

**TOWN OF BEDFORD
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
September 23, 2020
10 Meetinghouse Road**

1. ROLL CALL: A meeting of the Bedford Town Council was held on Wednesday, September 23, 2020, 10 Meetinghouse Road. Participating were Dave Gilbert (Chair) and Councilors Phil Greazzo, Bill Duschatko, Melissa Stevens, Bill Carter and Lori Radke. Also participating virtually was Town Manager Rick Sawyer.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Councilor Duschatko.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.

4. NEW BUSINESS

a. Bedford Cares Proclamation

Councilor Ricciardi read the proclamation:

TOWN OF BEDFORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Bedford Cares is an amazing 100-volunteer program serving the community of Bedford since the start of the COVID pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Bedford Cares does grocery shopping/delivery, prescription pickup/delivery, and anything that is needed for those who are immune compromised, elderly or those who fear going out because of the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, There have been hundreds of calls for those requesting the services that Bedford Cares provides and hundreds of hours that have been put in by the volunteers; and

WHEREAS, Although all of the volunteers are greatly appreciated, there are four individuals who have been shopping every week through the pandemic and continue to shop for those who request it; and

WHEREAS, Nancy Cronin, Lauren Welk, Tina Caruana, and Susan Labrie continue to put in many hours servicing the community through Bedford Cares; and

THEREFORE, be it declared that we, the Bedford Town Council, do hereby recognize Nancy Cronin, Lauren Welk, Tina Caruana, and Susan Labrie for their outstanding efforts and community service for the residents of Bedford on behalf of Bedford Cares.

*PROCLAIMED BY THE BEDFORD, NH TOWN COUNCIL
THIS 23rd DAY OF September 2020*

b. Children’s Environmental Health Day – October 8, 2020

Councilor Ricciardi explained that three years ago she wrote a proclamation for an environmental health day for the children in the State and Governor Sununu has graciously signed it each and every year. She wanted to recognize that October 8, 2020 is the day in New Hampshire. She reminded everyone to mention to their children anything health related.

c. Approval of 2021 Town Council Meeting Dates

Councilor Stevens stated that typically they will change the date of the February and April meetings if they coincide with school break weeks and both of those dates do. She's not sure if anybody is going anywhere, but wanted to bring it up in case they wanted to change those dates. The Councilors decided to wait and see how many would be away on those dates as they get closer.

MOTION by Councilor Radke that the Bedford Town Council approve the Town Council 2021 meeting dates as listed. Seconded by Councilor Duschatko. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.

d. CIP Update

Mr. Sawyer explained that to be included in the CIP, the project or equipment needs to be valued at \$25k or more and have an extended life span of three years or more. The Plan is put forth in accordance with RSA 674 and the Town Charter. The Charter requires that the Plan be submitted to the Town Council one month prior to the budget submission, which is required to be at the end of October. The Plan is also submitted to the Planning Board for their review and comment, especially on the project rankings. The rankings are his proposal to the Council, but the rankings of projects can change and have no impact when the project is actually done. The rankings and the entire Plan remain flexible all the way through the budget process until the Budgetary Town Meeting in March. The total CIP for the 10 years is \$88.6 million as it is currently proposed and about \$9 million in 2021 with \$5.4 million of that being just dedicated to debt service for the local roads program. \$1.2 million was added to debt service in 2021, because of the 3rd and final road bond installment that they sold at the beginning of this calendar year. It also includes a bond for facilities in 2021, which is intended to pay for the design and construction of the 1st phase of their yet to be finalized facilities plan. He noted that the facilities portion of the Plan is the most subject to change as they continue forward with the budget and decision-making process. The Plan proposes the next phase of facilities construction to be bonded in 2025 or after, after two of the local road bonds have been paid off and after they have moved a long-term plan of getting local road maintenance to \$2m in 2024, so they would be maintaining the roads rather than rebuilding them. The remaining recreation plan improvements are shown to be completed over time by saving \$125k a year in completing improvements every two to three years. Included in the CIP for 2021 is a replacement of the ladder truck, the purchase of a rapid response vehicle or squad

for the Fire Department as a shift in the manner of how they respond to high level medical calls, which he looks forward to discussing with the Council, two six-wheeled dump trucks, a one-ton dump truck, a roadside tractor, a compressor, a Town valuation update next year, an impact fee update, and new voting machines. The Plan is flexible all the way through the Town Meeting in March as it is part of the budget. There is no action for the Council. It's just a handoff for the Council to start reviewing it in advance of the upcoming budget discussions.

Councilor Duschatko wanted to know out of the total \$80m, how much of that was debt service. Mr. Sawyer didn't have the number, but stated that it was at least half.

e. Other New Business – None.

5. OLD BUSINESS

a. Other Old Business – None.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Public Session – August 12, 2020

MOTION by Councilor Duschatko that the Bedford Town Council approve the minutes of the August 12, 2020 public session as posted. Seconded by Councilor Carter. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.

7. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

- 1) COVID-19 Pandemic Update – Bedford has seen a great reduction in the number cases with only 5 current COVID-19 positive patients. I strongly encourage all residents to follow the CDC and State of NH recommendations for protecting yourself including wearing a face covering and washing hands as often as possible. He noted that the Town submitted for their full allotment of GOFER funds, which is \$543k. They are encouraged that they will be able to receive all of those funds.
- 2) Drought – Bedford and 72% of NH is now in the condition defined as “Severe Drought” with the rest of the state being “abnormally dry”. We are aware of Bedford residents having water supply problems and I would encourage all residents to implement water conservation measures now like only watering vegetable garden crops. Merrimack Village Water District has implemented an outdoor watering ban which impacts those in Greenfield Farms, Cabot Preserve, Jenkins Road, and the Brick Mill Road area who receive their water from Merrimack through Pennichuck Water Works.
- 3) 2020 Census – Bedford is in a tie for 5th place with a response rate of 84%. Please complete the Census by going to <https://my2020census.gov/>.
- 4) The Fire Department Open House and the Citizens Police Academy unfortunately have been cancelled for 2020 but should be able to take place next year.

- 5) October 12th – Columbus Day, The Library will be closed to the public for staff training, all other facilities will open. The Transfer Station will be closed as typical on Mondays.
- 6) October 31st - Trick or Treating will be on Saturday, time to be announced.
- 7) November 3rd – Federal and State Election, 7 AM- 7 PM, Bedford High School
- 8) The State Primary Election on September 8th had 5,873 votes cast representing 31.8% of our 18,450 registered voters. 103 people registered to vote on the day of the election and hundreds more in the weeks just prior to the election. Republican votes were: 2,403 at the polls and 863 absentee. Democratic Votes were: 1,046 at the polls and 1,563 absentee. Any resident who has any concerns with voting in person at the November 3rd Federal and State election due to COVID-19 are encouraged to vote absentee and instructions are available on the Town Clerk's website at: <https://nh-bedford.civicplus.com/491/Election-Information>
- 9) Political signs are not permitted on Town property or any traffic island.

Councilor Radke wanted to know why staff had recommended to change the hours. Mr. Sawyer stated that they were trying to get some added safety for spacing, social distancing, especially for the little kids and to try and get some daylight hours in for the younger group.

7. COUNCILOR COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

Councilor Carter mentioned that at the Conservation Commission meeting last night and the main part of the meeting was with Ron Klemarczyk, the forester that they have hired to put together the Pulpit Rock Forest Stewardship Plan. The finalization of that plan was voted on last night. He mentioned that a lot of people are walking on the Bedford roads and a lot of wildlife and asked everyone to be aware of that and keep the speed down.

Councilor Radke stated that there was an Energy Commission meeting tomorrow night and that member Sarah Braese had resigned. She had been charged with looking into the Town joining SolSmart and she had a phone meeting set up with the program manager from the National League of Cities next Thursday, 1-2 PM. She mentioned some red-lined Charter amendments that she had passed out to the Council. In July, the subcommittee consisting of Councilor Ricciardi, Councilor Stevens and herself met to talk about some proposed amendments for the Charter. If any of them have any other amendments, let them know. The next step would be giving the amendments to the Attorney General, Secretary of State, and another organization that needs to see them before they go forward to be voted on in March. After reading the Police report, she was excited to learn that they hired Officer Ryan Wobrock who happened to work in her hometown of Cromwell, CT. She congratulated Councilor Ricciardi on Bedford Cares and all of her hard work in getting that up and going.

Councilor Duschatko stated that at the Planning Board meeting last Monday, they declined the waiver application made by Encore for 200 market rate apartment units. They expect further actions by the developer. There are some other developments coming that deal with housing that will be dealt with over the next month. The length of the hearing on the Market & Main proposal was such that a number of different proposals and

applications were not heard. They have all been rescheduled. The Telecommunications Committee has not met, because the way they are interpreting the NH statutes, there isn't much they can do in terms of looking at developing a municipally sponsored internet fiber service. They are in the process of making requests from the various providers to send information about their coverage area or lack of coverage area. It's a 60-day process and they can't do much until they get some answers back from them.

Councilor Stevens thought that everyone that was involved with the Primary did a fantastic job. She knows a lot of work went into it and that they are talking about what they can do to move forward with the election in November.

Councilor Greazzo was glad to see things getting back to normal and happy they could be meeting in person.

Chairman Gilbert stated that there was a meeting last week concerning how the voting went and looking forward to what's coming up. With the numbers they expect they are going to have to staff up. If anyone is interested in working the election, please go to the website under Town Clerk, and the information is there. Mr. Sawyer added that they could email the Town Clerk and they will get in touch with you.

8. NON-PUBLIC – RSA 91-A:3 II (d)

MOTION by Councilor Carter to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interest are adverse to those of the general community. Seconded by Councilor Duschatko.

Roll Call Vote: Carter-aye, Radke-aye, Ricciardi-aye, Duschatko-aye, Stevens-aye, Greazzo-aye, Gilbert-aye. Motion passed 7-0.

Public Session ended at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Boufford