

**TOWN OF BROWNVILLE**  
**PUBLIC HEARING & BOARD OF SELECTPERSONS MEETING MINUTES**  
**Tuesday, November 19, 2024 at 6:00pm**  
American Legion Post #92 ~ 67 Railroad Ave. Brownville

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**Public Hearing** was called to order at 6:00p.m. starting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Felice Lyford, Town Manager/Deputy Clerk explained the Public Hearing is for the purpose of hearing public comment regarding a renewal application for a Marijuana Establishment License for Andrea Witham DBA Triple Goddess Cannabis located at 1497 Main Road and opened the floor to anyone that wanted to speak.

Ronald Galuppo spoke and is completely against marijuana. When he was active in the service and working the borders, he saw a lot of drugs getting smuggled into the country and believes that marijuana is a gateway drug. He said that he saw a lot of it coming over laced with the deadly drug, Fentanyl. His vote is no.

Hearing no other requests to speak, the Public Hearing was closed at 6:03p.m.

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**1. The Board of Selectpersons Meeting was called to order at 6:04pm by Byron Weymouth**

- a. **Selectpersons Present:** Byron Weymouth, Shelly Ekholm, Kevin Emery, Gary Chapman
- b. **Employees Present:** Felice Lyford, Jessica Wyman, Philip Cook, Richard Gallagher Shawn Mitchell, Martina Coburn, Jeff Witham
- c. **Residents/Others Present:** Mary and Lance Farrar, Tony Heal, Stan Belvin, Todd Lyford, Emily Cook, Andrea Witham, Ron Galuppo

**Action on prior meeting minutes from October 15<sup>th</sup> 2024.**

Motion to approve the minutes from 10/15/2024 as presented.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

**2. Treasurer's Warrants** were reviewed and signed (Payroll, Accounts Payable, Water/Sewer)

**3. Action on Renewal Application for Marijuana Establishment License.**

Motion to approve the renewal of a Marijuana Establishment License for Andrea Witham DBA Triple Goddess Cannabis located at 1497 Main Rd Brownville.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

**4. Building Permit Applications** – None to consider at this time.

**5. Tax Abatements/Supplements** – Lorna was able to complete the interior inspection for Ronald & Rebecca Galuppo in October. She noted a few changes, correcting their siding type, addition of a heat pump and generator with no reduction noted and she is recommending a denial of the building portion of their abatement application. At a previous meeting, the Board approved an abatement on the land portion of their taxes due to a tree growth application that had been received timely but not applied to their account.

Ron provided the Board with a packet that contained pictures of other properties located on Horseshoe Pond Road in the Unorganized Territory. He believes that Lorna should have used them in comparison to his property. He believes that the pandemic has brought the cost of houses in this area to rise. He stated his valuation has gone up %100 and is asking the Board to approve the abatement where they are the "assessors".

Shelly explained that they hire Lorna as their agent as she is the certified professional, experienced and knowledgeable in her field. Shelly said that she does not even know enough to be able to hold an educated conversation about it. The Board believes in the process and advised Ron he could appeal the decision through the proper channels.

Motion to deny a tax abatement for building value for Rebecca & Ronald Galuppo Jr. for 612 Horseshoe Pond Rd, Map 12 Lot 16-12.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

**Tax Supplements-** There are two requests to withdraw land from tree growth that require penalty supplements.

Alpine Property Trust- Acct # 322 Map 2 Lot 27-14 for tree growth 2-acre removal penalty per owner's request. Penalty of \$2,700.00, that has already been paid by the taxpayer.

George, William & Michael Mayo- Acct 697 Map 5 Lot 14 for tree growth 3-acre removal penalty per owner's request. Penalty of \$3,312.00, was already paid by the buyer at the time of sale.

Motion to approve the Assessors' Agent recommendations to supplement as outlined above.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

6. **Appointments/New Hires/Open positions** – Dillon Watters applied for a Per-Diem Public Works position. He has years of experience plowing roads for his dad's company, and he is needed there this year. He has offered to help in the evening or on weekends when he isn't driving school buses. He would be a great addition to the crew and provide some much-needed relief, particularly on heavier/longer storms. Felice and Rick recommend him for hire.

Motion to hire Dillion Watters as a Per-Diem Public Works Operator.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

There have been some folks express interest in the vacancies on the Budget Committee- Lance Farrar and Kelly Armstrong. Kelly is Gabe's wife and if appointed Felice would suggest Kelly abstain from voting on any of the Public Works budgets.

Motion to appoint Lance Farrar to the Budget Committee with a term to expire at the annual town meeting 2025.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

Motion to appoint Kelly Armstrong to the Budget Committee with a term to expire at the annual town meeting 2025.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

7. **Proposed "No Parking" Zone – Lake Ave** – Shawn brought this issue up to the Board at the previous meeting and has asked to table it until he is able to get out to Lake Ave and do some measurements of what the width is now and what it would be if it was to be reduced. Board has agreed to table this until the rest of the information is in. Shawn is still willing to bring out the board members to see if any of them have any concerns.
8. **Upcoming tax Foreclosures** – Felice enclosed the list of upcoming potential 2022 tax foreclosures (Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>). She is not particularly concerned about any of them. She also heard back from the attorney about the property at 6 Stickney Hill Rd that was previously waived a few months back. The attorney advised to let it go through the automatic foreclosure process to provide better protection under tort claims from a "dangerous building" and liability standpoint. The advantage of having a cleaner title is not worth giving up those protections. The Board took no action on any of the properties.
9. **Recreation Collaboration & Agreement** – After the Joint Public Hearing, a small group met again to discuss the proposed increase in hours and wages that was brought up by citizens in attendance. They put together some figures to discuss, but they want to make it clear to the public that those increases no longer constitute a "savings" for either town. As proposed originally (30hrs/wk \$19.50-\$22.50/hr) there was potential cost savings. \$20/hr 40hrs/wk and \$22.60/hr 4hrs/wk are in the original information that was presented. The group suggested trying to keep the wage around the \$20/hr 40hrs/wk range. The Rec budget would increase, but we would expect a much better overall program to offer the community. The revised budget was reviewed. When a draft agreement is finalized, it will come back to the Board. They still need to run the contract by legal, and it still needs some tweaks for the committee details.

The Board opened the floor for comments. Tony Heal, a Milo Selectboard Member, said that their Board voted unanimously in favor of the collaboration. Shawn asked if Milo had committed to a set rate of pay? They did not choose a rate of pay as of now. They have kind of left it open ended depending on what the applicants' qualifications are and felt the \$20 to \$22 per hr range was a fair estimate. Another question was asked about the committee and who would be on it, if they had to be from either Milo or Brownville? Our board talked about doing a trial run, and having the committee term be 2 years, but it could possibly change in the future. The Committee members have not been selected and could be from Milo, Brownville, or any of the townships in the community. Felice mentioned that there is an escape clause as well requiring either town to give 3 months' notice to the other town if they do not want to continue with the agreement. Milo's current Rec Director gave her notice, and she will be done at the end of December. The Board agrees that at this point there should not be a set pay rate for the position to negotiate with potential applicants. They agree to continue to move forward with this process.

Motion to move forward with working on a collaborative agreement with Milo to provide recreation programs.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

#### 10. Department/Projects Updates –

**Underpass** – The underpass project is finished until spring! The fence will have to be moved at a later date. The original plan was for the fence to be placed on top of the blocks. They are worried that if the blocks were drilled into it would compromise them, so for now the fence is placed in front of the blocks, causing the walkway to be narrower than expected. Sleds are not going to be able to cross using the sidewalk. Nor will the sweeper. There is also a safety concern with the kids walking along the block on the outside of the fence. Shawn has reached out to the Snowmobile club to help in making sure that people know that they will not fit on the sidewalk under the underpass. The road is also a little narrower, and they are worried about storms and the plow meeting a car. Felice, Shawn and Rick have been talking about possibly getting some flashing lights for when they are working under there, either plowing, sweeping etc.

**Lakeview & Spencer RD Projects** – Felice has emails out to the engineers on both projects to see where they are at with bidding them out this year to prepare for work next summer.

**Admin** – The 2024 budget was included in the packets for review. No questions at this time. Felice is requesting the purchase of a new server from the Admin Reserves and enclosed a quote from our IT company. The current server was put in service in March of 2018 with the warranty expiring in March of 2021. The IT company has been managing the limited space that is available for the last couple of years, knowing a replacement was in the plans. We are also going to be forced into upgrading the TRIO software from Sequel to Web in 2025 and will need to have the new server before that upgrade takes place. The server unit cost is \$7,914.99 with an estimated installation cost of \$2,500.00 for a total quote of \$10,414.99. This will also be the third year we have cycled new computer leases (3-year terms) on various desktops on our network, so they are not stuck replacing them all at once. They will continue that practice through the budgeting process to ensure that we are covered under warranty.

Motion to approve spending up to \$11,000.00 from Administration Reserve to purchase a new server at the Town Office.

Motion: Kevin Emery Second: Gary Chapman Vote: Unanimous

The Commissioners have approved the County budget. Brownville has an increase of \$12,360.00 with a total of \$141,714.00. Brownville is 2.373% of the total County budget.

**Public Safety – Fire/EMS** – There was a total of 33 calls in October: 13 Fire, 20 EMS. The EMS license has been renewed. All of the breathing apparatus passed the inspection. 1425 is out of service for repairs to the exhaust leak off the manifolds. The Side x Side is in service and will be at the holiday train event. Shawn wanted to acknowledge that 2 of the medical calls this

month were cardiac. These 2 calls could have had a much different turn around if BFD was not around for early interventions.

We finalized the Piscataquis County Fire Protection Agreement and the Commissioners approved it at their meeting this morning. This is a 3-year contract that expired August 31<sup>st</sup> and previously was for \$18,000/yr, with any calls that were over 2 hours were billed an hourly rate for apparatus and personnel. The new contract is \$33,000 with progressive annual increases with anything over 2 hours billed at the new hourly rates (approved by our Board last year) and is effective September 1, 2024. Shawn worked hard to provide data and proof of the need for a significant increase in the rates. He also noted that the proposed Lakeview contract will see an increase of 50% due to renew in December.

**Holiday Train** - There have been two meetings for the Holiday Train planning with CPKC to get some basic plans in place. Shawn is meeting with our local agencies and partners next week to discuss responsibilities and procedures. They will reach out to meet with volunteers from the general public as well. They have two volunteer bus drivers that work for the school and the school has given permission to provide two buses to transport people from parking at the Junction Music Park to the Railyard. Don and Colleen Belvin have generously given permission to use their space, and there will also be parking available at Davis Field, however folks will be required to walk to the event from there. The town will need to pay mileage rates for the buses and provide a few porta toilets to be available in the parking areas. CPKC is paying for two to be placed in the railyard. Local CPKC staff asked upper management if they could pay the fees, but they denied the request.

**Code** – Still processing and inspecting plumbing permits.

**Public Works** – Rick has got all of the town trucks inspected. The winter sand pile is finished, and they are just waiting for snow. Eric and Gabe got the rooves done at Whetstone Rest Area. Adam has been working hard cleaning up cemeteries, Davis Field and other town properties. He will be working with Phil this week while Chris is off. Rick is waiting for the new lights, radio and backup camera relocation to be completed in the new truck. The School has requested we provide snow removal services to Brownville Elementary School again this season and the Superintendent has signed an agreement for \$5,000.00 for the season, with the caveat that if we are requested to do additional snowbank removal or pushback with the loader, they will be charged the hourly rate with a minimum 1-hour call out. The agreement is for one year only and needs the Board's approval/signatures.

*Motion to approve and sign the Snow Removal Agreement with MSAD#41 for services at Brownville Elementary School to cover the October 2024 – April 2025 winter season for \$5,000.00*

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

There is an old wood splitter that Rick would like to get rid of. They purchased a new one last year and have no use for the old one. He is asking permission to sell it, not through a bid process, as it isn't that valuable.

*Motion to authorize the Public Works Director to negotiate the sale of the old wood splitter, with no minimum required, and allow the proceeds to be allocated to highway income.*

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

**Truck Bid Opening & Award** –

Ken Jay with a bid of \$1251.00  
Andrew Locke & Lisa Kinsey with a bid of \$7056.00  
Steve Noyes with a bid of \$1895.72  
Mark Ladd with a bid of \$4500.00  
Keith Ferro with a bid of \$3828.00

Motion to award the bid for the 2004 GMC 3500HD public works truck with plow to Andrew Locke & Lisa Kinsey for \$7056.00 to be paid in accordance with the terms listed in the bid notification.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous

**Parks and Rec** – Felice met with Angie Arno from PCEDC, Kristin Peet from AMC, and two other gentlemen from an environmental agency that specializes in assisting with assessments for cleanup of sites using Brownfield funds. Felice has applied for a “phase 1” environmental assessment at Davis Field to see if they would need the land “cleaned up” to develop it for a boat launch. If approved they are hoping to complete the basic assessment before snow falls. We would then need to apply for funding for the “Phase 2” assessment where they would test soils and explore in greater detail the extent of any hazards on the land. A representative from DEP was also in town and they stopped at the town office. Felice and he discussed the old dump (at the Ball field). Their records show it was closed pre-1976. The Town did not acquire it from the Davis Family until 1984. So, Felice believes that it was not a “Town” dump, which is good news as the Brownfield funds can’t be used by a current owner that “created” the contamination of the land. More information to come as things develop.

**Water/Sewer** – Phil has been getting ready for Winter, flushing, draining, and installing hydrant flags for both systems. Phil and Chris have completed all mowing for the year, they got it done in time for the Sewer inspection which went well. Everything passed. The DEP will be releasing the license/permit to the town for the wastewater treatment plant and all of its systems. It will be good for another five years. The crane on the back of the truck is not working properly and it either needs to go down to Messer to have them fix it (covered by warranty), or they can guide us how to fix it on our own; however, that would nullify the warranty if there were any other problems. Phil is worried about the time that it would take to fix and it’s a 2 ½ hour drive one way to Messer. With the winter season approaching he is worried about not having the plow here to use if they had to keep it for any length of time. He’s looking for a recommendation on what to do. The Board is in agreement that Phil should make an appointment to have it looked at, to see what kind of fix its going to be and how long it will take. Then he will be able to judge when the best time will be to leave it down there to get fixed. There are a couple of digs coming up, November 14<sup>th</sup> at Andrews, the corner of Gerrish and Meulendyk to cap and old sewer line that has been giving them issues. November 19<sup>th</sup> they plan to tie into the water main for Lenny Coover over on Church St. Seth from EJP will be coming up to help because this is the first tap they have all done since Kevin has left, they all feel its best to have someone who’s used to doing it there for backup. There will be one more dig at 295 Main Rd before it gets too cold. There is no one there for the winter and they have requested it to be shut off, but the curb stop won’t turn so it needs to be dug up and replaced. Water meters are pretty much all replaced. They just need to get the bigger ones, but those can wait until the next budget. Phil should have all of the old meters all stripped and ready to go to the junk yard by the end of the week. The new sewer pump should be here by Wednesday, or the 27<sup>th</sup> at the latest.

11. **Open Session** – Shelly mentioned the sidewalks in town and she had someone bring up a concern with a property on the corner of Front Street. There are a bunch of decorations and a fire pit in the “sidewalk,” and worried if people actually want to walk on them that they are unable to pass without going into the road. Emily brought up that all of the sidewalks are horrible, or not there at all. When she is out walking her baby, she needs to walk along the road anyways because she cannot push her stroller down the sidewalks.

Lance brought up that the times on the “School Zone” sign are not correct. He didn’t know what the process would be to get them changed. Cars go through way too fast. He also asked if it would be possible to get some Sheriff’s Deputies in town to help slow people down. Shawn says that the Sheriff’s Office only responds here for reactive calls, and if we wanted them to spend more time in town, we would have to contract with them separately for non-emergent calls.

Stan asked about the town’s street sweeper. He has been cleaning the old sliding hill and wanted to know if Rick could come down and sweep the road there. Felice is unsure of Rick’s

availability, or if the town crew has swapped it over for snow removal, but she will check with him.

**12. Next Meeting – Tuesday, October 15, 2024 at 6:00pm**

**13. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn at 8:36pm.

Motion: Shelly Ekholm Second: Kevin Emery Vote: Unanimous


Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Wyman

Deputy Clerk/Admin Asst

  
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Byron Weymouth, Selectboard Chair

  
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Shelly Ekholm

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Kevin Emery

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James Hartin

  
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Gary Chapman