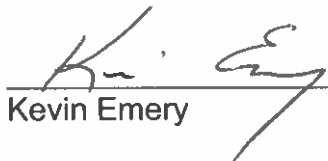
Motion: Kevin Emery Second: Shelly Ekholm Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,


Jessica Wyman
Deputy Clerk/Admin Asst


Byron Weymouth, Selectboard Chair


Shelly Ekholm


Kevin Emery

James Hartin


Gary Chapman