

**Beacon Falls Board of Selectmen
10 Maple Avenue
Beacon Falls, CT 06403**



**BEACON FALLS BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Monthly Meeting
July 12, 2021
MINUTES
(Subject to Revision)**

1. Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

Selectman Gerard Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

Members Present: Gerard Smith (GS), Mike Krenesky (MK), Chris Bielik (CB)

Others Present: Jack Betkoski (JB), Ed Mulvhill (EM), 13 members of the public.

GS – motion to move agenda item #5 EDC Acknowledgements to agenda item #2, MK/CB, all ayes.

- 2. EDC Acknowledgements – JB –** I am Jack Betkoski of the EDC and here with us is Ed Mulvhill from EDC and First Selectman. A while back the EDC said we have had wonderful businesses in Beacon Falls and we thought that we should recognize them for all they have contributed to the town over the years. Pete Smith, Gabe Fuco, Ray Shea and Charlie and Gene Lee. Everyone has stories to tell about the establishments. All great people and we just want to thank them for their years of service and wish them well on behalf of the Town of Beacon Falls. GS – I echo Jack's sentiments about the businesses. I have known you all for many years. It has been a pleasure doing business with you and to get to know you and recognize you. I consider it an honor and privilege.

3. Read & Approval Minutes from Previous Meetings

Motion made to approve Minutes from BOS Monthly Meeting held on 06.14.2021 and the BOS Special Meetings held on 6.21.2021 & 7.1.2021, MK/CB, all ayes.

- 4. Budget Transfers – GS –** Transfers are pretty routine. One is for \$2,350 for the lighting at the Fire House and the snow removal materials for \$16,985. There were two invoices that got delivered late so that line item was short. CB – that is because we transferred everything out because we did not think we needed it.

Motion made to approve transfers as presented and forward to the BOF, CB/MK, all ayes.

5. Comments from the Public

Gary Komarowsky – 15 Second Street – I am here to raise a counterpoint regarding the Thursday article in Citizen's News regarding Medical & Recreational Marijuana in the Town of Beacon Falls. Frankly, in writing an ordinance to exclude recreational or medical marijuana the town is making a mistake. These are legal products and not a burden on the Town so far as the Police Department has their own security. You must account for everything. This is not like throwing seeds on Jim Weeds farm and letting it grow. You have to keep accurate records. However, EDC has been trying to bring in a good taxable entity to Town and this is a just that entity. You should speak with the Assessor and find out what

kind of generation this would actual produce. We do not have the real estate to put in a big box store. This could be a small, confined cash producing entity and would be taxed accordingly. Please give this consideration.

6. Resident Trooper/Police Report

Motion to approve Resident Trooper Report as presented – no report this month. GS – We are influx and should be hearing from the State about our new Trooper tomorrow.

7. Wastewater Treatment Plant Report.

Motion to approve Wastewater Treatment Plant report as presented – MK/CB, all ayes.

GS – Dave Prickett is no longer the engineer. We had major issues regarding communication. It was a hard decision, but we had to make a change. We moved to our regular engineers, SLR for this service and we have moved many steps ahead already.

8. Report of Public Works

Motion to approve Public Works report as presented, MK/CB, all ayes.

MK – any challenges with this recent storm? GS – not really but we did close the fields and we were getting feedback that we were the only town that closed the fields. The baseball teams were upset so I think moving forward we need to consider the projected forecast. When the Park & Rec and the Public Works close, we should take in consideration what the fields look like. The good news is that Robert Cole won all three games and now they are in the finals for the tournament, so the home field advantage was not as crucial. CB – that is always a tricky situation because if you do not cancel and something bad happens, its weighing, so erring on the side of safety or pressing forward and rolling the dice. You will not make everyone happy sometimes. I am fine with erring on the side of caution. GS – I rather let them play. The only downside and why we do not close them is for damage to the field. CB – individuals can get injured on messy fields. It is very easy to break ankles and twist ligaments on sloppy conditions. GS – I would still advocate to let the kids play.

9. Report of the Fire Marshal

Motion to approve the report for the Fire Marshal as presented – MK/CB, all ayes.

GS – a lot of blasting and there is a lot going on in Alliance Circle. We just renewed the permit. I hope the plan that they show for a site comes through. It is a large-scale project.

10. Report of the Finance Manager

Motion to approve and forward to BOF for discussion at monthly meeting – CB/MK, all ayes.

11. Report of the Tax Collector

Motion to approve and forward to BOF for discussion at monthly meeting – MK/CB, all ayes.

12. Report of the Town Treasurer

Motion to approve and forward to BOF for discussion at monthly meeting – MK/CB, all ayes.

13. Report of the Town Clerk

Motion to approve and forward to BOF for discussion at monthly meeting – CB/MK, all ayes.

MK – it was a better month and I hope that is not just because of dog licenses.

14. Report from Economic Development – GS – we do not have an official report but is there

anything that you would like to share Jack? JB – What we are continuing to do is to wait to possibly have dialogue if we will become part of Naugatuck Valley Regional Project. There is money available to become apart of that. It is more cost effective to do this, and I believe there will be a meeting held soon. GS – I think this group would be a great asset to us. Have you met with Savannah-Nicole from the NVCOG yet? JB – not yet, but I did speak with her. GS – I think they will really help us broaden our horizons in positive directions.

15. Report of the Library

Motion to approve and forward to BOF for discussion at monthly meeting – MK/CB, all ayes.

CB – no surprise that in person attendance is up 60% compared to last year.

16. Report of the Fire Department

No report provided.

17. Any other reports

- a. **Report of the Custodian** – Motion to accept the report of the custodian for the month of May - CB/MK, all ayes
- b. **Report of the Town Nurse – (Quarterly)** – Motion to accept the report of the Town Nurse as presented - CB/MK, all ayes
MK – just a suggestion, it would be more helpful if this report were typed versus handwritten. CB – I think keeping up on interpreting cursive handwriting is a lost art but to each their own.
- c. **Report of the Animal Control Officer** – No report provided.
- d. **Park Trails Report – Motion made by MK to accept the report as presented, CB seconded, all ayes.**
- e. **BOE Report – Motion to approve and forward to the BOF for discussion at the monthly meeting – MK/CB, All ayes.**

18. Reading of Correspondence & Payment of Invoices

- a. GS – Smith Oil – Retirement Letter
GS – Letter from Howard Leeper requesting to serve on P&Z Board
GS – Letter from Chris Kopjanski to serve on P&Z board
GS – Resignation from Jeffrey Kean, Public Works – **Motion to accept resignation with regret, MK/CB, all ayes.**
GS – Town of Beacon Falls Planning & Zoning Commission letter to the Town of Beacon Falls Board of Selectmen regarding Wolfe Avenue Property citing the Town with a Blight Violation.
GS – motion made to add two items under new business, item E – Rehabilitation of Beacon Valley Road - MK/CB, all ayes and the second motion made to add item F – Wolfe Avenue MK/CB, all ayes.
GS – Beacon Hose Co. No. 1 – they will host parade on October 16th at 4pm. They would like us to sit on the viewing stand and/or march in the parade and attend the carnival.

19. Old Business

- a. **Town Sesquicentennial Celebration Update** MK – we had our first of two events that we have been planning and the first was very well attended. Everyone was very surprised that the food was free etc. I want to thank the Lt. Governor, Senator Blumenthal, Reps. Nicole Klarides-Ditria and Jorge Cabrera. Chris Murphy and Rosa DeLauro sent us proclamations. I hope everyone enjoyed the Ice Cream, Harold Murtha provided all of that and everything went very well. Pete Betkoski – it was a success and I want to thank the Committee for all their work. GS – will it be just the drone show? MK – I am in negotiations right now with a local band that may perform which will add quite a bit to the entertainment. The 26th the Lions is having their car show at Kolga. Kolga is where we will set up to watch the Drone Show. Parking on Lancaster Drive would be a prime spot and from the football field. You will be able to see it on Main Street and the Hill section as well. Rain date is September 26th. We are still trying to decide on if there will be food trucks and we will need assistance for parking cars.
- b. **Ordinance Committee** – GS – they have been on hold and a few things are being reviewed.
- c. **Burton Road Update** – GS – Burton Road has been resubmitted and the Engineers and the Town have pushed back a bit. The State wanted us to move the wall back due to sightlines and when the State puts money into a project, they have many requirements. The crash analysis does not bear reason to move the wall. We resubmitted with our comments and justification. We are hoping that since all State workers returned July 1, that all our STEAP and LOTCIP applications will get responses and not as delayed. I hear from many people that we must open the road. I get it but if we go with the bonded money, we will use just about all of it whereas if we deal with the idiosyncrasies of the State, it will only cost us \$275,000.

To be fiscally responsible I think we should grin and bear it and push the State as hard as we can. MK - just to clarify we are talking about the big wall. CB – the Jim Woodward Wall. GS – it is a major expense to move that wall back and I hope they understand our stance to remain the character and integrity of the wall. If they push back and say no, we will have to decide if it is worth the expense to save the wall. Right now, we are hoping to get the feedback that it is approved, and we can leave the wall as is.

- d. Rimmon School House Land Surveying** – The way the special act was put together, per the State of CT we had to complete a survey. We finally have the survey complete and it is currently sitting with the State Committee as to when they will give the property to us. The Governor has already signed the conveyance, but DOT has to bless everything that is there. There will be a couple of right of ways because there is a pipe for storm water that goes out onto Route 8. We must position the building in a way where it is not sitting on any of the utilities. The Historical Society is still selling bricks to defray some of the cost of the rebuild. The House is not in the best of condition so we will be doing more of a rebuild than a move/renovation of the structure. We may have to move the building sooner than we are ready too because the owner of the property does have some plans for that property although he has not yet come forward to our land commissions regarding that information. If we dismantle the building, we can move the piece to the DEEP site for the near term and keep it secured. CB – according to the site plan, it will fit. Plans for the location where it is at right now, have been gestating for decades. GS – it looks like, correct me if I am wrong, on this map, what we are getting conveyed from the State, we do not own that portion of Church Street. From the end of North Main to the bottom of Church Street is not a town road. MK – I am going to meet with the surveyors on Thursday morning to review the plans and the right of way issues.
- e. Sidewalk Ordinance Review** – GS – There is a lot that goes along with this. Attorney Studer is still researching his opinion. He did provide us a letter that he is working on the Opinion and that we should have it by the end of the month and have it for our next meeting.
- f. Senior Center Update** – GS - we did make a new appointment at our last meeting for a new Municipal Agent of the Elderly and that was given to Art Daigle. The Senior Center has been moved in a different direction. The organization known as the Beacon Falls Seniors, we found out was disbanded by the State so there were some liability issues. As we move forward with the YMCA, we made some changes to bring it under CIRMAS umbrella for insurance purposes. Now the Senior Center is under the control of the Municipal Agent for the Elderly which is appointed by the Board of Selectmen which brings the Senior Center under the control of the Board of Selectmen. We are looking into bringing in a Part Time Director. We can have up to 4 Municipal Agents for the Elderly which do a variety of services. The Senior Center is now fully insured and developing in a new direction. I have received positive feedback and these changes have been well received.
- g. BHC EMS Mutual Aid** – GS – this was brought up last month and it was something that has been going on for a long time. I have met with Jeremey and the Chief with how upset I was with how many calls we were receiving for Naugatuck. Their first reaction was that we all provide mutual aid and were resistant to cut them off. My point was is that if we have two ambulances and one is out and another is in Naugatuck, we are short sided. Naugatuck agreed to limit and monitor its mutual aid and it did get better however, it then got worse and now Beacon Hose EMS has pushed back. GS read letter in its entirety (attached). CB – we have been discussing this for a while so I think that the end result and that other towns agree

with our thought process helps add weight to the argument that it resolves our questions about it the way we were hoping it would.

20. New Business

a. Appointments & Reappointments

- **Brownfields Commission** – Still vacant.
- **EDC** – GS – no limitation on how long you can serve on EDC therefore, **I would entertain a motion to reappoint Ed Korzon, MK/CB, all ayes.**
- **Planning & Zoning** – **Motion made to appoint Howard Leeper, CB/MK, all ayes.**

b. Recreational Marijuana Ordinance – GS – I have spoken to our Land Use Attorney; Vin Marino I do stand by my opposition to selling marijuana because it sends a bad message but the great thing about American and Beacon Falls is that we cannot adopt something like that without going to the public and the public voting on it. But I will publicly stand up and say I think it is a wrong message to send to our youth and kids. I think there is a place for medical marijuana but recreational sends a bad message about what Beacon Falls is all about. There is a Resolution that our attorney has put together regarding smoking on town and public areas, and it limits all kinds of smoking such as cigars, cigarettes, marijuana, vaping etc. This does not prohibit the sale of recreational marijuana and that is in the hands with the Planning & Zoning Commission. With this proposed ordinance, if Selectmen agree, it will go to a Public Hearing and then a Town Meeting. CB – I went through that drafted version of the proposed ordinance and I was encouraged to see that it is not a prohibition on one product, it is doing all of them. I think if we are going to approach it that way, codifying and expanding to cover all contingencies, I am ok with doing that and taking that to the public. GS – why don't we set up a hearing for August 9th at 6:30PM at the Senior Center. MK – that is fine with me, I am in full agreement that we need to take this to the public. Without getting that input we will not know where anyone sits with this. I think that this meeting could be longer than expected. CB – if we establish the agenda properly were we limit it to the scope of this proposed ordinance it may go faster. **Motion made to hold Public Hearing on August 9th at 6:30PM at the Senior Center - MK/CB, all ayes.**

c. Safety Committee - GS – tabled until the next regularly scheduled Board of Selectmen monthly meeting.

d. Tax Refunds – GS – **entertain a motion to approve the refunds in the amount of \$880.51 and to forward to the BOF for approval - MK/CB, all ayes.**

e. Beacon Valley Rehabilitation Award - GS - through the bidding process there were 7 bidders. Grasso Construction was the best qualified company to start with the rehabilitation of Beacon Valley Road. Once they received this, they can start within two weeks. I entertain a motion to award the contract for the rehabilitation of Beacon Valley Road to Grasso Construction **MK/CB, CB – point of discussion. CB - Grasso was not the low bidder; they were the second lowest bidder but in the grading process they came out with a higher overall grade, and we are not bound to select the lowest bidder. We are responsible for selecting based on the best value of the Town and I concur they represent the best value on the town. All ayes.**

f. Wolfe Avenue Property – GS – we have been round and round for about 17 years and we have not done anything. We now have a blight ordinance. The last time we tried to tear it down it was going to cost us around \$160,000. We have no clear plan on what to do with it, we have no money to do anything with it. I agree that it is a choice piece of property that the Town owns. My recommendation is that we should explore the options of divesting the asset and sell it. If we tear it down, now we have a lot we are into for close to \$600,000. To me, we need to cut our losses, sell it, and move on. The person who buys it will have to clean up the property. MK –

I do not disagree with selling the property, but wearing my historical hat, I wish I could see someone buy and rehab the property. I think we should get whatever comparable we can on it. GS – I recommend 3 competitive market analysis from 3 different agencies and then see what it is worth. CB – I think it is in our interest to explore what value we can get out of it. Until we have that kind of market data, I think it is in our best interest not to necessarily to put all our cards on the table to say we will sell it. We cannot make that decision without that data. GS – it should not take us long to get the comparable and then we can decide on next steps.

21. Executive Session – None

22. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 8:09 P.M. CB/MK, all ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Kerry McAndrew
First Selectman's Office Administrator/Clerk