

SELECTMEN'S MEETING – DECEMBER 3, 2008

*Minutes are not final until reviewed and approved by the Board.
Review and approval of minutes generally takes place at the next regularly scheduled meeting.*

ATTENDANCE

Selectmen Nancy L. Carlson, Bruce L. Tatro, and Deborah J. Davis. Town Administrator Elizabeth Fox also was present.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Selectmen reviewed and approved accounts payable and payroll manifests.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Carlson called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

INFORMATION

Carpenter Home Holiday event Selectmen received an invitation to the Home's holiday festivities, scheduled for Sunday, December 14th from 1:00 to 3:00.

Highway Block Grant Selectmen received notice from NH-DOT advising that the Town's highway block grant is anticipated to be \$165,464 versus \$159,232 in 2008.

Cheshire County Proposed 2009 Budget Selectmen reviewed a cover letter from the Cheshire County Board of Commissioners advising that the now-released proposed budget for 2009 includes an 8.1% increase over the budget for 2008. The tax impact of the budget increase is more than 17%. In Swanzey's case (if all other factors remain unchanged) the budget would result in a county tax increase of 60 cents, with the 2009 County rate being set at \$3.90 (about a quarter less than the town's tax rate in 2008). Review of the proposed budget begins December 9th.

Variance application denial Fox reported that R. and D. McClure have filed suit in Superior Court as a result of ZBA denial of their variance application seeking to operate a dog breeding business at 10 Aldrich Road.

CITIZEN CONCERNS – none presented

APPOINTMENTS

6:45 – 8:10 DPW Director Lee Dunham (see **OLD BUSINESS**)

8:15 – 8:50 Fire Chief Skantze (see **OLD BUSINESS**)

DEPARTMENT REPORTS – none scheduled

NOMINATIONS – MRSD School Board member, March 2009 (see **OLD BUSINESS**)

CONFIRMATIONS – none pending

ENFORCEMENT – none pending

PUBLIC HEARINGS – none scheduled

CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

School Board vacancy Selectmen received four nominations to fill until March 2009 the vacancy created by the resignation of K. Goodenough. Selectmen agreed to base their decision upon the nomination forms, without requiring interviews. Fox will notify candidates of the process that the Board will use.

Polling Hours – March Election Selectmen considered modifying polling hours used for town and school elections (now 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.) to match those used for state and federal primary and general election (8 a.m. to 7 p.m.).

Motion by Tatro to adopt standardized polling hours that will run from 8 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Second by Davis. All in favor.

Department of Public Works With DPW Director Dunham, Selectmen continued discussion of the proposed DPW 2009 budget. Topics discussed include sharing expenses for repairs and equipment with the Sidewalk Committee, budgeting for diesel fuel (Dunham will revise figures after receipt of the November bill), implementing fuel conservation techniques, asphalt and cold patch expense, and likely anticipated costs of implementing a pavement management system, as well as the process of preparing the management system. The group discussed scheduling and costs of repairs to specific roads.

Dunham presented Selectmen with a draft road plan, which he will use to direct a rotation of road repairs. Selectmen reviewed the draft plan. Dunham will return to the Board with a more detailed plan, including a report of existing conditions.

Regarding Cemeteries, Facilities & Parks Maintenance, the group's discussion topics included expense of fertilizer/lime/grub control, and evaluation of eliminating an application of fertilizer. Dunham will reexamine the budget to try to locate any remaining potential cost-cutting measures. Selectmen recommended establishing a plan for mower replacement, and discussed provision of dumpsters and management of trash at Richardson Park and Lane Field and Brown Field.

In response to a question from Fox, Dunham reaffirmed the need for the replacement truck incorporated into the work-in-progress Capital Improvement Plan.

Cemetery fee schedule Selectmen reviewed proposed changes to cemetery fees provided by Grounds and Facilities Maintenance Supervisor Faulkner – Attachment #1.

Motion by Davis to adopt the new fee schedule. Second by Tatro. All in favor.

Keene Paramedic Intercept Service Fox reported receipt on November 21, 2008 of a notice from the City of Keene advising that the City would no longer be providing paramedic intercept service to the Town. Included with the 11/21/08 letter was a copy of a May 22, 2007 letter from the City of Keene to the same effect. Selectmen reviewed and discussed a draft response to the City's most recent notice prepared by Attorney Bradley. Board members agreed that a report of the number of times the paramedic intercept service has been required by Swanzey would facilitate their consideration of the matter.

Selectmen agreed to authorize Attorney Bradley's response.

Fire Department Selectmen reviewed with Fire Chief Skantze proposed plans for internal renovations to the West Swanzey fire station that would result in office spaces, a lounge area, and a second floor bathroom. Fox said that the fire station maintenance expendable trust account contains funds sufficient to cover the renovations. Francis Faulkner has indicated to Skantze that he could begin work immediately, and anticipates completion in approximately three weeks of uninterrupted time. Skantze also outlined a longer-term plan to retrofit part of the ground floor of the station into a communications room, and to improve flow by redesigning gear storage facilities.

Motion by Tatro to appropriate \$16,000 from the fire station maintenance expendable trust account for construction of offices and other internal improvements to the West Swanzey fire station. Second by Davis. All in favor.

The group reviewed Skantze's proposal to purchase a printer/copier/scanner for the new offices at the West Swanzey fire station. Networked computers could make use of the machine. Skantze said that he had taken advantage of Police Department research and multiple quotes to select the machine; the proposed vendor services the Town Hall copier.

Fox recommended using funds that had been allocated for start-up of the new full-time chief position.

Motion by Davis to authorize the expenditure of \$2,873 from the 2008 fire chief position startup budget for the purchase of a Konica-Minolta printer/copier/scanner. Second by Tatro. All in favor.

The group reviewed Skantze's proposal to use 2008 Fire Department budget funds to purchase sets of firefighter protective clothing (\$10,039.47) and Class 3 vests (\$1,428), and to re-number and identify with radio call signs Department apparatus (\$1,400). Skantze also informed Selectmen that he intended to replace his communications minitor V pager. (The group noted that expenditures of less than \$1,000 do not require the authorization of the Board of Selectmen.)

Motion by Tatro to authorize the total expenditure of \$12,867.47 from the Fire Department operating budget for the purchase of protective clothing, Class 3 vests, and for re-numbering apparatus. Second by Davis. All in favor.

Fire Department Invoice With Fire Chief Skantze, Selectmen discussed payment of invoice #144861 charging \$187.19 for a chrome tail pipe, a repair that specifically had not been authorized by the Board (August 20, 2008 meeting minutes), prior to the Board's hiring of the new fire chief. Skantze will return the invoice to the company.

Fire Department burn exercise Fire Chief Skantze reported that the basic light burn exercise conducted at the former Bardwell farm was successful. Forty-five firefighters took part in the training.

Budget 2009 update Fox reported that the Town's trend in claims has resulted in an increase to 1.01 of the worker's compensation experience modification factor, eliminating the premium discount; Fox has revised the budget accordingly.

To minimize administrative expenses of changes to health insurance, Fox recommended initiating the new co-pay deduction as of January 1, in advance of implementation of the new policy on February 1. Selectmen discussed this recommendation, and agreed that it would be cost effective.

Motion by Tatro to authorize Fox to initiate the new health insurance co-pay plan on January 1. Second by Carlson. All in favor.

In a general discussion of the 2009 budget, topics included setting a date to discuss the finalized budget, and efforts to locate any possible remaining opportunities for budget reductions. For the Board's next discussion, Fox will further analyze the capital reserve and expendable trust accounts.

Conservation Easement – Moore Nanotechnologies Selectmen received the draft easement, and requested review of the easement by Town Attorney Bradley in preparation for Board discussion.

CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

Old Home Day Committee Fox reported a resignation received, and a second resignation anticipated. Upon resignation of all current members, Selectmen will post notice inviting candidates for Board appointment to the Committee. Board members discussed expanding the Committee to five members.

Town Treasurer's Position Selectmen discussed conversion of the Treasurer's position from elected to appointment, and the duration of the appointment. Fox will discuss term length with Treasurer Hutwelker.

Accepting and expending funds Fox reported that Francis Faulkner has obtained a donation of \$1500 from the Swanzey Cal Ripken League to be used to fix up dugouts at Lane Field.

Motion by Davis to accept the \$1,500 donation, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b, and to authorize expenditure of the donation for repairs to the Lane Field dugouts. Second by Tatro. All in favor.

Other matters Selectmen discussed changing the regular Board of Selectmen meeting night to Tuesdays.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of registration fee for Busick's attendance at FBI LEEDA conference, April 2008 (per employment MOU).
2. Monadnock Regional School District Payment Schedule – January to June 2009. (Selectmen reviewed the apportionment of the 2008/2009 school district appropriations.)
3. Police Department. Approval of purchase of copier printer at \$4,786 from 2008 funds removing lease payments from Budget 2009.
4. Raffle Permits #2008-28 & 30.
5. Added Property Tax Warrant - \$3,450, Tax Map 79 Lot 6-322.
6. Intent to Excavate, Tax Map 86/2 & 24/58.

Motion by Tatro to approve the consent agenda. Second by Davis. All in favor.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Motion by Davis to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2008 regular meeting and non-public session. Second by Tatro. All in favor.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

At 7:45, Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to enter non-public session, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3II(a), to discuss personnel. Present were Carlson, Tatro, Davis, Fox and DPW Director Dunham. Selectmen left non-public session at 8:06 p.m., voting by roll call to seal indefinitely the minutes of the session.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Davis to adjourn; second by Tatro. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:45.

Submitted by

Victoria Reck Barlow
Recording Secretary

LIST OF FUTURE AGENDA/PENDING ITEMS

1. Personnel policy updates – drafting of updates ongoing. Distribution pending.
2. Display on Route 12 (pending enforcement issue) referred to Weston.
3. Disposition of South Grove Street Land acquired by tax deed - pending.
4. RFP – Town Facilities assessment.
5. Hiring – Department of Public Works (1 full time positions).
6. Subdivision Road Standards. Draft developed by DPW Director Dunham distributed to Selectmen. Review pending. Winter Maintenance draft – revisions to priority section requested.
7. NHDOT Projects – development of scope of work and fee proposals for fire suppression systems pending response from NHDOT.
8. WS Sidewalk Committee – work plans & process 2008? Equipment Budget 2009.
9. Conversion of 1997 DPW truck to forest fire vehicle pending/Fleet assessment & disposition of excess vehicles pending.
10. Street Addressing Committee. Review of file and project status underway. Committee meeting to be scheduled.
11. Discussion, defining roles and responsibilities between Selectmen, DPW and West Swanzey Sidewalk Committee. Research underway.
12. Town ordinances – Fireworks. Further consideration deferred to allow for input of full time fire chief following hiring.
13. Carpenter Home Properties – Discussion with counsel re: options. Authorization to investigate pending.
14. Westbrook Court – Class VI – Camuso (Richmond).