

Town of Benton
Budget Hearing and Select Board Meeting
Monday, May 8, 2023

Select Board Members: William R. Darcy, Chair; Regina Elliot, and Kimberli Carpenter

Also Present: Dwight Swauger, Treasurer; Mike Stiebitz, Town Clerk and Tax Collector; Joe Boutin, Jr., Surveyor of Wood and Lumber; and Joe Boutin III, Chairman of Benton School Board

These draft minutes of the Town of Benton Select Board are believed accurate and correct, but they are subject to additions, deletions, and corrections by the Select Board at the next meeting when the Board votes its final approval of the minutes. These minutes are made available at this time to conform to the requirements of New Hampshire RSA 91-A:2.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Darcy at 6:32 PM.

Member Carpenter moved approval of the April 17, 2023 meeting minutes, seconded by Chairman Darcy and approved.

The Trustees of the Trust Funds have reported that they now have removed all of their funds from the Woodsville bank and thus the Town no longer has to be limited to only \$200,000 in the Woodsville bank operating account.

Chairman Darcy reported that he had been approached by the Twin States Clean Energy Link which is proposing to build a transmission link which uses existing rights of way in Benton to bring 1,200 MW of power from Hydro-Quebec. They have asked to arrange a presentation before the Selectboard and members agreed that the Chair should make such arrangements.

There was a discussion of two building permits. The first is for a 14 x 36 foot building at 491 Coventry Road, that would not be connected to the water or sewer systems serving the existing residence. The permit was recommended by the Planning Board with the proviso that the permit would state that no well water or sewer connections would be made to the building. With that restriction, the Selectboard members agreed to issue the permit. The second building permit, also recommended by the Planning Board, was for an 8 x 16 foot addition to the back of the existing residence at 1830 Mount Moosilauke Highway. The Selectboard voted to approve the permit.

Chairman Darcy reported that he had completed the Project and Expenditure report for the ARPA federal grant we had received and attributed all of the balance of the funds (about \$36,000) to road repair and paving in the prior calendar year. The grant funds became a portion of our unassigned fund balance which in turn funded the road work and paving.

Treasurer Swauger reported that there was \$219,052 in the operating fund at Woodsville Guaranty Trust and \$412,048.67 in NH PDIP.

Tax Collector Stiebitz reported that April was a very good month for vehicle tax receipts as a result of some new vehicles purchased by Benton residents.

School Board member Swauger reported on concern about a possible \$19 million expenditure on a new building being discussed at the SAU meeting.

Joe Boutin, Jr., discussed the need for site markers in the cemetery and would be contacting the Sexton in Haverhill to discuss contracting with him to mark the cemetery area above the parking area.

Joe Boutin, Jr. submitted two Notices of Intent to Cut Wood or Timber, one for a 1.39 acre lot on Hanson Way owned by the Benton Bible Chapel and the other for a 1,200 acre lot off Tunnel Stream on National Forest land to be logged by Cersosimo Lumber. The Selectboard signed both Notices.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:29 PM.