

SELECTMEN'S MEETING – APRIL 15, 2009

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

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Selectmen reviewed and approved accounts payable and payroll manifests.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

INFORMATION

Green Business forum April 21, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Franklin Pierce University, Rindge.

Open Space Committee easement celebration April 21, 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Keene State College Camp at Wilson Pond. Davis and Tatro will not be able to attend.

Forest View Estates v. Town of Swanzy Pre-trial has been scheduled.

Sidewalk Committee Sidewalk Committee member Jim Weston has provided a copy of the bid request for a portion of the Committee's planned work.

Arrowcrest Drive Extension Deeds have been recorded to complete conveyance of the rights of way and easements required for the dedication and acceptance of the section of road.

Ed Jacobs property, 195 Westport Village Road Use of the cottage as a residence has been discontinued, and the kitchen has been removed, converting the structure into an outbuilding. Work to convert the barn to a legal residence is almost complete. CEO Weston expects to issue a CO shortly, bringing the property into compliance with Town zoning.

CITIZEN CONCERNS – none pending

DEPARTMENT AND COMMITTEE REPORTS –

- 6:40 – 7:05 Stewards of Mt. Caesar Advisory Committee (see **NEW BUSINESS**)
- 7:05 – 7:20 Police Chief Busick (see **NEW BUSINESS; NON-PUBLIC SESSION**)
- 7:20 – 8:05 Fire Chief Norm Skantze (see **NEW BUSINESS; NON-PUBLIC SESSION**)
- 8:05 – 9:20 DPW Director Lee Dunham (see **NEW BUSINESS**)

APPOINTMENTS – The board was in session from 7:45 p.m. to 8 p.m. to accept inventories and hear parties regarding their liability to be taxed.

NOMINATIONS Vacancies are posted.

CONFIRMATIONS – none scheduled

ENFORCEMENT – none scheduled

PUBLIC HEARINGS – None scheduled, although the Board is in public session to accept inventories.

CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

Town of Swanzy v. Sevene Selectmen advised Fox of the Board's desire to proceed with the enforcement action while the Planning Board considers the site plan application scheduled for application acceptance on 4/16.

Past due property taxes Selectmen reviewed and signed letters sent to most parcels with 2007 tax liens eligible for deeding still outstanding.

Update of market values and utility appraisal Selectmen reviewed and discussed a proposal (including comments from Town counsel) from Vision Appraisal Technology, Inc. to update valuation of Swanzev properties for tax assessment purposes. Selectmen reviewed and discussed correspondence from George E. Sansoucy, PE, LLC describing a proposed contract to value the Town's public utility property for 2009. Fox proposed funding the \$106,000 cost of both agreements from the expendable trust for revaluations and updates (December 2008 balance: approximately \$120,000).

Motion by Carlson to authorize Fox to proceed with the contract with Vision to update market values, and to proceed with the contract with George E. Sansoucy to appraise utility properties, for Board signature when both contracts are approved by Town Counsel and DRA. Second by Tatro. All in favor.

Budget 2009 Selectmen and Fox continued discussion of a budget implementation strategy, complicated by State budget shortfalls. Fox reported work management difficulties for staff because figures are not in place; at the same time, she said that she hopes to avoid false expectations that budgeted amounts are guaranteed to be available. Selectmen authorized entering the voter-approved numbers into the system, with the understanding that staff will continue to evaluate work plans relative to available funding as the year proceeds.

CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

Stewards of Mt. Caesar Advisory Committee Advisory committee members DiLuzio, Zeh and Bohannon updated Selectmen on their work to date.

DiLuzio said that the Committee seeks authorization to immediately post temporary signs to discourage use of trails by motorized wheeled vehicles during the time of greatest trail vulnerability to damage. Zeh presented photographs depicting recent damage to trails, exacerbated by spinning tires during wet conditions, and a photograph of a Jeep at the Mt. Caesar summit. DiLuzio reported that citizens have cut saplings to widen trails. Zeh presented a map indicating proposed locations of the signs at key entry points to the trail system. After discussion, Selectmen authorized the Committee to post signs for 60 days, timed from the actual installation of signs, to protect the trails while the Committee solicits public input regarding uses and restrictions of the Mt. Caesar property.

DiLuzio reported that the Committee has applied to Public Service of NH for a \$684 grant to finance construction of a gate and purchase 8 signs, proposed to state "no motorized wheeled vehicles." DiLuzio requested authorization for DPW staff to assist volunteers with constructing and installing the gate at the trail access point behind the Carpenter Home. Fox will ask Faulkner for an estimate of the scope of work.

DiLuzio and Bohannon reported the interest of MRHS science teacher John Samperisi to collaborate with the Town by involving students in using GIS software to map features of the Mt. Caesar parcel. (Bohannon said that MRHS is the only school in Cheshire County with ARCVIEW GIS capability.) The projects could lead to development of a comprehensive existing conditions map, and possibly could depict locations of the original settlement as part of a curriculum that integrates history, geography, art and science. DiLuzio offered to invite Samperisi to a future Board meeting, if so requested by Selectmen and said that she would ask him to attend the Committee's public hearing, if one should be scheduled. Selectmen expressed their support of the Town-school collaboration.

Justice Assistance grant Police Chief Busick presented information supporting his proposal to apply for grant funding to purchase the Coplogic Desk Officer online incident reporting system. Busick said that the system has been used with success in California and the South,

could help reduce Town expenses for fuel and staff related to incidents that require little investigation, and could free up time for more complex cases. Following the \$12,000 software purchase cost, annual maintenance – to be worked into the Department’s budget -- would cost \$3,300. Busick endorsed the system as a progressive approach to law enforcement with potential future benefits.

The group discussed the proposal, and the funding program, which calls for review of grant proposals by municipal governing bodies. Receipt of the grant requires a public hearing, as well as a memorandum of understanding with other BYRNE participants. Grant recipients have three years in which to expend funds.

Johnson Farm conservation easement Selectmen reviewed and discussed a proposed agreement with surveyor Richard Drew for survey work required to meet the terms of a purchase and sales agreement (closing date, May 30, 2009) between Johnson and the Monadnock Conservancy, providing for a conservation easement over much of the farm property.

Fox explained that the survey will delineate the property boundaries and the conservation easement exclusion area, and said that Johnson has reserved the right to develop two house lots. Estimated cost of the survey is \$8,010, to be paid from the Conservation Land Acquisition capital reserve fund. The Board conducted public hearings pursuant to RSA 41:14-a in 2007.

Motion by Tatro to authorize Fox to execute the survey agreement. Second by Carlson. All in favor.

Building Permit processes Fox requested Board consent for a plan -- developed by Land Use Office staff, Fire Chief Skantze, and Fox -- to streamline and clarify the inspection process, improve customer satisfaction, improve record-keeping, and focus Fire Department review on complex, larger construction projects. The plan calls for dividing the Town permit process into two categories, based on code requirements: 1) one- and two-family homes with associated accessory structures, and 2) commercial, industrial, institution, and multi-family buildings. The plan proposes that Code Enforcement Officer Weston manage all inspections related to one- and two-family homes, with the exception of oil burner inspections. For the second category of structures, a joint review process would provide for Fire Department review and comment. With Board authorization, Fox said that Weston would develop separate forms for two-track application process by month’s end.

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

Fire Department Fire Chief Skantze requested authorization to spend \$4,006.66 for a Firefighter I class. Six firefighters from Swanzey will participate; participation from outlying towns helps to reduce the expense.

Motion by Tatro to approve the \$4,066.66 purchase order. Second by Carlson. All in favor.

Skantze reported that mechanical issues with Engine 2 may be nearing resolution. He said that the pickup has been repaired, and is getting set up for forestry use.

Skantze provided deputy warden appointment forms for Board signature. Selectmen approved Ben Tatro, Geoff Davis, Robert Symonds, Jr; Bruce Tatro, Ronald Fontaine, Kelson Mulcahy, Theresa Koski, Eric Kerylow, Ernest Kirouac, Sylvester Karasinski, Dave Mason, Shaun Beal, Keith Bell, Raymond Phillips, David Page, Vincent Sanchez, and Gerald Bell, Sr. as deputy wardens. Skantze said that he will conduct deputy warden training on April 22.

Skantze said that he has established a system for logging fire permits. Site visits will be required prior to issuing day permits, and seasonal camp or cooking fire permits will require annual inspection. Skantze said that he has advised fire wardens to offer his availability for issuing permits during the week.

Donation to the Fire Department expendable trust Leslie and Mary Keeton have donated \$100 to the fund, established by resolution of the Board of Selectmen on February 11, 2009. **Motion** by Carlson to accept the donation pursuant to authority provided the board under RSA 31:19. Second by Tatro. All in favor.

Department of Public Works Selectmen and DPW Director Dunham reviewed the status of and approach for accomplishing Department work plan elements.

- Citizen concern regarding beaver activity at upper Wilson Pond: Dunham said that he will inspect.
- Citizen concern regarding crosswalks: Selectmen advised Dunham to make painting Town crosswalks a priority in 2009.
- Activity reports: Dunham proposed submitting detailed reports monthly.
- Projected work: Selectmen requested that weekly reports be submitted with enough advance time to help other departments coordinate; Selectmen supported Dunham's plan to prepare the reports on Friday afternoons.
- Annual DPW plan: To enhance Town-wide coordination of projects and make best use of staff, Selectmen recommended annual scheduling of large seasonal DPW tasks.
- Repair of Cresson covered bridge: Dunham said that the work will be undertaken after Faulkner completes work on ballfields; the project will require both crews, shutting the bridge, and ample notification of the public.
- Snow and ice policy: Following receipt of the policy from Town counsel, Dunham said that he anticipates adjusting priority ranking of roads to incorporate further consideration of snow management issues (eg, give a higher ranking to certain roads that become overly difficult to plow if not plowed frequently). The policy will be complete by the fall of 2009.
- Employee evaluations: Dunham will complete the evaluations by Friday, May 15. The group discussed timing of annual evaluations; Selectmen supported Dunham's decision to conduct all evaluations in the same month, likely February.
- Road construction standards: Dunham plans to solicit ideas from others, and will bring those comments to a future meeting.
- Pavement bids: Dunham will prepare the bids for Selectmen by May 15, for release the following week.
- Pavement management system: The group reviewed a preliminary report Dunham generated with the software program, and discussed the program's merits, liabilities (including no ability to rate gravel roads) and recommendations. Dunham said that he will validate some of the results that appear questionable. Tatro asked for baseline cost information to help voters understand the expense of bringing Town roads to a certain standard. To help establish priority for repair, Tatro also asked Dunham to sort roads by amount of road surface life remaining.
- Repairs to Main Street: Dunham proposed inviting a retired State engineer to help estimate the job, and suggested narrowing the road to 28' along its entire length. This approach would incorporate granite curbing and a greenway parallel to the sidewalk, and would require relocation of catchbasins and upgrading of sidewalks to meet ADA specifications. The group discussed the need for early involvement of the Sidewalk Committee, and considered scheduling the repairs for the August-November period when the Thompson covered bridge likely will be closed for repair.
- Sidewalk Committee work plan: The group reviewed proposed plan elements, and determined the need for more information regarding locations and extent of proposed work.
- Five-year plan: Dunham said that he will undertake some crack sealing in 2009.

- Hiring: The group discussed staffing of summer tasks. Dunham will find out what level of staffing Faulkner requires to open cemeteries for the summer, and will request Faulkner's list of project priorities. Selectmen did not authorize initiating recruitment at the present time.
- Replacement cargo van: Those present endorsed continued use of the existing vehicle.
- Possible equipment for sale: Dunham said that the Department may be retiring a mower and possibly a string trimmer.

Selectmen commended Dunham for his progress on the various tasks.

Home Occupation application, L. & J. Ostriker (37 Centerview Drive). Selectmen determined that the proposed use qualifies as a home occupation, and authorized Davis to sign the application.

Summer Camp 2009 Fox reported staff recommendation to shorten the camp by one week, beginning after the Fourth of July and running for seven weeks. She said that no increase in the weekly fee is planned for 2009. Parents have already been contacting Town Hall with interest in the camp, which serves children aged five to eleven. Selectmen discussed and concurred with the staff recommendation.

Income from sale of Town property Fox reported receipt of \$9,000 for sale of 18,000 yards of earth material at \$.50/yard to Emile Legere.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Correction proposed by Davis: ZBA appeal of Administrative Decision Fox informed Selectmen of Chris ~~Fraser's~~ Frazier's pending appeal of a denied building permit for renovation of a structure.

Motion by Tatro to approve, as corrected, the minutes of the April 8, 2009 regular meeting and minutes of the April 8, 2009 non-public session. Second by Carlson. All in favor.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Intent to Cut, Tax Map 30 Lot 18.
2. Raffle permit 2009-8

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

NON-PUBLIC SESSIONS

Session I At 7:10, Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to enter non-public session, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3IIa, to discuss personnel. Present were Carlson, Tatro, Davis, Fox, and Police Chief Busick. Selectmen left non-public session at 7:20 p.m., voting by roll call to seal minutes of the session.

Session II At 7:32, Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to enter non-public session, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3IIb, to discuss hiring. Present were Carlson, Tatro, Davis, Fox, and Fire Chief Skantze.

Selectmen left non-public session at 7:54 p.m., voting by roll call to seal minutes of the session until criminal checks and motor vehicle issues are resolved.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Carlson to adjourn; second by Tatro. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria Reck Barlow,
Recording Secretary

LIST OF FUTURE AGENDA/PENDING ITEMS

1. Personnel policy updates – drafting of updates ongoing.
2. Disposition of South Grove Street Land acquired by tax deed - pending.
3. RFP – Town Facilities assessment.
4. Subdivision Road Standards. Draft developed by DPW Director Dunham distributed to Selectmen. Review pending. Winter Maintenance draft – BOS suggestions re-worked at provided to Dunham 1/5 for final review before forwarding to Town Counsel as requested for an opinion.
5. Street Addressing Committee. Review of file and project status underway. Committee meeting to be scheduled.
6. Discussion, defining roles and responsibilities between Selectmen, DPW and West Swanzey Sidewalk Committee. Research underway. 2009 work plan discussed with committee.
7. Town ordinances – Fireworks. Further consideration deferred to allow for input of full time fire chief following hiring.
8. Carpenter Home Properties – Discussion with counsel re: options. Authorization to investigate pending.
9. Westbrook Court – Class VI – Camuso (Richmond).
10. Old Home Day Committee recruitment.