

**TOWN OF BEDFORD  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES  
September 11, 2019  
BEDFORD MEETING ROOM  
10 MEETINGHOUSE ROAD**

**1. ROLL CALL:** A meeting of the Bedford Town Council was held on Wednesday, September 11, 2019 at the Bedford Meeting Room, 10 Meetinghouse Rd. Present were Bill Duschatko (Chair), Melissa Stevens (Vice Chair) and Councilors Denise Ricciardi, Phil Greazzo, Dave Gilbert, Chris Bandazian, and Catherine Rombeau. Also present was Town Manager Rick Sawyer.

Chairman Duschatko opened the meeting at 7:45 PM.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Led by Chairman Duschatko.

Chairman Duschatko asked for a moment of silence in remembrance of the anniversary of the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

**3. PUBLIC COMMENTS** –

Dave Chisholm, 6 First Street, read a statement on the unassigned tax fund.

*For several years I have wondered why Bedford's taxes have continued to rise despite the numerous commercial developments that have taken place all over Town. We also have continued to see residential construction. Both of these have added considerable dollars to the Town's tax base along with increasing property values.*

*I remember hearing that a new school would eventually decrease our taxes. We now have a great school system. However, our school board has lost sight of what is a need and what is a want. Our school budget continues to sky rocket. I hope this council does not follow suit.*

*I will close my remarks by saying I have elderly neighbors who wonder if they can continue to live in their house on a fixed income. I'm sure there are many other senior and Bedford citizens who share their concerns.*

*In light of this I implore this council to use the un-expended fund to reduce our overall budget and tax rate.*

*Please consider helping the residents who want to continue to live in this great town.*

**4. NEW BUSINESS**

Councilor Ricciardi stated that some states have a proclamation in place that has a national health day for children. She wrote the proclamation and was grateful that the governor signed it and she would like to make it an issue in the State and make awareness in our schools and in our town since it stemmed from here. It's all health environmental issues for children. It will always be held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday in October. This year it is on October 10<sup>th</sup>. She hopes that the residents would recognize it and talk to their children about and maybe talk to your schools and get them interested in helping our children be healthier.

**a. Appointment to PFAS Commission**

Councilor Stevens thought they had a lot of great candidates and was happy to see who came in and the overall interest and expertise. They bed for volunteers so it was a good surprise to see all of them. She would like to see Chris Bandazian continue along with this issue since he has been such a big part of it from the beginning. She would like to see if they could write a letter of support for Dr. James Chithalen and see if they can get him appointed per paragraph 7, which is two citizens with backgrounds in environmental science. She thought he would be well positioned and very qualified to serve in that capacity. Regarding paragraph 9, which is three residents, one from each of the affected towns who are members of drinking water related environmental advocacy citizens' organizations, she would like to see if they could get Emma Paradis as their Bedford representative by writing a letter to their State Senator.

Mr. Sawyer stated that Bedford only has the one appointment they are making tonight, but paragraph #9 does allow for somebody from Bedford.

Councilor Gilbert thought this position needed experience, background and representation experience so that's why he would vote for Chris Bandazian. He doesn't have a problem with the recommendation for Dr. Chithalen or the other one.

Councilor Greazzo thought it was a tough decision, because they are all very interested and very capable in their own areas. Chris Bandazian has definitely been on top of it, but he has a lot of stuff that he does. That's a lot of time commitment for that number of years. He's on a lot of commissions and does a lot of great things for the Town and he wondered if this is another thing he can take on his plate. Dr. Chithalen had a lot of great experience as well, but thought he had too many conflicts. Ms. Paradis has been there since the beginning and has been personally affected.

Councilor Rombeau wanted to know if they could make a motion to nominate somebody for the position and also recommend for the other positions and if they could do that together. Chairman Duschatko stated that he would rather have two separate motions.

Councilor Gilbert wanted to know, as a board, what they want from their representative. Who is going to better serve the Town, what's the best interest of Bedford in this commission. Councilor Rombeau thought the context of Chris Bandazian's experience and role and working with the Town throughout this process was useful. She didn't know if they were looking for lived experience and advocacy, pure science experience or experience navigating like they've had the last couple of years. Councilor Greazzo thought that Chris Bandazian hit all of the criteria.

**MOTION by Councilor Stevens that the Bedford Town Council appoint Chris Bandazian as the Bedford representative to serve on the Commission on the Environmental and Public Health Impacts of Perfluorinated Chemicals with a term to expire in 2024. Seconded by Councilor Greazzo.**

Councilor Greazzo was impressed by the number of people that came out and the reasons they came out to be involved. He wishes there was a way to appoint them all.

Councilor Ricciardi asked if there could be a subcommittee and the response was no.

**Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0-1 (Bandazian abstained)**

**MOTION by Councilor Rombeau that the Bedford Town Council pursuant to section 126-A:79a-II-(9) recommend Emma Paradis, to the Senator appointed to the commission, to represent Bedford as the drinking water related environmental advocacy citizen.**

Councilor Gilbert mentioned that the citizen had to be in a group and wanted to know if that was a real sticking point. Mr. Sawyer stated that it was straight out of the Legislation. He's not aware of a Bedford advocacy group unless they call it the Green Meadow Road Neighborhood Group and he would have no problem calling it that.

**Seconded by Councilor Greazzo. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.**

**MOTION by Councilor Stevens that the Bedford Town Council, under 126-A:79a-II (7), write a letter to the appointed Senators recommending the appointment of Dr. James Chithalen as a citizen to serve with a background in environmental science and/or public health. Seconded by Councilor Rombeau.**

Councilor Gilbert wanted to know how real the conflict of interest issue was. Councilor Greazzo thought it was pretty significant. Not only does he work for the State in that capacity, but he also lives in one of the zones that may be affected. Councilor Stevens pointed out that they are looking for someone with that background, so whoever they pick is going to have some sort of conflict. Greazzo understood they may have that conflict, but the time he's suggesting that he'll take off of work, the amount of coordinating he'll have to do with his department, with his boss and potentially what may happen with the Town having to mitigate any PFAS contamination in that area; he's on both sides. He's either contaminated and needs to get it dealt with or he's an advocate of the Town trying to look for the Town's best interest and he doesn't know how he could do both. Councilor Rombeau thought he was incredibly qualified and was here and showed the commitment to want to do it.

The Council discussed the recommendation and any concerns they had.

**Vote taken – Motion Passed – 5-1-1 (Greazzo-nay; Bandazian abstained as he didn't participate in the interviews)**

**b. Other New Business – None.**

**5. OLD BUSINESS**

c. **Other Old Business** – None.

## 6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

d. **Public Session – August 14, 2019**

**MOTION by Councilor Gilbert that the Bedford Town Council approve the minutes of the August 14, 2019 public session. Seconded by Councilor Greazzo. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 6-0-1 (Bandazian abstained as he was not present at that meeting).**

## 7. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

- 1) People are running School Bus stop signs. Please stop for school buses.
- 2) Bedford experienced two fatal accidents on back to back nights since our last meeting and my condolences go out to the families involved. As I stated in my last report DWI arrests are up 100% over last year at the same time and we need to curb that trend immediately.
- 3) Student parking program: 186 spaces available, 172 names provided from the lottery, 19 more names this year, 17 did not have a license, and remaining spaces were issued to those on the waitlist. It is possible that there will not be enough spaces for all that want spaces on campus or in a Town lot at the start of school in the future. They met with the Superintendent of Schools and the Principal about doing things differently next year to avoid the line that occurred this year.
- 4) September 12<sup>th</sup> – Thursday Theater, “A Dog’s Journey” 2PM; “Rocketman” 6:30 PM.
- 5) September 22<sup>nd</sup> – The Educational Farm at Joppa Hill, Fall Fair, 1-5 PM.
- 6) September 23<sup>rd</sup> – BeBold Speaker Series, “Accomplished, Award-Winning, and Addicted” Bedford Library, 7 PM.
- 7) October 8<sup>th</sup> – The Bedford Fire Department Open House, 5-8 PM at the Safety Complex, 55 Constitution Drive.

## 8. COUNCILOR COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

Councilor Rombeau attended the Fire Department pinning ceremony prior to the meeting. Today was a hard day for people in different ways so to be able to end it by celebrating the Fire Department and the sacrifices they make and their families make was a positive way to tie in the end of the day.

Councilor Bandazian commented on the public comment that was read at the beginning of the meeting. Since 2010, a substantial amount of municipal revenue has been taken by the State and are on a path to continue to do that for at least another two years. That includes revenue sharing and he read from an article in the Union Leader and what Senator Warren Rudman had to say about it. That’s a reason that the taxes have gone up. Another reason is the meals and rooms tax and that the State has taken more than half the Town’s share. It’s also affected by unfunded pensions and the Town’s share of

gas tax. If the taxes are going up it's because Concord has declared that there's a surplus and that surplus is the Town's money. He expressed his sympathies for Bernie Otterson's family who passed away. He served as a Cemetery Trustee and was on the Friends of the Bedford Cemeteries and has been an outstanding member of the community.

Councilor Stevens invited everyone out for the crowning of Miss Bedford and Miss Bedford's Outstanding Teen this Saturday at McKelvie School at 5:30pm. These women are eloquent speakers and extremely talented. Most of them are focused on their education so they are awarded scholarship money.

Councilor Gilbert encouraged people to attend the EFJH fall fair on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. The EFJH sells meats, vegetables and eggs. He and Chris Bandazian will be there. They need additional board members, so if you are interested, talk to him. Councilor Stevens asked about ordering turkeys for Thanksgiving and was told that they do that in July. Councilor Bandazian stated that it's the best turkey you will ever have.

Councilor Ricciardi mentioned that the Police Department through the month of August had almost 6,000 calls and there are increases in incidents that the Police have to address. Despite the significant staffing shortage, they post significant results in crime prevention and harm reduction. There was an industry publication that listed Bedford as the 7<sup>th</sup> safest among the 221 towns and 13 cities in New Hampshire.

Chairman Duschatko discussed the ranking with Chief Bryfonski and thought the number should be higher. They do a great job and his thanks goes out to them and the Fire Department.

#### **9. NON-PUBLIC – RSA 91-A:3 II(d)**

**MOTION by Councilor Bandazian to go into Non-Public Session at 8:27 PM under RSA 91-A:3 II (d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community. Seconded by Councilor Gilbert.**

**Roll Call Vote: Ricciardi-aye, Greazzo-aye, Gilbert-aye, Duschatko-aye, Stevens-aye, Bandazian-aye, Rombeau-aye.**

Public Session ended at 8:27 PM.

Public Session reconvened at 10:10 PM.

**MOTION by Councilor Bandazian to seal the minutes of the Non-Public Session. Seconded by Councilor Greazzo.**

**Roll Call Vote: Ricciardi-aye, Greazzo-aye, Gilbert-aye, Duschatko-aye, Stevens-aye, Bandazian-aye, Rombeau-aye.**

The Town Council discussed the employee luncheon being held on October 17<sup>th</sup>.

**MOTION by Councilor Bandazian to adjourn public session at 10:20 PM. Seconded by Councilor Gilbert. Vote taken – Motion Passed–7-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Boufford