

**Town of Benton
Select Board Meeting
Wednesday, October 9, 2023**

Select Board Members: William R. Darcy, Chair (via telephone); Regina Elliot and Kim Carpenter

Also Present: Dwight Swauger, Treasurer; and Joe Boutin, Jr., road contractor

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 6:30 PM.

Member Elliott noted that she did not recall a discussion of outside faucets at the Town Hall. With that deletion she moved approval of the September 27, 2023 minutes, seconded by Member Carpenter and approved.

Director Elliott brought up the subject of a fence above the reconstructed retaining wall at Mountain View Cemetery and noted that with the reconstruction of the top of the wall made it no longer suitable for fence posts. She recommended that we not do the project and everyone agreed.

Treasurer Swauger reported that there was \$145,949.66 in the operating fund at Woodsville Savings Guaranty Trust and \$419,309.12 in the NH PDIP account. He noted that the largest payment in the last month was \$75,000 for the schools. He also reported that the IRS was no longer claiming a deficiency in reporting 1099 income.

School Board Member Swauger reported that there would be a public hearing on accepting unappropriated new revenue, a little over \$3,000. He also reported the SAU budget was going up \$300,000 and that the SAU was offering free breakfast and lunch to all students.

Joe Boutin reported that the paving work on Tunnel Stream Road and Howe Hill Road will likely start in late October. He noted the completion of the rock crushing on Howe Hill Road that enabled the placement of a 18 inch diameter culvert to replace the damaged existing 15 inch culvert.

Chair Darcy asked if the Board wanted to oppose the County using \$5.6 million of the County's unassigned fund balance for a middle mile internet project because Benton will already receive fiber internet from NHEC, there are better uses of the money and accepting the grant imposes continuing financial risks on the County. The Board agreed to take that position with the County.

The Board discussed putting together a map of the Town properties that were identified in the recent reevaluation. They were all small pieces of land without buildings, except for the Town Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 PM