

Town of Bethel
Selectboard Agenda
Monday, November 14, 2022
6 pm @ Bethel Town Hall & via Zoom

[Zoom Link](#) Meeting ID: 830 9457 3475 Passcode: 303387 Dial: 1-646-558-8656

6 pm: Call meeting to order and approve agenda.

6:05 pm: Bethel Library Association re: appropriation request

6:30 pm: Recreation Committee re: continued discussion on skatepark costs

Public Comment

Better Connections Steering Committee would like permission to sell hats and mugs as a fundraising effort toward the implementation of future Better Connection projects.

Motion to approve request

Amend Cemetery Rules and Regulations, to include Christmas Wreaths.

Motion to amend policy

FY 2023-2024 Budget Discussion

Discussion only

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) spending plan

Motion to transfer \$162,135 of general fund surplus caused by the ARPA money for wage replacement, to the Capital Sewer fund, \$20,000 to the Highway Capital Equipment fund, and \$396,069.68 to the Capital Road fund.

Minutes and Communications:

1. Town Manager's Report
2. Selectboard Minutes from 11/14/2022
3. Other Communications -
4. Any Other Business Necessary to Come Before the Board: Discussion to move Selectboard meeting start time from 6 pm to 6:30 pm.

Selectboard Meeting Agenda Notes and Town Manager's Report:

1. The Bethel Library Association will be here to discuss their appropriation request. They provided additional information you can find in your packet.
2. The Bethel Recreation Committee reached out to me this week, asking me to get them estimates from local excavation contractors. I said I would, but they would need to provide me with the plans they gave Michael Parker, so contractors would know what to bid on. I have not received anything, so am unsure if they will reschedule their appointment to December or not. I did present that as an option, since they do not have numbers for you yet.
3. The Better Connections Steering Committee is working with a local company to print the Bethel for All logo on mugs and hats. This company allows us to set up an online store, where people can pay for their items online and we can receive proceeds of those sales. The Steering Committee is asking for any proceeds to be earmarked for implementation of future projects, that come out of the process.
4. The cemetery rules need to be amended to include Christmas wreaths. I have spoken with Cecil about the language and he was in favor of it. I took this language from the policy the Veterans Cemetery uses.
5. Budget Discussion: There are several things in this budget that we do not have control over...retirement, health insurance premium increase, diesel, heating oil, and salt prices. I have included an updated DRAFT 2023/2024 tax rate, based on a current 411 from the Lister's Office, as well as an updated/paired down proposed 2023/2024 budget.
6. As discussed at our last meeting, you can transfer \$162,135 of general fund surplus caused by the ARPA money for wage replacement, to the Capital Sewer fund, \$20,000 to the Highway Capital Equipment fund, and \$396,069.68 to the Capital Road fund. That would leave \$5,000 in the general fund budget to have our website revamped. Please see the list with the items suggested to us by the general public. I have highlighted the ones we would address. The starting amount for ARPA is \$583,204.68.

Town Manager's Report:

We continue to be short staffed in the office, so Pam and I are pulling double duty. The Road Crew managed their first snow storm with the help of two seasonal employees. They will be joining AJ & Morgan on a daily basis soon.

11.22.22

To : Select Board, Town of Bethel, VT

Dear Select Board,

I am writing representing the Bethel Public Library in reference to our 2023 budget request.

The library's Board of Trustees would like to request an increase in our Annual Allocation to \$7500.00.

The last year has been one of significant growth at the library, and the plans for 2023 will continue in that direction. Attached is documentation of the events over the last year, the changes and updates that have occurred, as well as goals for the upcoming year.

While these changes are exciting, they bring with them increases in expenses. Our board is actively working on fundraising, and seeking grant funding, with the goal of not only increasing the services the library provides, but also working towards protecting the endowment that has been our primary source of income. The town's support has been, and will continue to be an important support towards these goals.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lisa Campbell
Trustee President
Bethel Library Association

2021-2022 was a year of big changes at the Bethel Public Library (BPL).

- Beginning with the unexpected passing of Marilyn Osborne, long time patron, trustee, and manager of the finances at the library. All too quickly after this, Carroll Ketchum also passed away. He was a long time patron, trustee, and held much historical knowledge regarding Bethel and the Bethel Public Library.

With their passing it became apparent that it was time to modernized the mechanics of our finances, our record keeping, and the function of the board. Towards that end...

- **Lisa Hill, Board President** worked to transfer the 2020-2021 financial information to our in-house computers, and to insure that moving forward there was a record keeping system in place that was accessible to multiple board members. She also instituted a finance committee to track finances, and develop purposeful plans for moving forward.
- **The addition of Bennett Law to our board was crucial for re-envisioning our financial future.** While the Branliere Trust that has supported the library since 1965 was more than generous at the time, it is clear that using it as our sole support is unsustainable. Bennett has brought his experience with non-profits to our finances, including bringing clarity to our budget process, introducing the need for fundraising to protect the endowment, diversifying income streams (including seeking grant funding, fundraising, etc), and challenging the board to more actively use their talents to benefit the library.

What follows is a list of the happenings at the library this year.

- **Updated lighting** in the non-fiction room (thanks to a memorial donation)
- **Planning for the repair of the steps/walkway from the sidewalk.** Stu Chase arranged for the donation of two granite steps, and Bennett Law is working with a local contractor for the installation.
- **Interlibrary Loan** is now available to library patrons. A courier service is used to transport the requested items (supported in part by a grant from the Vt Dept Libraries)
- **The BPL was the recipient of a Rural Libraries Grant** from the Children's Literacy Foundation. In partnership with the elementary school, there will be two storytelling events (fall and spring), and in the spring all elementary students will be able to choose two books to keep via the grant. The library got \$2,000 to update their children's collections, and the school got \$500 to update their collection.
- **BPL received an ARPA grant** of \$1,900 from the VT Dept of Libraries. It was used to replace the library's printer with a device that will scan, copy, and print. In addition, money from the grant was used to update our adult and children's collections with titles that reflect diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- **E-Books/Audiobooks** - we are working with the Vt Dept of Libraries to integrate a system called The Palace Project which patrons will use to borrow audiobooks and e-books. It is anticipated the system will be available for public use by January 1st.
- **Computer updates** - The libraries computers were replaced this year (thanks in part to contributions from the town). This improves the computer experience for patrons, and will allow the library to develop a website, newsletters, and the future implementation of an integrated library system (ILS) to streamline the collection and retrieval of library data.
- **Community events** - the BPL was pleased to go back to in-person programming this year. This includes the Mother's (and others) Day Tea, monthly bookclub, Teddy Bear Picnic and Sleepover, and coming up this winter, talks regarding local history (telephone operators, local businesses, and the history of some of the Bethel hamlets). Planning is underway for participation in the 2023 Bethel University, and Legislative Breakfast.
- **Upcoming developments**
 - reopening on Saturday mornings, after January 1st

- updating the website
- updating the by-laws
- exploring the development of a strategic plan for capital improvements and programming.
- fundraising ideas including annual appeals, coin drops, rest stop bake sales, and grants
- raising the BPL's public profile using FPF, social media, newspaper articles, and community events.
- the acquisition and purchase of museum passes for use by library patrons.
- exploring the addition of Kanopy, which streams movie selections including (but not limited to) short children's movies, films in other languages, documentaries and feature films.
- Seed Library, and additions to our Library of Things (which now includes baking equipment, games, and puzzles.

**CEMETERY
RULES AND REGULATIONS
Bethel, VT**

The following rules and regulations for the Town operated cemeteries are based on authority granted the Selectman acting as Commissioners of said Cemeteries under V.S.A. Title 18 Chapter 121.

SECTION I- DEFINITIONS: shall include all those located within the Town of Bethel which are not privately owned.

COMMISSIONERS: the duly elected Selectmen of the Town of Bethel.

SEXTON: The appointed representative of the commissioners commonly known as the Cemetery Foreman.

RESIDENT: An individual:

- A. Presently living within the Town as primary place of residence; or
- B. Presently owning real property within the Town; or
- C. Having a verifiable association with the Town over a significant period of time.

NON-RESIDENT: Any individual not meeting one of the requirements for "Resident,"

LOTS: Those plots of land located in the Cemeteries owned and operated by the Town of Bethel.

SECTION II- SALE AND CARE OF LOTS:

All lots shall be sold only with provisions for both perpetual care and immediate placement of corner markers. Prices for lots, inclusive of these provisions, shall be:

Residential Rate:

# of Lots	Cemetery Account	Perpetual Care	Reserve Fund	Marker Cost	Total Cost
8 Grave Lot	776.00	984.00	160.00	160.00	2,080.00
4 Grave Lot	388.00	492.00	80.00	160.00	1,120.00
2 Grave Lot	194.00	246.00	40.00	160.00	640.00
1 Grave Lot	97.00	123.00	20.00	160.00	400.00

Non-Residential Rate:

# of Lots	Cemetery Account	Perpetual Care	Reserve Fund	Marker Cost	Total Cost
8 Grave Lot	1,352.00	1,848.00	320.00	160.00	3,680.00
4 Grave Lot	776.00	924.00	160.00	160.00	2,020.00
2 Grave Lot	388.00	462.00	80.00	160.00	1,090.00
1 Grave Lot	169.00	231.00	40.00	160.00	600.00

SECTION III-GENERAL REGULATIONS:

- A. 1. Vaults or cement grave liners shall be required with all burials within the Town of Bethel.
- 2. An urn vault with the maximum size of 12" by 15" by 11" shall be used for the burial of cremated remains; the urn vault may be used with or without an urn.
- B. One casket, or up to four cremated remains, may be buried in one designated lot.
- C. No foundations or gravestones shall hereafter be placed by private concerns unless said work is approved by the Cemetery Foreman and will be subject to his/her directions as regards to location on lots, etc. A flat headstone shall be set flush with the ground and without a foundation.
- D. Corner Markers:
 - 1. Cornerstones on all lots shall be placed flush with the ground in such a manner that cemetery equipment will not be interfered with.
 - 2. Corner markers are required within all sales for the value of \$160.00. If lot purchasers install markers by their own means, they may request reimbursement from the Town for the \$160.00 corner marker charge.
- E. Trees and shrubs shall not be planted in the Town Cemeteries without the consent and/or direction of the Cemetery Foreman.
- F. Artificial flowers are permitted from Memorial Day to Labor Day, but must be removed by the first Saturday after Labor Day. Flowers not permanently planted, must be secured to the monument or hung from a Shepard's hook that is securely installed tight to the monument. **Wreaths may also be placed from a Shepard's hook, from November to April. Christmas Trees are not allowed.** Any flower, decoration or wreath not properly installed will be discarded.
- G. No grave openings will be permitted between the dates of December 31, and April 15, The Selectmen also may at their discretion refuse requests for grave openings during the periods between December 15 and December 31 and April 15 and April 30 if conditions merit so.
- H. Ten percent (10%) of all sales will be dedicated to development of an improved record-keeping system and acquisition of future new cemetery area(s).
- I. In the event a "Resident" designation is sought under item C in the definition under Section I, a written letter of application setting forth the nature of the association must be submitted to the Board of Cemetery Commissioners who shall be solely responsible for determining the application for "Resident" status is approvable. The determination by the Board of Cemetery Commissioners shall be deemed final and without appeal.

- J. All cemeteries under the control of the Town of Bethel shall be closed to the public from 9:30 PM until 6:00 AM daily. Persons found on the premises during these closed hours will be charged with a misdemeanor and henceforth be brought before a court of proper jurisdiction.
- K. State Law regarding injury to burial grounds and historical tablets, as found in Sections 8379 through 8385 inclusive, shall be enforced and persons apprehended for such violations shall be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

SECTION IV

These regulations shall take effect immediately upon endorsement by the Cemetery Commissioners and when duly recorded in the Records of the Town Clerk's office. All previous regulations in conflict with the above are hereby rescinded.

Signed by the Selectmen of the Town of Bethel, March 8, 2010:

Neal Fox, Chair Bill Richards Joe De Freitas

Effective April 1, 1988

Amended September 10, 2001; July 7, 2008; October 27, 2008; April 13, 2009; March 8, 2010; May 9, 2022; August 8, 2022; November 28, 2022

Originally filed in the Bethel Town Clerk's Office on June 1, 2010 and recorded in Town Proceedings Book 7 Page 361.

Attest: Jean Burnham, Town Clerk

Amended copy filed in the Bethel Town Clerk's Office on _____ and recorded in Town Proceedings Book ____ Page ____.

Attest: Pamela Brown, Town Clerk

ARPA spending ideas for our \$583,204.68 award:

1. Sewer pumps (\$125,000)
2. Generator for Lower Church Street sewer (\$37,000)
3. Gravel roads
4. Website upgrade (\$5,000)
5. \$25,000 match for land/water grant for recreation department
6. Updates to pool
7. Database linking volunteers
8. To purchase/install signage designed via VOREC
9. Repair sidewalks
10. Economic Development staff
11. Amphitheatre style seating in front of the library.
12. Library investments are dwindling – can we give them money to help?
13. Blinking lights downtown.
14. \$20,000 towards new Western Star
15. \$571,766 in local match for \$1,692,896 transportation grants, \$339,086 may be paid for with ARPA funds.

583,204.68

-126,000.00 – Laramie Water Resources, WW Pumps

- 36,135.00 – Yankee Generator, Lower Church St. Replacement

\$421,069.68 – Balance

- 5,000.00 – Website Upgrade

\$416,069.68 – Balance

- 20,000.00 · Transfer to Highway Capital Equipment Fund

\$396,069.68 – Balance for local match/road work

Town of Bethel
Selectboard Meeting
November 14, 2022
6 PM @ Bethel Town Hall & via Zoom

Present: Lindley Brainard, Dave Eddy, Chris Jarvis, Gene Kraus, Paul Vallee, Therese Kirby, Julie Kraus and filmed by Orca Media.

Visitors: Vincent Bergamo, Owen Daniel-McCarter (via Zoom), Carson and Mitchell Wenz.

6 pm – Chris Jarvis called the Selectboard meeting to order at 6 pm. Paul Vallee's resignation from three positions was moved to the end of the meeting and an executive session was added regarding the employment/evaluation of a public officer. Lindley moved to approve the agenda as amended, Dave second, so voted.

Appointments

6:05 pm: Owen Daniel-McCarter re: Equity & Inclusion Committee's request to submit a \$10,000 grant proposal with no local match required. Owen answered questions from the Selectboard.

Motion made by Lindley Brainard, seconded by Paul Vallee, to give permission to the Equity & Inclusion Committee to apply for a \$10,000 grant with no matching local funds. So voted

Motion made by Paul Vallee, seconded by Lindley Brainard, to accept David Phair's resignation from the Equity and Inclusion Committee, with thanks for his service. So voted.

Motion made by Gene Kraus, seconded by Lindley Brainard, to appoint Vincent Bergamo to the Energy Committee. Vincent spoke about his interest in serving. So voted.

Bethel Library Association's request to hold a coin drop on April 22, 2023.

Motion made by Lindley Brainard, seconded by Paul Vallee, to accept request to hold a coin drop on April 22, 2023, with adherence to permit conditions plus proof of insurance. So voted.

Vermont River Conservancy baseline documentation report (BDR) for Bethel Floodplain Restoration - River Corridor Easement at Carla's Meadow. Motion made by Gene Kraus, seconded by Dave Eddy, to authorize Chair Chris Jarvis to sign the Vermont River Conservancy baseline documentation report. So voted.

FY 2023-2024 Budget Discussion re: payment in lieu of health insurance, COLA/merit increase, etc. Therese did an overview of the budget, expected growth in the Grand List, etc. The Board asked Therese to look to see if there were any cost savings to move from MVP to Blue Cross, redo the budget with a proposed 3% salary increase/cola, and discussion regarding increasing the payment in lieu of health insurance, in hopes of attracting applicants. Discussion regarding moving away from organic sand to manufactured sand, salt prices, etc.

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) spending plan. Discussion to transfer \$162,135 from General Fund Surplus caused by the ARPA money for wage replacement, to the Capital Sewer Fund, \$20,000 to the Highway Capital Equipment Fund and \$396,069.68 to the Capital Road Fund. This transfer leaves \$5,000 in the General Fund budget to revamp the Town website. Motion made by Lindley Brainard, seconded by Paul Vallee, to table this item until the 11/28/22 meeting. So voted.

Motion made by Lindley Brainard, seconded by Dave Eddy, to accept Paul Valle's resignation as Trustee of Public Funds, Bethel's representative to Two Rivers Regional Planning Commission Board and as Deputy Health Officer, with thanks for service. So voted.

Motion made by Lindley Brainard, seconded by Dave Eddy, to approve the minutes of the 10/24/2022 Selectboard meeting as printed. So voted.

Discussion regarding the rescheduling of the Monday, December 26, 2022 Selectboard meeting to Monday, December 19, 2022. The Selectboard agreed.

Motion made by Lindley Brainard, seconded by Paul Vallee, to enter executive session at 8:27 pm, to discuss the employment/evaluation of a public officer per 1 VSA § 313 (a)(3). At 8:32 pm the Selectboard entered public session, where a motion was made by Lindley Brainard, seconded by Paul Vallee to adjourn executive session. No action was taken.

Motion made by Lindley Brainard, seconded by Paul Vallee to adjourn at 8:33 pm. So voted.

Submitted by
Julie Kraus

TAX RATES FOR 2023/2024

	Amount	2022/2023	Difference between last year and proposed
<u>Taxes to be raised for:</u>			
General Fund	\$2,307,394.00	1.0624	0.64%
Local Agreement	\$8,046.07	0.0040	0.00%
State Homestead tax rate		<u>1.4993</u>	<u>-100.00%</u>
Total Homestead tax rate		2.5657	-58.17%
<u>Taxes to be raised for:</u>			
General Fund	\$2,307,394.00	1.0624	0.64%
Local Agreement	\$8,046.07	0.0040	0.00%
State Non-Residential tax rate		<u>1.5076</u>	<u>-100.00%</u>
Total Non-Residential tax rate		2.5740	-58.31%
23/24 Municipal Grand List	\$ 2,158,095.00	2,012,499	7.23%
23/24 Homestead Grand List	\$ -		
23/24 Non-Residential Grand List	\$ -		
2022 CLA			
2022 COD			
Municipal Tax Rate	\$ 1.0732		