

MINUTES OF THE BELMONT TOWN ADVISORY BOARD MEETING OF JUNE 27, 2020

Members present: Anthony (Buddy) Perchetti, Donna Motis, Theodore (Tay) Schuff, Larry Marshall

Called to order by Chairman Buddy Perchetti.

Guests introduced themselves: Arnold Knightly – Nye County Public Information Officer; John Koenig – Nye County Commissioner; Lorinda Wichman – Nye County Commissioner; Savannah Rucker – Nye County Comptroller.

1. **General Public Comment:** Commissioner Koenig read into the minutes a letter from Neal Jones – See Exhibit A. General discussion from those attending this meeting regarding this letter. Buddy stated that the Belmont board can not and has not directed staff to do anything. If we need help, we ask BOCC if something needs to be done.
2. **For Possible Action:** Discussion and deliberation regarding meeting minutes from September 14, 2019. Tay motioned to approved the minutes as written from the board meeting of September 14, 2019. Larry seconded the motion. Approved by Buddy, Donna, Tay and Larry.
3. **Information/Update from County Commission:** Commissioner Koenig gave a report on Covid-19 and compliance. The sheriff and other commissioners are working hard to handle what should be done in our county. Savannah gave update on county budget. Due to the close of so many businesses, the effect of revenue collected from sales tax etc. has dropped. The Belmont road repairs were done with road tax which is generated from fuel taxes. The Federal Government “Cares Act” is to provide funding for each state and county to use to deal with and mitigate the coronavirus, approximately 8 ½ million dollars. Excess money not spent will be returned to the federal government. This is not used for regular budget items. Lorinda Wickman wants to thank everyone for all our support during her term in office.
4. **For Possible Action:** Discussion, deliberation and direction to staff regarding levying a common tax rate for common services in the unincorporated town of Belmont: Savannah Rucker provided information: Assessing Tax Rate for Town Summary – See Exhibit B (1) & B (2). This item was brought to the Belmont town board due to the comments at County Commissioner meetings from Neal Jones about Belmont town not having a budget. There is no separate legal budget for the town of Belmont because there is no separate tax rate for the town of Belmont. Savannah explained the difference between our tax rate as it is now and how a specific tax rate for Belmont would affect us in the future. The Belmont tax rate would be applied to the properties in Belmont. Property tax owners in town would see their property taxes go up. Nye County take care of costs of the maintenance within Belmont Town from County General funds. Does the town have needs outside of what is being done now, then a separate Belmont Town tax rate should be put in place? If not, the tax rate can be left as is. Donna made a motion to not have a Belmont Town tax rate and to leave our tax rate as is. Motion seconded by Larry. No further discussion, motion was approved by Buddy, Donna, Tay and Larry. This board thanked Savannah for the information provided.

General Public Comment (second): Tay stated that starting tomorrow there will church services by Greg Kilgore in Belmont every other Sunday at 10:30. Everyone is welcome.

Board Comments: John Terras asked about the flag pole that was supposed to be purchased to replace the broken one at the fire house. The County purchased one that is very lightweight and small and it has never been brought to Belmont and installed. Commissioner Koenig stated he will look into getting us a flagpole. He will provide a County Seal for the building.

Set time and date of next meeting: September 5, 2020.

The board would like to thank all the county officials for coming to this meeting to help with us and for all the hard work you have done to get us to this point.

Also, Donna stated that in December 2019 the Board of County Commissioners approved the re-appointment of Tay, Buddy and Donna to the Belmont board for another two years.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes done by Donna Motis

Exhibit A

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR JUNE 27, 2020 BTAB MEETING

I submit this public comment via e-mail with respect to agenda item # 4 to be read and ask that it is be included in the minutes of this meeting.

Agenda item # 4 is stated to be about "levying a common tax rate for common services" for Belmont. The background documentation for the agenda item includes a public comment to the BoCC regarding the lack of a budget for the Belmont Town Advisory Board (BTAB) made by myself on May 11, 2020.

First, the BTAB has no legal authority with respect to the levying of taxes and has no authority to direct staff to take any actions whatsoever. The BTAB is a liaison between the community of Belmont and the Nye County BoCC. That is all.

Second, nobody wishes to have to pay more taxes. Taxes are a part of life, they fund the necessary services we use and depend on. Taxes are a necessity.

Third, my opinion is that if we wish to make improvements to our town and these improvements have a financial cost, as most things do, we should have to pay for these improvements. Somebody has to pay for them, why shouldn't it be the people who stand to benefit from the improvements? Does anybody feel right about having to pay for goods and services that they do not get to use and enjoy? It is called personal responsibility which includes financial and monetary responsibility.

Allegedly, the entity of the Town of Belmont owns property. Nye County has yet to be able to tell me who the entity of the Town of Belmont is. Nye County Manager Tim Sutton is the contact person for the entity of the Town of Belmont, but he cannot tell me who he is the contact for. The BTAB want to make improvements to one of the parcels held by the Town of Belmont, but one of their questions was; who is going to pay for these improvements? I believe that the owner should be responsible for paying for improvements and maintenance of their property. Only seems fair.

But, the Town of Belmont as well as the BTAB do not have a budget to pay for anything and according to the County Comptroller, no expenditures are ever made for Belmont. All one has to do is review the meeting minutes of the BTAB and they will see that every year the BTAB requests for reimbursements for expenses related to the BTAB and Belmont. Last year, the BTAB noted that they would just ask the BoCC for money for a project. Of course, this request is never brought to the public's attention in a BoCC meeting. That way, the County can continue to claim that no expenditures are ever made for Belmont, therefore they do not need a budget.

When does Nye County and the Town of Belmont start being honest about what happens? If you do not wish to be taxed for expenses related to Belmont, then stop doing things that cost other people money. Time to start being responsible for our actions.

Respectfully submitted,

Neal Jones
Belmont property owner
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Assessing Tax Rate for Town Summary

Belmont Town Advisory Board Meeting 6/27/20, 10:00 AM

Benefits:

- The Town Board would have access to funds for town use:
 - Town expenses for building improvements, facilities, services, etc....
 - Town events and recreation.
 - Town services, including trash, fire department, etc....
 - The Town Board could consider financing projects, IE: park or a new facility.
- Town budget would include a capital improvement fund funded by County taxes
 - Capital funds can be used for capital repairs of Town facilities or town projects.

Things to Note:

- The Town Board will be required to meet regularly to approve expenditures from Town funds.
- The Town Board will be required to meet occasionally to discuss plans for town improvements.
- An annual budget is required to be generated, typically by Nye County Finance, on behalf of all advisory boards. The advisory board reviews and approves budget, then budget goes before BoCC for final approval.
- Budgets require monitoring, whether by Town or County staff.

Drawbacks

- Budgets are time-consuming for Town Board and the County to administer.
- If budgets are overspent, budget violations could be issued.
- If the funds aren't spent, the tax rate could be called into question.
- Property tax owners in the Town of Belmont will see their tax rates go up.

Current Budget Situation for Belmont

- Nye County provides funding for following items from the County General Fund tax rate or the County Capital fund rate:
 - Department of Emergency Management pays for utilities at the firehouse and certifies community emergency response.
 - Nye County B&G pays for maintenance at the firehouse.
 - Nye County Admin pays for portable toilets, weed spraying, insurance on County buildings, and other Town costs.
 - BoCC approved roof replacement funding for Courthouse and Nye Finance administered procurement.

Questions

- Does the Town have needs outside of the needs currently being met by NC?
- Does the Town want a tax rate? If yes, see the next steps section below.

Assessing Tax Rate for Town Summary

Belmont Town Advisory Board Meeting 6/27/20, 10:00 AM

Next Steps

- If the Town wants a tax rate:
 - NC Comptroller will bring back an agenda item before the BTAB to discuss and deliberate to set a tax rate. During that meeting, the funding available to the Town will be calculated to identify the funding yielded from each tax rate in question.
 - If a tax rate is approved, NC Comptroller will bring the recommendation forward to the BoCC for their review of the tax rate. BoCC can approve or deny, though they typically side with the decision of the Advisory Board.
 - DTAX will be informed of the new tax rate, and the first budget year will be FY22, beginning 7/1/21.
- If the Town does not want a tax rate, no further action is required.

Contact Information:

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