

**Bethel Town Meeting Committee  
Minutes of October 29, 2015 Meeting**

Present: Rick Benson, Jean Burnham, Neil Brooks, Davis Dimock, Ola O'dell, Lisa McCrory, Victoria Weber, Rebecca Stone (via Skype), Lisa Sacks Warhol.

Rick called the meeting to order at 3:35 pm.  
We approved the minutes of Sept. 28, 2015.

Budget Discussions coming up:

The select board (and also the school board) has expressed a desire to have citizens involve themselves in budget discussions early on while the budgets are being created. This committee has been trying to facilitate that. Quite a few citizens turned up October 5<sup>th</sup> for the first municipal budget discussion about Personnel Funds. The Selectboard will discuss the General Fund on Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>. We will help publicize this one by: Lisa Warhol mentioning it in *The Herald*, Victoria posting it on Front Porch Forum and asking Linda Noyse to post it on the Town Hall information board. We voted to approve the latter. [Note: the information board was in use to publicize an event at the town hall, so Victoria obtained permission to use the town offices sandwich-board sign to notify passers by of the budget meeting. ]

On the school side Rick will ask Owen Bradley to post their upcoming budget meetings (Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>, Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>) on the school electronic sign board. Lisa McCrory mentioned she is on a new advisory group of parents and she will share the information with them.

Town Report Suggestions:

Davis has reorganized suggestions for the town report into 3 categories based on how much additional space they might take up. These suggestions are not intending to correct anything, but are just suggestions from citizens based on other town reports with the intent of making our town report more reader-friendly and easier for people to understand the information presented.

We went over the suggestions and voted to pass them to the select board. Prior to this reorganization by how much space they might take, this list of suggestions was given to the Selectboard in July. Rick will send the list to Abbie Sherman and ask to have it on the agenda, for the November 9<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Davis will attend to answer any questions from the board.

Survey Results:

Rebecca has perhaps 20 more completed surveys from the Forward Festival. Lisa will get these typed up and to Rebecca during the next month.

Operator's Manual:

We are trying to pull together a budget for the project so we can see which grants might be productive for paying for the production of the Manual.

We have estimates from Lisa Sacks Warhol for editing, pulling the information all together and making sure the document has a uniform presence, and from Julie Nelson for graphic design.

We agreed the manual would probably be 8.4" x 11", 32 pages and color. We envision a print run of 2,500 to cover the approx. 1,200 households in Bethel and have copies for new residents and others who might request it over 10 years, which is the estimated lifetime of the Manual. It is cheaper to do a larger print run one time, than to go back and do a second smaller print run. Lisa had quotes from a printer she has worked with.

So far, the draft budget looks like:

\$1,225	Editing, per Lisa Warhol
900	Graphic Design, per Julie Nelson
2,850	print run of 2,500 copies
1,500	posting on World wide web
500	Town to administer
400	Publicity when it first comes out
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\$7,375.	

We do not know if the Selectboard will approve our asking for a grant under the auspices of the town. We don't know if they will approve staff time to write checks or otherwise administer a grant. We also don't know whether we will need to get estimates from several designers, editors, printers, etc.

Much of this depends on how closely the Selectboard wants to oversee the project and whether it would be viewed as an official town document.

We note that the Middlesex Operator's Manual says on its first page:

"It was created for your convenience by volunteers and should not be considered an official town document, or the last word on any topic."

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### Grants:

Rebecca has given us a listing of grants that might be useful to us. Also local banks have grants and 'pocket change' awards of a few hundred dollars which do not require full applications. Each grant application will require us to describe the community-building impacts we expect to achieve with our Manual project, so we will need to customize our application for each one.

□□ Our task for our next meeting is for each one of us to look at, and print out, applications from the grants on Rebecca’s list and to begin to fill in the applications so we can identify just what is needed.

This should fulfill the select board’s request that we get information about the grants to see what would be needed for the town to sponsor the Manual and possibly administer a grant.

We look forward to our discussion with Lisa Hill at our next meeting about her ideas on involving more people in the process of creating the Manual. We might get the BRI and or BBA or another group to sponsor it and to work with us in its creation. Neil thought the school may be a sponsor as well. We may ask corporate businesses in town to donate to the production of the manual.

Manual contents:

Who is responsible?	What topics they will cover
Jean	Town clerk, Selex, etc. duties; voting
Ola	Community volunteer groups; health and human services; parks and public spaces
Neil	School info
Rick	Town meeting procedures; worship
Victoria	Maps; arts + History
Davis	Land use and zoning
Lisa	Recreation; libraries; waste and recycling
Rebecca	Bethel University; what ever differentiates us from other towns

We agreed to hold a contest to obtain photos that will represent Bethel, especially the cover photo. They will need to be high resolution.

Jean would like a pull-out sheet with phone numbers and hours of things like the town offices and the transfer station. She frequently gets calls asking for the hours because people cannot find the transfer station in the phonebook.

Lisa McCrory would like for the manual to clearly distinguish town employees who are paid, from volunteer positions, and to further differentiate volunteer groups where anyone can step up and take part from select board appointed committees (where one can step up, but must be appointed by the select board).

Lisa Warhol would like the Calendar section to be presented in a graphic or chart form with bullet points reminding people when they need to get their dog licenses or pay their taxes, as well as non-official things like the Forward Festival.

A beginning list of organizations to include in the Manual includes the food shelf, BRI, BBA, Bethel University, Forward Festival. Conservation Commission, Rotary, Bethel potluck, Masons, girl scouts, boy scouts, 4H.

The meeting adjourned at 5:18.

Our next meeting will be at 3:30 at the town offices on Thursday November 19<sup>th</sup> to accommodate a visit from Lisa Hill.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Victoria Weber, Secretary, Nov. 3, 2015.