

1 **BENNINGTON SELECT BOARD MEETING**

2 **130 RIVER STREET**

3 **BENNINGTON, VERMONT 05201**

4 **JANUARY 23, 2023**

5 **MINUTES**

6 **SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jeannie Jenkins-Chair; Jeanne Conner-Vice Chair; Bruce  
7 Lee-Clark; Gary Corey; Sarah Perrin; and Tom Haley.

8 **SELECT BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jim Carroll.

9 **ALSO PRESENT:** Stuart Hurd-Town Manager; Dan Monks-Assistant Town Manager; Shannon  
10 Barsotti-Community Development Director; Jack Rossiter-Munley; Tordis Isselhardt; Asher  
11 Edelson; Nancy White; 5 citizens; Josh Boucher-CAT-TV; and Nancy H. Lively-Secretary.

12 At 6:00pm, Chair Jeannie Jenkins called the meeting to order and announced that  
13 Agenda Item #5. Bennington Sports Foundation has been cancelled this evening due to the  
14 weather and will be added to an agenda in March.

15 **1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

16 The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

17 **2. VISION STATEMENT**

18 Ms. Conner read the Town’s Vision Statement that was adopted by the Select Board on  
19 August 24, 2020:

20 “Bennington is a welcoming, engaged, inclusive, resilient community where everyone  
21 regardless of identity shares in our vitality and benefits from an outstanding quality of life.”

22 **3. CONSENT AGENDA**

23 **A. MINUTES OF JANUARY 7, 2023 AND JANUARY 9, 2023**

24 **B. WARRANTS**

25 **C. LICENSES**

26 *Bruce Lee-Clark moved and Tom Haley seconded to approve the Consent Agenda*  
27 *amended as follows:*

28 *Minutes of January 7, 2023, Page 8, Line 257, Change “body” to “volume”*

29 *Minutes of January 9, 2023, Page 3, Line 67, Change “become in compliance with” to*  
30 *“become compliant with”*

31 *Minutes of January 9, 2023, Page 4, Line 117, Change “to housing” to “to expand*  
32 *housing”*

33 *Minutes of January 9, 2023, Page 6, Line 196, Change “Coor’s” to “Corr’s”*

34 *Minutes of January 9, 2023 Addendum, Line 1, Change “Bruce L. Clark” to “Bruce Lee-*  
35 *Clark”*

36 Ms. Conner noted that there haven’t been any liquor license violations in quite some  
37 time.

38 ***The motion carried with Jim Carroll absent.***

39 **4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

40 The following Public Comment Practices to make the experience for all involved a  
41 productive and informative use of the Public Comment period at Select Board meetings was  
42 placed on the podium for those that wish to make Public Comments to reference:

- 43 1. Public Comment is to allow residents an opportunity to share information or make  
44 announcements that benefit the community at large.
- 45 2. The topic should not be related to an agenda item. If a member of the public wants to  
46 comment on an agenda item they can do so during the discussion of that item.
- 47 3. Comments should be 3 minutes or less.
- 48 4. You are required to state your real name and town of residence.
- 49 5. Sharing comments, announcements and concerns are encouraged rather than asking  
50 questions. Public Comment is not a time for discussion. If you have specific questions it is best  
51 to call the Town Manager to get a full explanation and accurate information.
- 52 6. If the topic requires much discussion the item will be considered as an agenda item at a  
53 future meeting.

54 \_\_\_\_\_  
55 \_\_\_\_\_

56 Jack Rossiter-Munley: Stated how successful the Community Café is on Saturdays 1:30pm-  
57 3:00pm at 121 Depot Street. People order a meal, it is brought to them, and they pay whatever  
58 they wish or nothing at all. It is very popular within the community for all with many making  
59 contributions to the project.

60 Tordis Isselhardt: Commented on the following three items:

- 61 1. Pleased to see the Bennington Police Department’s quarterly “Report to the  
62 Select Board” in this meeting’s packet. The two most recent reports to the

63 Select Board in person were on July 11<sup>th</sup> and October 10<sup>th</sup>. On October 10<sup>th</sup>,  
64 Chief Doucette thanked a large grant from the Vermont Center for Crime Victims  
65 to be able to hire a Human Trafficking Case Manager who would be invited to  
66 speak at a future Select Board meeting.

- 67 2. Pleased to see a report by Jonah Spivak or Shannon Barsotti included in one of  
68 the Select Board’s two monthly meeting packets in addition to whatever they  
69 may contribute to an agenda item.
- 70 3. Kudos to all involved in the Town’s beautiful new unified website - town staff,  
71 community members, Revize deisgn firm, and Jonah Spivak as all project  
72 management.

73 **6. ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARNING APPROVEL**

74 Mr. Hurd stated that the Floor Meeting will be March 6, 2023 at 7:00pm (or immediately  
75 following the Southwest VT Regional Technical School District’s Annual meeting should that run  
76 over). The elementary schools and Mr. Anthony School District may also be here but that is  
77 unknown at this time. The meeting will stand adjourned to March 7, 2023 at the Bennington  
78 Fire Facility for those on the Bennington checklist and the North Bennington Village office for  
79 those on the North Bennington checklist. Polls are open from 7:00am until 7:00pm.

80 ***Bruce Lee-Clark moved and Sarah Perrin seconded to adopt the Warning, Town of***  
81 ***Bennington, 2023 Annual Town Meeting as presented. The motion carried with Jim Carroll***  
82 ***absent.***

83 **7. BOND WARNING APPROVAL CIRCULATION FOR SIGNATURES**

84 Mr. Hurd explained that they post bond issues separately because there are different  
85 Vermont statute requirements to do so. This bond is not to exceed \$5.8M to upgrade the Gage  
86 Street water main and the south end water system on Jefferson Heights and Margaret Lane to  
87 increase water pressure within the system.

88 ***Bruce Lee-Clark moved and Tom Haley seconded to approve the Public Hearing Notice,***  
89 ***Town of Bennington, Water System Improvements Bond as submitted.***

90 Ms. Jenkins noted that this is necessary to do these, and Mr. Hurd added that the south  
91 end project is a compliance issue for the Town that we have been working on for 5-7 years that  
92 began with a water tower above Southern Vermont College at the time, serving the hospital  
93 down Dewey Street to Weeks, to Crescent Boulevard, and now to Jefferson Heights and  
94 Margaret Lane. The bond will cost us \$259,000/year which is ~\$140,000 less annually for these  
95 construction projects for the last 4-5 years.

96 ***The motion carried with Jim Carroll absent.***

97 Nancy White: We already have water/sewer projects totaling \$21M and this information should  
98 be given to the Banner.

99 **8. IMPLEMENTING THE TOWN VISION**

100 **A. POLICY SIGNING**

101 *Bruce Lee-Clark moved and Tom Haley seconded to adopt the Quality Control, Internal*  
102 *Investigations and Discipline amended as follows:*

103 *Page 1, Line 1 and Line 3, Change “citizen” to “civilian”*

104 *The motion carried with Jim Carroll absent.*

105 **9. MUNICIPAL RESOLUTION DOWNTOWN TRANSPORTATION FUND**

106 Ms. Barsotti stated that staff are preparing a grant application for the Agency of  
107 Commerce and Community Development’s Downtown Transportation Fund for improvements  
108 to the Benn Hi parking lot by resurfacing, and creating a court yard and pathways that is  
109 currently pavement. The application is due January 31<sup>st</sup> and requires a 20% match for funds up  
110 to \$200,000. The \$40,000 match would come from the designated ARPA funds and/or in-kind  
111 work through the town’s Department of Public Works. MSK Engineers has completed a site  
112 survey and parking plan that will be submitted with the application.

113 *Tom Haley moved and Bruce Lee-Clark seconded to approve the Municipal Resolution*  
114 *for Downtown Transportation Fund application for \$200,000 with the \$40,000 local match*  
115 *from ARPA funds.*

116 Ms. Conner asked what would happen if we did not go forward with the Benn Hi Project,  
117 and Ms. Barsotti answered we would let them know that we weren’t going through with the  
118 project and they would be able to re-grant the funds.

119 Mr. Corey asked if this is subject to the final designs of the project, and Ms. Barsotti  
120 responded yes.

121 *The motion carried with Jim Carroll absent.*

122 **10. MANAGER’S REPORT**

123 Mr. Hurd did the following report:

124 Benmont Avenue/County Street Sewer Line Replacement - Moving along with a water  
125 connection at Lincoln and County Streets remaining. When complete the Town would prepare  
126 road surface for Winter/Spring. Sidewalks will be done in the Spring. Thank you to all for their  
127 patience.

128 Equalization Study Results - The results of the Study completed for Bennington and North  
129 Bennington both show values below 85% which, according to statute, triggers a reappraisal.  
130 Unfortunately, approximately 150 towns are in the same boat with only 3 reappraisal firms able

131 to do a full mass reappraisal. I have reached out to our legislative delegation for some help and  
132 am hopeful some relief can be found that will work state-wide to avoid a situational crisis.

133 **11. UPCOMING AGENDA**

134 February 13, 2023 - Bennington Police Department Report

135 February 13, 2023 - Sunrise Family Resource Center Update

136 February 13, 2023 - VTRANS Contractor To Discuss Roundabouts at Route 7/Kocher  
137 Drive, Benmont Avenue/Northside Drive, and Hicks Avenue/Northside Drive.

138 February 13, 2023 - Social Service Organization Policy

139 **12. OTHER BUSINESS**

140 Ms. Conner: Thanked Mike McDonough for the presentation he did on the Riverwalk  
141 improvements.

142 Ms. Perrin: January 30<sup>th</sup> is the last day to file for those interested in running for the Select  
143 Board, and she will be seeking re-election.

144 **11. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

145 **A. CONTRACTS**

146 *At 6:32pm, Bruce Lee-Clark moved and Gary Corey seconded that the meeting was*  
147 *adjourned finding that an Executive Session be held on Contracts as premature public*  
148 *knowledge would place a person involved in the subject matter at a substantial*  
149 *disadvantage. No decision will be made when going back into Open Session. The motion*  
150 *carried with Jim Carroll absent.*

151

152

153 Respectfully submitted,

154 Nancy H. Lively

155 Secretary

156

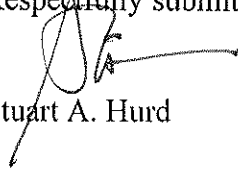
**SELECT BOARD  
MINUTES ADDENDUM  
January 23, 2023**

Present: Jeannie Jenkins, Chair, Tom Haley, Jim Carroll, Bruce Lee- Clark, Jeanne Conner, V. Chair, Gary Corey, and Sarah Perrin. Also present.: Stu Hurd, Town Manager, Dan Monks, Assistant Manager and Shannon Barsotti, Community Development Director.

The Board went into executive session at 6:32pm for a contractual matter.

The Board came out of executive session at 7:00 pm. but took no action. There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 7:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stu Hurd", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Stuart A. Hurd