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Belmont Selectmen meetings soon to be live streamed on public access TV



THE BELMONT BOARD OF SELECTMEN met Monday at the Corner Meeting House on Fuller Street. Left to right, selectman Jon Pike, chairman Ruth Mooney, and selectman Ron Cormier. (JIM CLARK/CITIZEN)

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BELMONT—Following a report from Fire Department Lt. and Inspector Mike Newhall regarding the trash and discarded drug needle problem created by transient and homeless persons at the Belmont town beach, selectmen on Monday turned to a number of routine matters.

Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin informed the Board about a PEG Access Support Grant

from MetroCast, part of funds paid by the cable TV provider in its franchise agreement with the town. Selectmen approved, accepting \$1,167 from MetroCast, which will make up most of \$1,500 to be forwarded to Lakes Region Public Access Television of Laconia.

LRPA will set up, record, air and archive live stream broadcasts of future selectmen meetings, to be broadcast on channel 26, its town government channel.

An amount of 75 cents is charged to each Belmont MetroCast subscriber, to be used in support of public access TV for the town. The live stream broadcasts will utilize town-owned video equipment. There are currently 1,556 MetroCast subscribers in the town of Belmont. LRPA also serves the city of Laconia, as well as the towns of Gilford, Meredith and Northwood.

The board heard from Building Inspection and Code Enforcement Officer Steve Paquin regarding ongoing efforts to construct a bath house at Sargent Park. He informed selectmen that he has been in touch with an administrator for the State Correctional Facility in Concord. A work detail from the facility builds structures, and Paquin said the state facility has offered to construct the bathhouse for the cost of material, plus an additional 20 percent.

Although the final cost has not been determined, it is believed that the construction of the bath house will run in the range of about \$7,000. The structure would be prefabricated and assembled at the State Correctional Facility, then transported to Sargent Park.

When the structure will be assembled and made available for delivery is still not known. Paquin told selectmen he would like a concrete foundation and sewer line to be installed soon. After the structure is delivered, a plumber and electrician will install lights, a heating system and a bathroom. The structure will have a metal roof and not be shingled.

The Sargent Park bath house would be utilized mostly during the summer and warm weather months, and is not expected to be used during the winter.

Selectmen approved and signed a loan agreement with Northway Bank of Berlin for the Hoadley Road culvert project, in the amount of approximately \$330,000. In March, town voters approved a warrant article for the project and the issuance of bonds for \$375,000. Last month, selectmen approved the issuance of those bonds to be financed by Northway Bank, which has a branch in Belmont.

The bond issue is for 10 years at an interest rate of 2.9 percent. Work on the Hoadley Road culvert project will begin later this summer, and is expected by completed by late September.

Selectmen heard from Library Trustee Diana Johnson, who spoke on work that has been done to correct long-term structural, foundation and drainage problems at the town library. A total of \$111,150 has already been spent, with the money coming from an existing library trust fund.

Selectmen unanimously approved expending an additional \$42,345 for additional exterior drainage work with the money coming out of an existing capital reserve fund that currently contains \$324,000.

The board adopted revisions and a clarification to its social media policy pertaining to Facebook pages posted by various town departments. The new policy is modeled after one passed in Exeter. The clarification concerns what is and what is not permitted to appear in comments by the public on each department's Facebook page. A statement of the policy appears on each Facebook page.

Selectmen also approved a slight change in policy regarding the detail rate for town police officers performing work for private businesses and organizations outside of their normal police duties.

Currently, the town charges outside entities \$70 per hour for private police details, with \$40 provided to officers, \$20 going to the town and \$10 an hour for use of a police cruiser. Police Chief Mark Lewandoski recommended that the fee for officers be increased to \$45, and the change was approved by the board. There will be no change in the existing detail rate, with the \$70 an hour fee remaining the same.

Beaudin informed the board that upcoming union contract negotiations with police and fire department personnel will begin soon. She said that for the first time, the departments will be split into separate negotiating groups, with each negotiating their contracts independently and not combined as in the past.

No action was taken on a bid of \$555 from Bay Ridge Motors of Staten Island, N.Y. to purchase a 2004 police vehicle with high mileage that is at the end of its operational use by the department. The car dealership is a buyer of used police cars.

Selectman Jon Pike said the vehicle is worth much more, and should be sold at a car auction. He added that the parts on the vehicle alone are worth more than the \$555 bid that Bay Ridge Motors is offering.

Following the public portion of the meeting, selectmen then went into non-public session.

The next meeting of the board will take place at 5 p.m. on Monday, June 6, at the Corner Meeting House on Fuller Street.

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