

**TOWN OF SOUTH BETHANY
BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
OCTOBER 21, 2011**

The South Bethany Budget and Finance Committee met on October 21, 2011, at Town Hall. Pat Voveris, Steve Farrow, John Fields, Kent Stephan, Melvin Cusick, and Renee McDorman were in attendance.

The meeting was called to order and prior minutes were approved.

The first topic discussed was the Temporary Mercantile License which some neighboring towns support. The concept was raised by several residents who asked we consider a license on a smaller scale for infrequent services to their homes such as window washing, gutter cleaning, etc. Dan West spoke to the idea with agreement, as he sees service people from property owners' main residences out of town coming in to do small jobs for their clients. Comments from property owner Dennis Roberts were distributed to and read by committee members. After discussion, the group unanimously agreed to recommend to Council that a Temporary Mercantile License be established. The license would be for a 30 day period at a cost of \$30 and could be issued twice within a year to an applicant, after which time a full license would have to be purchased.

Pat reviewed her snapshot on the 1995 Stormwater Management Report and the upcoming financial requests from the Canal Water Quality Committee. Melvin reviewed what was put in place after the GMB study and pointed out our limitations due to available space in our developed town.

Public comment came from George Junkin who spoke to the following:

1. A proposed pilot program for a diffuser system in the Anchorage Canal costing approximately \$25,000.
2. A proposed study for potential retrofits along the east side of Route 1 to improve stormwater management costing \$12,000.
3. A line item for dredging the canals be added to South Bethany depreciation schedule (which had been done prior to this Budget and Finance Committee Meeting).

Much discussion took place. George provided scientific information as to the success of aeration in contained bodies of water, i.e., lakes and ponds. He also spoke to the length of time our canal water sits before interacting with the bay (122 days). The purpose of aeration is the result of clean canal water that is both fishable and swimmable. The scope of such a project would mean more than \$200,000 of expense to our town, and grant money does not appear available.

The study for retrofits on the east side of Route 1 would be a proactive measure to treat stormwater before it traveled to our canals.

Pat raised the question about the purpose and history of the canals. John Fields elaborated that the canals were dug to drain the land so building lots could be sold for construction of homes. Dirt from digging the canals was used as fill to raise the level of the building lots. In time, the Town required lot owners to bulkhead the canals, and this made the canals more than ditches to drain the land. This made the lots waterfront and waterview properties, which increased their value. Lot owners built docks for boating recreation and boat access to the back bays. In the early days it was said that the canals were fishable and swimmable.

YTD financials were reviewed by Renee. At meeting time \$458,000 has arrived for rental revenues. Budgeted amount was \$470,000, so we are very close, and Renee is following up on strays.

Yard waste overage was reviewed. Costs for trash, recycling, and yard waste were compared to neighboring towns. Melvin provided information on our current trash service provider now gearing up to include yard waste service. Further discussion took place about changing yard waste service from 12 months each year to perhaps 9 months.

Steve Farrow presented an outline for an investment policy for South Bethany. Pat contacted the auditor for recommendation on allocation of funds and provided his written response. The committee agreed that whatever policy we recommended to the Council would include parameters that administration could be done by Renee.

Tracking internet rentals is an ongoing topic of conversation by the committee. All were in agreement to add a line item on the rental form for owners to supply their license number used on any internet advertising. We will continue to research how other resort towns monitor this activity.

Long term planning was briefly discussed, and a handout to include all of our capital asset depreciation was given to all for review. Many thanks to Keith and Renee for completing these spreadsheets in time for our meeting. The committee still has the work to "specify" long term reserves and will strive to complete this for the next budget.

The next meeting is planned for November 18th at 3:00 p.m. at Town Hall.