

Beacon Falls Ordinance Review Committee  
10 Maple Avenue  
Beacon Falls, CT 06403



BEACON FALLS ORDINANCE REVIEW COMMITTEE  
Monthly Meeting  
October 27, 2020  
MINUTES  
(Subject to Revision)

1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

Rich Minnick called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Rich Minnick, Tom Pratt, Don Molleur, Kyle Brennan

**Others Present:** none

2. Read & Approval Minutes from Previous Meetings

This was the first official meeting of the committee so there were no previous meeting minutes to review.

3. Comments from the Public

None received.

4. Discussion on Procedures to Update/Modify Existing Ordinances

- RM: Moving forward for legal requirements, will be publishing agendas and meeting minutes from this meeting forward
- **DM: Motion to appoint Rich Minnick as committee chairperson, seconded by TP, unanimous.**
- RM: Moving forward will hold meetings at the Senior Center
- RM: Need to set a proposed meeting schedule for 2021. Discussed written proposal
- TP: One change — move June 15 meeting to June 8 due to Board of Finance meeting
- **TP: Motion to pass meeting schedule as amended, seconded by DM, unanimous.**
- RM: The committee has received copies of the proposed reformatted ordinances from General Code E360 as a result of a grant in September 2018 that was discussed but never brought up for a town meeting
- DM: As I'm creating some of my proposed changes, I'm handwriting notes before we start rewriting the entire ordinance.
- RM: Would be great to get a digital version of the September 2018 proposal to make easier edits and additions. We currently have digital access we have no ability to modify it to make changes as of yet.
- DM: Until then, keeping separate notes makes the most sense.
- TP passed out document listing all fee amounts currently on file with the Finance Department
- TP: This was created by an intern in the Finance Department last year and includes Beacon Falls' current fees with a comparison between Beacon Falls, Seymour, Trumbull, and Oxford when it comes to fire marshal, police, planning and zoning, sewer, DPW—although it's incomplete, it's a good starting point for us.

- TP discussed research of blight and nuisance ordinances—looked at Naugatuck, Prospect, Seymour, and Plymouth. Suggested we take a close look at Naugatuck due to its thoroughness and was recommended by others to consider looking at Coventry's ordinances due to similarity in town size and function
- RM: This is a positive start. We will obviously have to make modifications as necessary to suit our town.
- TP: Anything in Naugatuck's ordinances that called out state statutes, I had to check to make sure the reference is still active.
- DM: I did the same in my research.
- KB: If our goal is to include some of the legal and formatting changes to the ordinance as drafted by General Code E360, then we're going to basically be proposing a complete replacement of all the town's ordinances, even if they're minor changes?
- RM: Yes, that's what Gerry Smith basically wants.
- DM: This will eventually have to be presented at a series of town meetings.
- TP: I think it makes sense for us to do three, four, five at a time, and then turn them over to the town to get the process going toward adopting them.
- KB: I worked with the deputy fire marshal in the spring regarding an updated open-burning ordinance. I have a copy of that proposal, which has not yet been sent to the selectmen or any other review, that I will share with the committee in the future. Essentially it's an update and expansion of the existing open-burning ordinance, which was vague and at times difficult to enforce. This was written at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic so it hasn't made any progress recently, but I will follow up with the fire marshal's office.
- RM: What I've done with conservation commission and wetlands commission, I've printed sections from other towns and annotated them of things that I'd like to see included in the changes. I'd like to be able to give something to Gerry and the other boards something that they can easily read eventually.
- DM: I took a look at planning and zoning ordinances versus state statutes, and then compared to other towns. There don't need to be many dramatic changes, but changing the fee structure will have a major impact. Nowhere in our current ordinances specify anything about court costs, for example. I don't think our current fee structure is that bad, but we're missing a lot. I compared Beacon Falls, Bethany, and Oxford. Oxford's fee structure is impressive. What I wanted to go through in my first pass was to get the language straightened out in each section. I figured we would spend a few nights together doing all of the fees later on.
- RM: I'm with you on that.
- TP: On the Board of Finance, we have a Finance Manual. One thing we were missing was the state statute — 2016 was the last update, and we just included the state statute in the latest revision because one member of our board brought it up at a meeting. My point is that if you know there's something missing as a member, you should point it out to us.
- RM: I started some research on the stormwater section, and I think we're OK on that right now. Larry from Nafis and Young did a great job on that when he worked on those. I don't see many changes needed on that. I see some controversy there if we keep it the same, and the wetlands commission needs to enforce it. There are two sections –stormwater management and illicit discharge. The fines were lowered so much, that the COG said it would be almost impossible to enforce.
- KB: Fees and fines are the major priority of revising these ordinances, correct? That was my impression since they are probably the most outdated. And fees would probably be more widely used than fines because fines are inconsistently enforced.
- RM: Are you saying that we should focus on fees and fines first, then do language later?
- KB: No, I think we might as well do them at the same time so when we submit a final proposal it's completely updated and we don't have to do the process twice.
- DM: Absolutely. And let's think about which sections carry the most fees and fines? Fire marshal, P&Z, stormwater, building, etc.

- TP: We need to make sure whatever is passed in the new ordinances, things are going to be enforced. Who is going to enforce these provisions and fines? Enforcement officers? Police officers?
- DM: I think no matter what we put together, the selectmen are going to suggest their own changes. Once we complete our proposals, they own it.
- TP: Talking about enforcement—we need to address the verbiage that refers to police officers as constables. We need to figure out whether that's still the case or whether that needs to be updated.

#### 5. Dates for Future Meetings

- RM: At our next meeting, we should have some items ready for discussion on conservation, inland wetlands, stormwater management, and illicit discharge.
- TP: Don, how close are you to being ready to present something on P&Z?
- DM: I'm going to have to start typing these things up for P&Z.
- TP: I will get in touch with Town Hall to get access to the digital copies of the September 2018 draft of proposed ordinance changes because that will be a great document for us to work from.
- DM: I see a lot of things in our current ordinances that can just be deleted — there are some very old or redundant items in some of these ordinances that can make these a lot more concise.
- RM: I saw the same thing in my research.
- TP: I will have something ready on blight, and Kyle, can you have fire marshal and noise?
- KB: Yes, hopefully.
- TP: Let's set our next meeting for November 17.

#### 6. Adjournment

- **DM: Motion to adjourn at 8:12 p.m., seconded by TP, unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Kyle Brennan*

Ordinance Review Committee clerk and member



**TOWN OF BEACON FALLS  
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
C/O TOWN HALL  
10 MAPLE AVE.  
BEACON FALLS, CT. 06403**

November 27, 2020

**Town Clerk - Leonard C. Greene**  
C/O Town Hall 10 Maple Avenue  
Beacon Falls, CT 06403

Dear Mr. Greene,

Please be advised that the **Town of Beacon Falls Ordinance Committee** has scheduled their **monthly meetings** for 2021. To be held the 3<sup>rd</sup> third Tuesday of each month at **7:00 PM to be held in the Beacon Falls Senior Center 57 North Main Street, Beacon Falls, 06403.**

The meeting dates may change due to holidays. If any meetings are cancelled, or relocated, proper notice will be posted with the Town Clerk. Special Meetings will be scheduled, as necessary.

January 19<sup>th</sup>  
February 16<sup>th</sup>  
March 16<sup>th</sup>  
April 20<sup>th</sup>  
May 18<sup>th</sup>  
~~June 15<sup>th</sup>~~ June 8<sup>th</sup> (as amended)  
July 20<sup>th</sup>  
August 17<sup>th</sup>  
September 21<sup>st</sup>  
October 19<sup>th</sup>  
November 16<sup>th</sup>  
December 21<sup>st</sup>

Respectfully submitted,

*Richard Minnick – Chairman*