

## Minutes of the Board of Selectmen Meeting

This meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 6:00PM on Tuesday, January 18, 2022 at the North Brookfield Police Department. Dale Kiley, Jason Petraitis, and John Tripp present.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to approve the following minutes: 11/9/21 and 11/23/21. So voted.

### Financial Items:

Superintendent Mary Jane Rickson-School budget discussion. Did not attend meeting.

Police and Fire APRA Fund request: Mr. Kiley said the Police request was discussed last week and asked Chief Joe Holway what he was looking for. Joe said he's had several people ask about ARPA funds hazard pay and local Chiefs have been discussing it but it is ultimately up to the Board members. He would like his department to be considered because they are first responders. Mr. Kiley stated there wasn't an amount requested, Joe said he wasn't sure what the situation was or how it would be paid out but that he knows the Board will be fair. Mr. Tripp said that Ashley thinks there's a formula for figuring out the pay. Joe said he's seen all different amounts and isn't sure how its calculated. Mr. Kiley said it some towns the different unions presented their numbers to the Board and then there was a negotiation. Joe said there's a lot to consider, many employees in Town continued to work with the public during the pandemic in different degrees. Mr. Kiley asked Mr. Tripp and Mr. Petraitis what they thought about making a committee to review ARPA requests, maybe a member of the Board, a member of Fin Comm, members of the public. Trevor Bruso said we really need to look at infrastructure needs of the Town before we look at paying stipends/hazard pay. Joe suggested setting aside a capped figure and dispersing hazard pay from that. Joe asked Anne Jannette to do some research. Currently the Town has 204 employees. We'd have to do a pay scale based on first responders, interpersonal, less interpersonal, ect. Money can bring people together or tear them apart. Joe said his men were in the trenches, and the Police were too. Mr. Kiley said we'd form a committee to discuss ARPA funds. Mr. Tripp said a maximum of 5 members. Trevor said he's not opposed to pay but we should be looking at best practice and capital needs first. Joe said we could base hazard pay on hours.

Mr. Kiley said the Board would form a committee to study the ARPA funds, study the requests, and make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. Similar to how Finance Committee functions. Mr. Tripp said Ashley will get the word out. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to create an ARPA Funds Study Committee with five members: one from the Board of Selectmen, one from Finance Committee, and 3 to be determined based on applications. So voted. Mr. Kiley asked Ashley to post the information and see if there's interest from the public. Joe asked if they wanted department heads on the committee, Mr. Kiley said department heads would go to an ARPA meeting to make their proposals. Darren Anderson asked if there were criteria for proposals, Mr. Kiley said ARPA committee would send out any information regarding criteria.

Finance Committee Reserve Fund Request: Mr. Kiley said that Finance Committee had approved a reserve fund request to reimburse the Council on Aging for emergency expenses due to water leak. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to approve the request. So voted.

Reserve Fund request for port-o-potties. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to approve reserve fund request to cover cost of port-o-potties on the Town Beach. So voted. The Town Beach gave back that portion of their budget at the Special Town Meeting, before they received the bill.

#### New Business:

Appoint New COA Director: Judy Manning stated that the COA was recommending Donna Seguin as the new COA director. She can start Monday. Michelle Thayer will resign as Interim COA Director and rejoin the COA. Mr. Tripp asked if Michelle will help Donna, Judy said yes. Judy said since July they haven't had a COA Director, Michelle is doing an excellent job as interim. No qualified candidates had applied for the position but Donna popped up late December. The COA interviewed Donna and found she fits the bill, the COA is happy and anxious to have her start. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to appoint Donna Seguin as the Council on Aging Director. So voted. Mr. Kiley welcomed Donna aboard, wished her luck, and said this is an important position for our Town.

Jim Buzzell Town House Updates: Jim Buzzell was present to give some updates on the Town House. In 2021 the TAP program came to Town to do some interviews and a walking tour. We will have a community gathering to go over full report/study. In March the Friends worked with WPI to update their website: NBTownHouse.com The Friends plan on putting quarterly updates and activities on the website. The Friends will be applying for One Stop grant to pay for final construction plans. Banners were placed on the TH for programming. Mr. Tripp asked if that program was still going, Jim said they will be replacing the banners with updated programming. Donnie Berthiaume was able to earmark \$50,000 for the Town House through the ARPA bill. Jim said the Friends have incredibly dedicated people on the board, as well as other volunteers, that continually work to get grants. The last piece needed is final construction plans, they have an architect in line. Once we have the plans, we'll have hard costs and will have more opportunities for grants and donors. Hopefully by the Summer or Fall this year we'll have a timeline. Mr. Kiley thanked Jim for the updates.

Fire Report: Mr. Petraitis read the Fire reports for October and November 2021. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to accept the report. So voted.

PVPV discharge: Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to execute document to discharge lien on property. So voted.

Water Dept Enterprise fund: Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to sign a letter stating the water department is an enterprise fund. So voted.

Request for Resources: Joe Holway told the Selectmen East Brookfield is planning a bonfire for their 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration on 2/5/22. They handle everything but inform North Brookfield since it will be held on the beach. Mr. Kiley asked if that would preclude NB from having a bonfire, Joe said no, that won't affect our bonfire. Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to approve the request for resources. So voted.

#### Announcements:

Mr. Kiley stated the Town Clerk's office is closed for the foreseeable future. Mr. Tripp said that Ashley, along with other Town employees, are doing their best to cover the Clerks' office.

Mr. Tripp thanked the Highway department for doing a great job with storm cleanup. They've got 5 guys for 75 miles of road.

Mr. Tripp also said work for the Rail Trail is done for the winter, he will pack down the trail with snowmobiles.

Mr. Tripp said Country Auto donated 800 gallons of waste oil for heat at Huck's (new highway). He said the storage units need to be straightened out. Checks should now be made payable to the Town of North Brookfield. We will need renters' names, address, phone number, and unit numbers. Joe Holway thanked the Board for storage units for the Fire Department. Joe also stated he was able to stuff for a kitchen donated and a treadmill.

Public Comment:

Kathy Crevier asked if the Town was only allowed one bonfire a year. Joe said yes, DCR regulates that towns can only have one a year.

There being no further business, at 6:56PM Mr. Petraitis moved, and Mr. Tripp seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley Barre