**Minutes**

**Bristol Summer Town Meeting**

**August 10, 2019**

**Open:** Ned Gordon, Town Moderator opened the Summer Town Meeting at 9:00 AM with Police Chief McIntire leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Introduction:** Select Board Vice Chair, Don Milbrand introduced fellow Select Board members, Wayne Anderson and Rick Alpers.

**Bicentennial Celebration Update:** Janet Cote, Bicentennial Committee Chair gave an update on the many events the Town has enjoyed for it’s Bicentennial and informed the public of the upcoming events happening the rest of the year.

**Legislative Update:** Ned Gordon, State Representative gave a legislative update on the state happenings this year. As a member of the NH House of Representatives, Mr. Gordon gave an informative view of NH’s political climate. He updated the public on various bills which were passed or vetoed this year. He closed by saying Maude Ferguson of Bristol was honored at the last session of the Senate.

**Department Head Update:**

**Assessing/Land Use:** Assessing Manager Christina Goodwin gave an update on this year’s assessing activities. Requests for Proposals were sent out for assessing firms and the Town received three bids. It was decided to stay with our current assessors, Commerford Nieder Perkins, LLC. The Select Board voted to move up the revaluation process and changes in values will take place next year.

The staff has been busy preparing for the upcoming move to 5 School Street in October. Ms. Goodwin requested that the public give a 24-hour notice for property file requests as they are in the process of being digitized.

The Town Planner, Tyler Simonds is now on-board full time and is a great addition to the team. He has done an analysis of the Community Opinions Survey which is on the Town website. He will use this information in the updating process of the Vision and Land Use sections of the Master Plan.

Ms. Goodwin added that Land Use case-loads have doubled from 2017-2018. Eighty Land Use permits have been issued so far this year. The Town was awarded a grant to develop an Economic Development Plan. The various Land Use Boards are now full, but a few could use alternatives.

**Finance Department:** Finance Director Bob Blanchette informed the public that the Town of Bristol is in great financial shape with over a million dollars in the Fund Balance. Finance documents can be found on the Towns new website. Mr. Blanchette has worked with Town Treasurer Kathleen Haskell in reviewing investments and securing better interest rates along with increasing the security of our online banking processes.

A new audit firm was chosen from a group of bidders, saving the Town $5,000 from our previous audit firm. The Water & Sewer Department and Clerk/Tax Collector Office now accept credit cards online and in their offices.

**Fire Department:** Fire ChiefBen LaRoche spoke on the happenings at the Fire Department. There have been 1,291 incidents for 2019 so far, up 20 calls from last year at this time. On July 1st, Call Fire Fighter Jamie Moulton was hired full time and former intern, Cyle Moore was hired as a Fire Fighter/AEMT. Rachel LaCasse will be leaving her Administrative Assistant position but will stay on as a Call Fire Fighter.

The new fire truck is in service and is working out well. Architectural studies were conducted on expanding the Fire Station bay and administration office areas. The Fire Department will be working with the Select Board on its space needs. Forms and inspection requests as well as other information can be found on the Fire Department page of the Town’s website.

Mr. LaRoche was asked how many incidents were drug-related. He estimated that this year 12-24 calls were overdose related, approximately 2% of the call volume.

**Highway Department:** Highway Superintendent Mark Bucklin gave an update on the Highway Department projects. The department is now fully staffed, having been short two employees since April. Central Street has been paved and paving on other streets will continue. Approximately twelve parking spots have been added to the downtown area. Other projects happening this fall include drainage improvements, Pemi Trail, and Mill Stream.

The new Transfer Station has been opened and a new attendant has been hired. Mr. Bucklin closed by thanking the Garden Club and Decorating Committee for all their great work this summer.

**Library:** Library Director Brittany Overton opened by thanking Ned Gordan for his comprehensive legislative update. She also recognized her staff, the Library Trustees, Friends of the Library and the community. She announced the full time hiring of Paula McKinlay as the Youth Services Librarian and Assistant Director.

The Library has been working with the Board of Trustees on a Strategic Plan which will be launched at a kick off event at the Library on September 26th at 6:30 PM. She then spoke on various programs being held this fall and winter. The Children/Teen rooms continue to be utilized and are a safe space for our youth. Residents receive technological assistance and are utilizing downloadable books on a daily basis. Approximately thirty thousand people will visit the library this year.

**Police Department:** Police Chief James McIntire started out by saying that enforcement numbers have gone up from last year; arrests by 29, incidents by 110, restraining orders by 11, parking tickets by 34, arrest warrants by 8, and accidents by 5. There have been 12 DWI arrests and 1 homicide. Motor vehicle stops are down due to being down a police officer. The K9 was deployed 10 times.

Chief McIntire went over the drug abuse situation in Bristol. Meth is on the rise with heroin use decreasing slightly. Last year had 18 overdoses, 4 of which were fatalities. This year there has been no overdose fatalities.

The department was active with various community events including Stand Up Newfound, Bicentennial events, 4th of July parade and fireworks, Swim with a Mission. They are working with the school system on active shooter training. Officer Van Tassel has been put on the regional SWAT team. The Chief ended by announcing the hiring of Administrative Assistant, Kirsten Marsh. Chief McIntire addressed questions from the public regarding speeding and youth jumping off the bridge. The department continues to address these issues. He was asked on detail activity and responded that it has been busy with outside agencies assisting and our department assisting other agencies. One member of the public expressed concern on people going through the Cedar Street stop sign. Chief McIntire responded that the Police Department will look into that and to not hesitate to call the department whenever there are any concerns.

**Town Clerk/Tax Collector:** Town Clerk/Tax Collector Raymah Simpson was on vacation at the time of the meeting. Mr. Milbrand reiterated that Town Clerk and Tax Collector office now accepts credit/debit card payments both online and at the office.

**Water & Sewer Department:** Water & Sewer Superintendent Jeff Chartier gave an update on the Water & Sewer Department. The department has flushed 160 hydrants, 4 of which will need to be replaced. Mayhew Island has been connected to the Town water system. The Sewer to Lake and solar projects will be discussed more in depth with the Select Board. The department now accepts credit/debit cards at the office and will soon be accepting them online. The online component will also include features such as changing addresses and account history.

**Town Administrator Update:** Town Administrator Nik Coates spoke on the following projects:

* Town Office Project-Mr. Coates thanked the voters for approving the purchase of 5 School Street for the location of our new Town Office Building. The project is on time and on budget, with the anticipated open date of October 24, 2019. The week prior (10/16-10/23), the Town Offices will be closed in order to move and set up. He asked the public to plan accordingly for business conducted at the Town Clerk/Tax Collectors Office, Land Use, Finance and Administration.
* Transfer Station-The new Transfer Station was opened this year and the burn pile will be kept in the lower section for now. The station did have to be closed early a couple of times due to being filled to capacity. This was due largely because we are no longer recycling (except for glass) which significantly adds to the waste stream. Economical options are being explored by the Select Board to bring back recycling.
* Beaches-Mr. Coates thanked the Police Department for their assistance in enforcing parking rules this year. The beach attendants were great this year, along with the Highway Department who assisted them in cleaning up debris on the beaches. The attendants are now able to take credit/debit card payments for beach passes at the beaches.
* Downtown parking-The Town is trying to maximize the space available downtown for parking as opposed to buying land for parking. We are in the process of working with a business owner to utilize some of their parking. Signage has been ordered as well.
* Park and Beach Improvements-The stone wall at Cummings Beach has been redone. The drainage swale is being worked on currently and the stairs will be improved this fall. Signs have been added at Mill Stream Park. Other improvements are in the works.
* Fiber Optic project-This project is in the design phase and should be done next year. Permission from pole owners is needed to proceed, and they have a year to respond.
* Cell Tower project-A proposal for a cell tower has been submitted to the Town for an AT&T tower. This tower would give priority to emergency responder communication. The next hearing for will be on August 14th at the Town Hall at 7:00 PM.
* Water & Sewer Solar project-The Energy Committee has put out an RFP and has received responses from nine companies for a solar array at the Water & Sewer Department.
* Sewer to Lake project-The voter’s approved extending sewer to the lake area pending a match of $10 million dollars of grant and loans. Upon meeting this restriction, further steps will be taken. If funding becomes available, the project would take three to four years to complete.

Mr. Coates took questions from the public and was asked about invasive plants growing in the water at Avery Crouse Beach. Mr. Coates will have the beach attendants take a look at this and will contact the Newfound Lakes Region Association. He was also asked about the quality of the lake and recommended the resident attend the DES Lake Water Level meeting at the Bridgewater Town Hall on August 30, 2019 at 7:00 PM.

The pros and cons of recycling cardboard and the specifics of doing so were discussed. The Select Board feels that recycling is the right thing to do and has looked into regionalization and other ways of making recycling happen. Bristol is recycling glass at the moment and hopes to expand in the future.

Discussion occurred on the Sewer to Lake project and the water quality of Newfound Lake. More information on the project can be found on the Town website. The Select Board is currently waiting to hear on whether or not the USDA will be providing significant funding for this project. There was concern with the water quality of the lake by some residents and the Board encouraged them to contact their state representatives on funding the DES and other environmental programs. The next potential steps of the Sewer to Lake project was discussed.

**Public Comments:** A resident in the audience commented on all the wonderful work the committees in Bristol do.

**Adjourn:** Mr. Milbrand thanked the staff and the residents for coming out on a Saturday and adjourned the meeting at 12:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Smith