

**Minutes
Bristol Select Board
February 6, 2020**

Present: Select Board members: Chair Les Dion, Vice Chair Don Milbrand, Rick Alpers, JP Morrison (arrived late), and Town Administrator Nik Coates.

Absent: Wayne Anderson

Non-Public Session: Mr. Milbrand made motion to enter nonpublic session per RSA 91-A, II (c) (d) and (e) at 5:05 PM. Seconded by Mr. Alpers. Roll call vote taken. 3-0-0 in favor, motion carried. Mr. Morrison arrived at 5:15 PM. Motion made by Mr. Milbrand to leave nonpublic session at 5:50 PM. Seconded by Mr. Alpers. Roll call vote taken. 4-0-0 in favor, motion carried.

Public Session: Chair Dion opened the public meeting at 6:00 PM with Mr. Milbrand leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

Others Present: Raymah Simpson, Town Clerk; Fire Chief Ben LaRoche; Police Chief Jim McIntire; Jeff Chartier, Water & Sewer Superintendent; Paul Bemis, Energy Committee Chair; Tom Kaempfer and his son Jacob; Cheryl Cizewski, Bristol resident.

Meeting Minutes: Mr. Milbrand made a motion to approve the minutes of January 2, 2020 as written. Seconded by Mr. Alpers. There was no discussion. The Board voted 4-0-0 in favor of the motion to approve the minutes.

Consent Agenda: Mr. Milbrand made a motion to approve the consent agenda dated February 6, 2020, to include the items named therein, seconded by Mr. Alpers. No discussion took place. The Board voted 4-0-0 in favor of the motion to approve the consent agenda.

Recognition of Tom Kaempfer for 40 Under 40 Award: Ms. Dion recognized Tom Kaempfer for being a recipient of the Union Leader's 40 Under 40 Award. Mr. Kaempfer serves on the Budget Committee, the Minot-Sleeper Library Board of Trustees and as a Trustee of the Trust Funds. The Select Board expressed their appreciation for Mr. Kaempfer's dedication.

Beach Stickers: Mr. Morrison suggested increasing the price of beach stickers as they are worth more than is being currently charged. Town Clerk, Raymah Simpson agreed the prices should be raised but has already started selling some tickets in 2020. She added that the beach attendants did a great job in 2019 regarding parking issues. Discussion occurred on options for price changes. Mr. Alpers made a motion to increase the Daily Visitor pass from \$10 to \$20 and the Weekly Visitor pass from \$25 to \$50, effective immediately and an increase for the Bristol resident annual pass from \$5 to \$10, effective 1/1/21. Seconded by Mr. Morrison. The Board voted 4-0-0 in favor of the motion. No further discussion occurred.

Primary Election Responsibilities: Raymah Simpson went over where people electioneering can stand with signs. Discussed logistics of Select Board's attendance at the primary election this Tuesday. The Select Board thanked Ms. Simpson for her input.

Public Hearing for the Establishment of a Patriotic, Recreation and Special Events Expendable Trust Fund and Public Hearing for the Establishment of a Solar Purchase Power Agreement Between the Town and BP Bristol, LLC: Chair Dion opened the public hearings at 6:15 PM.

Patriotic, Recreation and Special Events Expendable Trust Fund: Mr. Coates read the articles and explained the difference between an Expendable Trust Fund and a Capital Reserve Fund. One reason for the establishment of this fund is to take any fund surplus at the end of year and roll it over into the next year thus reducing the amount asked for from the taxpayers each year. The Expendable Trust fund will allow the acceptance of donations for fireworks from people from other towns. The Charitable Trust fund already established allows for the acceptance of donations from Bristol residents.

Chair Dion asked for any public comments. Paul Simard stated that he is concerned with transparency and adding another line item to the budget. The Select Board responded that any money in the fund could only be spent on the purposes established. Cheryl Cizewski inquired about the oversight of the funds and that the oversight be written into the article. Mr. Coates reassured her that the Town Treasurer has oversight over the fund and the transactions are included in her yearly Treasurer's report. John Sellers asked why this is coming up now instead of when we were planning for the 2019 Bicentennial celebrations. Ms. Dion responded that a Bicentennial fund was established for the Bicentennial celebrations. The Bicentennial fund is now being closed and this new fund will allow for donations to be earmarked for the purposes established and not be put into general fund.

Water and Sewer Solar Purchase Power Agreement (PPA) Between the Town and BP Bristol: Chair Dion read the associated article. Mr. Coates reported that he spoke with the Town attorney who recommended adding "up to 25 years" regarding the length of the multi-year agreement as the NH Department of Revenue (DRA) requires that the number of years be specified. This will also give more flexibility to negotiate terms. There was a Public Meeting at the Minot-Sleeper Library last week on this article and there is a Q & A fact sheet located on the Energy Committee page of the Town website.

Ms. Dion asked if there were any questions from the public. Paul Simard asked if language could be added to say that the electricity cost will be below current electricity costs. Mr. Coates had talked to Paul Bemis about this who is concerned that this change is not feasible. Mr. Simard said that the payment in lieu of taxes should be clarified before voting on it as well as the payback period of the project. He stated that he calculated that the Library solar project pay-back period is 33 years and wants to be sure that this project will actually save the Town money. Cheryl Cizewski feels that a lot of other options such as hydropower could become available and that 25 years is too long a period of time. Mr. Coates replied that an opt-out clause after six years is included in the contract. Mr. Coates added that Bill Dowey went over the data on the Library solar pay-back period at the meeting last week and would be willing to share it and it shows the payback period is much less than 33 years. One difference between the two solar projects is that the Town purchased solar panels for the Library and on this project the Town does not own or maintain the equipment. Mr. Morrison asked about electric rates and how long the equipment is good for. Mr. Coates replied that Trish Mills who used to work in the solar industry said 30 years or more is the usual life span of a solar array system. Depreciation of the equipment was discussed. Mr. Morrison asked how this project benefits Bristol. Mr. Milbrand responded that the Town would save on transmission fees. Mr. Chartier, Water and Sewer Superintendent said that building the array big enough to supply all of the Town's municipal buildings electricity needs may make it worthwhile. Savings will occur due to transmission charges being significantly reduced due to the electricity being locally produced. John Sellers stated it would be better to own the system and that a solar array is not reliable depending on the number of solar days. Chair Dion asked if there were other public comments. John Sellers stated that he is concerned with the Town buying the equipment at the end of 25 years. Mr. Milbrand suggested downsizing the project to consume all of the energy at the Water and Sewer plant. He added that if the project is sized so we consume all of the electricity then it doesn't cost us anything and we save on transmission fees. John Sellers ended by saying the warrant article needs massaging and more thought. Ms. Cizewski agreed and asked if the Town has spoken to

other towns who have installed solar arrays. Mr. Coates responded that Mr. Chartier and Mr. Bemis went to North Conway and met with the Superintendent of Water and Sewer and that he recommended not oversizing. Ms. Cizewski suggested having someone from one of the towns who have experience with this subject come here for an informational session. Chair Dion asked if there were any other questions. There were no further comments or questions. The Public Hearings were closed at 6:48 PM.

2020 Warrant: Finalization and Voting

Discussion occurred on the 15 Zoning and Planning Articles which will be on the ballot. Mr. Coates went over the remaining articles for Select Board recommendation or non-recommendation. The following motions were made:

Mr. Milbrand made a motion that the Select Board recommend or not recommend the articles on the ballot, seconded by Mr. Alpers. All in favor. The Board voted 4-0-0, motion passed.

Article 16 (Petitioned): Mr. Milbrand motioned that the Select Board recommend Article 16 on whether to change Bristol's form of government to SB2, seconded by Mr. Alpers. The Board voted 1-3-0, motion did not pass.

Article 17 (Petitioned): Discussion occurred on this article to repeal Article 11 as passed at the 2019 Town Meeting regarding the Sewer to Lake Project. Mr. Milbrand motioned to recommend Article 17, seconded by Mr. Alpers. Discussion followed with Mr. Morrison adding that the Town voted to go forward on this project last year. The Select Board voted 0-4-0, motion did not pass.

Article 18: Mr. Milbrand motioned to recommend Article 18, the Solar Purchase Power Agreement, seconded by Mr. Alpers. Discussion followed. The Select Board decided that, even though Mr. Bemis has put in a lot of work and been extremely helpful, more work should be done before this can be put on the warrant. More time is needed to look into other options as well. Mr. Alpers recommended waiting a year. Mr. Milbrand rescinded his motion. Further discussion followed. Articles 18 and 19 were taken off of the warrant.

Article 20: Removal of article to design new Central Street Pump Station since it was previously approved.

Article 21: Article for a Solar Tax Exemption was removed for more study.

Article 22: Was not discussed as the Select Board doesn't vote on the operating budget warrant article until after the Budget Committee votes on the operating budget.

Article 23: Mr. Alpers motioned to recommend Article 23, to establish a contingency fund for unanticipated expenses that may arise and appropriate \$25,000 from unreserved fund balance to be put in the fund. Mr. Milbrand seconded, the Select Board voted 4-0-0, motion passed.

Article 24: Mr. Alpers motioned to recommend this article to raise \$100,000 for architectural and engineering studies for a future public safety building. The sum to come from the unreserved fund balance. Mr. Milbrand seconded. Discussion followed. Mr. Morrison said it would be good to wait a year. Mr. Milbrand and Mr. Alpers were of an opinion that now is a good time because other long-term debts will be paid off first. Chair Dion understands that there is concern that this project is too soon after the new town office project, though the Board was aware then that the needs of the Fire and Police Departments weren't being addressed. Mr. Alpers stated that blending the departments with

shared space saves money in the long run. Mr. Milbrand added that funds would come from the unreserved fund balance, therefore no taxation would occur. Chair Dion said that she supports keeping this article in the warrant because she feels the Town should be able to vote on it. The Select Board voted 3-1-0, motion passed.

Article 26: Mr. Alpers recommend this article to add \$44,000 to the Police Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund. Mr. Milbrand seconded. Mr. Morrison asked about police vehicle expenditures in 2019. Mr. Milbrand reported that the Police Department does not need to buy a cruiser currently and that there is \$6,000 in the fund now. This article would allow there to be \$50,000 in the fund to be used when they do need a cruiser. Mr. Morrison asked if all of the proposed articles passed how it would affect the tax rate. A report provided by Finance Director, Mr. Blanchette, shows that the operating budget will come out to be \$8.63 per thousand and if all the proposed articles were approved (including the ones taken off of the warrant at this meeting) the tax rate will go up to 9.99 per thousand (an increase of \$1.36 from last year). This article alone would add .07 to the tax rate. Further discussion took place. The Select Board voted 4-0-0, motion passed.

Article 27: Mr. Alpers made a motion to recommend the article for the first year's payment (\$15,000) of purchasing two defibrillators for the Fire Department. Mr. Morrison asked why this would not be part of the Fire Department's operating budget. Mr. Coates answered because this is not a recurring expense. Further discussion followed. The Board voted 3-1-0, the article passed.

Article 28: Article to purchase a trailer mounted message board to be partially funded from a 50% grant. Mr. Milbrand would like to see a purchase such as this to be a part of the CIP plan and questioned whether to keep it on the warrant. The Board decided to take this article off of the warrant.

Article 29: Mr. Alpers recommended taking this article to construct a sand shed at the Highway Department off of the warrant. The Board agreed and recommended that this project should be planned ahead of time in the future through the CIP process.

Article 30: Mr. Milbrand recommends changing the language in this article to renovate the bathroom and second floor facilities at the Highway Department garage in the following way. He suggested taking \$20,000 from taxation and \$25,200 from the unreserved fund balance which would result in less taxation. Mr. Alpers was not comfortable taking the funds out of the unreserved fund balance. Mr. Alpers motioned to recommend Article 30 as written, Mr. Milbrand seconded. The Select Board voted 4-0-0, motion passed.

Article 31: Article for elevator, emergency backup generator, and office furniture for the Town Office building to be partially funded by grant monies. Mr. Alpers said that the elevator should stay on the article as the residents of Bristol expected an elevator to be a part of the new Town Office. Mr. Milbrand asked if it was possible to apply for a grant for only the elevator. Mr. Coates answered that it was possible. Discussion followed. Mr. Alpers made a motion to reword Article 31 to include only the elevator. Mr. Milbrand seconded. The Select Board voted 4-0-0, motion passed.

Article 32: Article to raise \$14,000 for the Fourth of July fireworks display. The Select Board considered taking the article off of the warrant and having the funds go into the potential expendable trust fund being established if Article 33 is passed. It was decided to have the firework article stand alone. Mr. Milbrand made a motion to approve Article 32, seconded by Mr. Alpers. The Select Board voted 4-0-0, motion passed.

Article 33: Article to establish a Patriotic, Recreation and Special Events Expendable Trust fund. Mr. Milbrand made a motion to approve Article 32, seconded by Mr. Alpers. The Select Board voted 4-0-0, motion passed. Mr. Alpers made a motion to change the amount to be raised for the expendable trust fund to \$1,000, Mr. Milbrand seconded. There was no further discussion. The Select Board voted 4-0-0, motion passed.

Article 34: Mr. Milbrand made a motion to recommend raising \$240,000 to be added to the Capital Reserve Funds (Accrued Wages, Assessment Reval, Fire Department Fire Engine, Highway Equipment, and Town Building Maintenance), seconded by Mr. Alpers. Mr. Coates conveyed that Mr. Blanchette said the amount for accrued wages could be halved if it was necessary to reduce. The Board decided not to half the amount as there are a number of employees who will be retiring in the near future. The Select Board voted 4-0-0, motion passed.

Select Board Items: Mr. Morrison asked if it was possible to get a master key for the Town Office. He was told that it was not.

Mr. Alpers went over the tax rate and how the revaluation will increase revenue. The valuation at the moment is 89% ratio, i.e. assessed rates are lower than current market rates.

Public Comments: None

Non-Public Session: Mr. Alpers made motion to enter nonpublic session per RSA 91-A, II (e) at 7:50 PM. Seconded by Mr. Alpers. Roll call vote taken. 4-0-0 in favor, motion carried. Motion made by Mr. Alpers to leave nonpublic session at 8:05 PM. Seconded by Mr. Milbrand. Roll call vote taken. 4-0-0 in favor, motion carried.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Mr. Alpers, seconded by Mr. Milbrand. 4-0-0 in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Smith