

TOWN OF NEWLAND
11/07/2023
MONTHLY BOARD MEETING



ATTENDING:

MAYOR: Derek Roberts

ALDERMAN: James Johnson, Christie Hughes,
Kenny Caraway

GUEST: Teresa Foxx, Kenan Foxx, Christy Ray, Nathan Gittner, Burt Valarie,
Donna Valarie, Bryon Towler, Nancy Davis, Ken Long, Ruth Ann Suttle, Nicole
Hogan, John Jones, Michaela Sutherland, Robin Morgan, James Clark

STAFF: Town Administrator Bill Bailey, Town Clerk Mackenzie Tipton,
Finance Officer Jessica Buchanan, Police Chief Byron Clawson, Police Captain
Michael Fields, Officer Chris Clark, Public Works Director Gary Lewis, LPA
Melisa Borkowski, LPA Jamie Bare

The mayor called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., reminded everyone of ethics awareness, and led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance. James made a motion to approve the October minutes; Kenny seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

The mayor asked if there would be any changes to the agenda. James requested the review of the September vote on the town administrator's job description be added to the agenda.

MOTION: Christie made a motion to accept the amendment to the agenda. Kenny seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

AGENDA

RECOGNIZE JAMES CLARK

The mayor recognized James Clark and thanked him for his twenty years of service to the town.

BRYON TOWLER

Bryon introduced Broken Wheels Ministries to the board, explaining that he and other individuals have been working to organize this nonprofit, which is now closed to the general public but is open to anyone who is referred by a church or organization. Bryon clarified that in addition to helping high-risk individuals, the organization is collaborating with other nonprofits

on a referral process that will eventually lead to teaching the individuals a trade. Bryon added that they will also be teaching automotive skills to high school interns and he just wanted to let the town know about the organization so they could spread the word to people in need.

SWEET WATER RANCH ANNEXATION

Bill introduced Sweetwater Ranch and stated that the clerk would need direction for a satellite annexation. Burt Valarie gave a brief introduction, along with his spouse Donna. Burt explained they are raising elk with the intention of giving them back to the state. Burt said that due to state laws, the costs were extremely high, so they were considering selling wine and beer as a means of raising funds and that the county manager had recommended, he come to the town. Jamey asked if Burt only wanted to be annexed in for the sale of beer and wine. Burt indicated that they do have a vineyard, but it will take a while to get up and running. Jamey questioned Burt about his land holdings and his neighbors' opinions of the wine and beer sales. Burt stated he owns fifty-four acres, and he hasn't spoken with the neighbors. Derek stated he spoke with Burt's neighbor, Mike Nelson, and his only concern was not getting annexed into town as well. John Jones said he was a landowner next to Burt and that he had only attended the meeting to learn about the annexation. Burt clarified that the site will be transferred to the nature conservancy after he and his wife pass away. James declared that before making any decisions, he would require further details. Bill said that a sufficiency assessment will be conducted following the board's conclusions, which should address the majority of inquiries. Kenny said he required more details as well. Derek advised asking Bill any questions via email so that they might be addressed at the following meeting.

RESOLUTION FOR A – STREET

Bill explained that there was a motion made in a previous meeting to close A-street but after doing some investigating, he concluded that it was only to make the street a one-way that was restricted to Town Hall and Bojangles. Bill explained that the final phase would be to make a resolution. Jamey asked if the local businesses would be impacted given that the majority of customers at the hardware store park in that area. Bill said they could be. Kenny asked if the resolution was something to finalize what was already done. Bill said yes and that signs were already ordered. Bill stated he just stumbled across the one-way conversation in the minutes and realized there was no resolution. Kenny stated he thought the decision was already made for safety reasons. Kenny made a motion to approve the resolution to make A-street one-way. Gary pointed out that if A-street was one-way, tractor-trailers couldn't enter. Christie asked if anyone had spoken with Three Nails Hardware. Bill said no. Christie asked if the motion could be tabled. Kenny rescinded his motion and agreed to table until they spoke with Three Nails Hardware.

RESOLUTION FOR BYRON CLAWSON

A resolution was made to give Chief Byron Clawson his badge and duty weapon upon retirement.

MOTION: Jamey made a motion to accept the resolution; Kenny seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

ROBERT TAYLOR GROUP

Ken Lang introduced himself, and his partner Ruth-Ann. Ken went over the benefits and said that in order to make things a bit less complex, the rate plans were combined. Ken reported, the town now has a transitional plan in place, which hasn't been updated since 2013. Ken clarified that the renewal of the transitional plan will incur an increase of 14%. Jamey asked if this plan was 80/20. Ken stated yes and went over the dental plan. Ken stated that the current dental plan would go from 32.94 to 33.41. Jamey asked if that price could be locked in for two years. Ken answered yes. Ken stated that they switched over the life insurance plan to MetLife, so they were able to get one rate which brought the cost down by seventy dollars and twenty cents per employee. James stated that he thought one benefit of working for the town was the medical benefits offered, and he thought what the town had currently was excellent.

MOTION: James made a motion to accept the proposal from the Robert Taylor Group and the two-year dental plan. Christie seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

PLANNING BOARD

Bill explained that there were three attendees at the planning board meeting last month, and the board decided that the person or individuals who showed up would be appointed to the planning board. Bill said he needed four individuals to have a quorum. Bill made the point that the town will be charged a fee if a meeting is held without a quorum. Jamey requested a list of individuals. It was suggested that Nicole Hogan join the planning board. Nicole said she would.

MOTION: Christie made a motion to add Christy Ray, Theresa Foxx, Nicole Hogan, and Martha Hill to the planning board. Jamey seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stated aye.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Derek asked if there were any volunteers to put out Christmas lights. Christie mentioned everyone in the community decorating a pole or lamppost. Kenny stated in previous years it was extremely popular. Derek asked for a date. Christie suggested the day before Thanksgiving. Christie stated that there would be a prize for first place.

MOTION: Jamey made a motion to accept the pole idea. Christie seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

REVIEW OF THE SEPTEMBER VOTE FOR THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR JOB DESCRIPTION

Jamey stated that according to state laws, the town administrator must consult the board before they hire or fire.

MOTION: Jamey made a motion to rescind the town administrator job description. Kenny seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

MOTION: Jamey made a motion to go back to the former job description for the town administrator. Kenny seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

NONE.

REPORTS

PUBLIC WORKS

Gary explained he needs every resident to have their house number on their house. Bill said that's usually required under the fire code. Gary reported that two meters had been converted to electronic ones and that three water and sewer taps had been added. Gary also reported that several clogged pipes were replaced and that the ditch had been cleared out. He stated that well two's pump and pipes had been fixed in addition to the restrooms being cleaned. In order to prevent blockages, Gary advised constructing a device to keep leaves out of the treatment plant. Gary added that cameras had also been installed at the bandstand.

FINANCE REPORT.

Jessica reported she's been working on annual reports and the sales tax refund reports. She also stated that the audit for 2021–2022 will be finished shortly, but she needs Cindy to respond to her with some questions first.

POLICE REPORT

Byron gave the police report and reported that two deputies passed their basic radar.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORT.

Bill mentioned that he had been reviewing the completed AIA grant reports. He stated that he took the data from the study and submitted the 1.5 million for the wastewater grant and he's waiting for a response. Jamey requested that those reports be emailed and scanned. Bill promised to do so. Bill clarified that they have been delayed in maintenance and have been busy addressing a collapsed pipe. Jamey asked about the streetlights. Bill stated they are ordered, and all the outlets are here. Bill announced that between Thanksgiving and Christmas, they'll start to go up. Bill also mentioned getting the town hall door fixed but said he's having trouble getting glass. Bill added that the Sokassa modular system had also been delivered and installed and

although the original quote was lowered by \$22,000.00, it still requires water and sewer. Jamey asked about the paving. Bill stated potholes have been filled around the pool. Derek mentioned that they patched Banner Hill and a few other nearby streets, which included the bank. Bill stated Mike has been busy and doesn't have time for small jobs.

CLOSED SESSION

Derek explained that in the closed session, there was a decision made to move eighty hours of Byron Clawson's vacation time to sick time so he could retire sooner.

MOTION: Kenny made a motion to go ahead with what was discussed in the closed session and convert the chief's eighty hours of vacation time into sick leave time. Jamey seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Derek asked about take-home cars. Jamey stated he wanted to discuss take-home vehicles openly and see if there were other options. Jamey explained that the chief and the k-9 officers would keep their vehicles, and this would only affect the other two officers. Jamey pointed out that the vehicles would need more maintenance. Jamey questioned Byron about whether he believed that having take-home cars would result in higher maintenance costs. Byron said he couldn't estimate when the maintenance would occur, but it would happen eventually. Kenny questioned Byron about whether additional money would need to be allocated for the take-home vehicles in the next budget. Byron stated that unless the price of gasoline increased, he didn't think so. Byron said he planned to purchase a used car with the insurance money. Derek stated he would donate the striping kit. Jamey asked if Byron had talked to the driver. Byron announced that he would be attending driving school soon. Jamey stated that the newcomers should get older vehicles. Byron pleaded with the board to let his staff keep their take-home cars. Jamey stated the Chief should have the newest vehicle. Derek noted that the chief's preference was not to have the newest vehicle. Derek asked if the board was trying to resend the take-home vehicles. The answer from Christie was no. Jamey stated he wanted to discuss the non-town employee using employee equipment. Derek stated Carl was teaching Gary. Jamey asked why Carl was hired and if the job was offered to anyone else. Bill stated Mike Nelson was asked but never called back. Jamey questioned why Gary was just now receiving excavator training. Bill said one person claimed they could run it, but it turned out they couldn't, therefore they are currently training a new employee. Bill said he believed Carl would be the most cost-effective for training and the best at teaching how to utilize the equipment. Kenny asked where Carl was from. Bill stated Summerfield. Jamey asked if the town was paying for Carl's hotel. Bill said no. Christie asked when Carl would be done. Bill stated Carl shouldn't be too much longer. Kenny asked where his certification was from. Jamey asked if he was certified to teach. Bill stated Carl is a heavy equipment operator with a federal license. Jamey asked what Carl was paid \$25,000.00 for. Jessica said that applied to a portion of the pond. Jamey talked additionally about RFP. Kenny asked what Carl's hourly rate was. Bill stated sixty dollars per hour. Bill noted he has used Carl before, so Carl is cutting the town a break. Jamey asked if the money was in the budget. Bill stated Carl is withholding some of it until next year. Christie suggested that they set a three-minute time limit for public remarks and hold another round of comments at the end of the

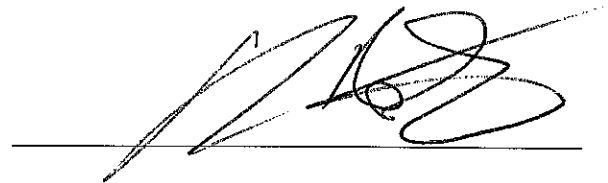
session. Bill said he believed that was covered in the procedure regulations already. Jamey stated that he has enjoyed working with Christie and Kenny and appreciates what they've done for the town. Jamey asked about hiring for public works. Bill said he didn't need anyone until spring. Jamey stated that the board would like to see a list of certifications for all employees in the public works department.

Kenny made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Christie seconded the motion. All agreed by a show of hands and stating aye.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Mackenzie Tipton", written over a horizontal line.

Town Clerk, Mackenzie Tipton

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Derek Roberts", written over a horizontal line.

Mayor, Derek Roberts