

Selectmen's Meeting – July 29, 2009

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

Chairman Davis called to the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. The meeting was conducted at Town Hall.

Financial Matters. Selectmen reviewed and approved accounts payable and payroll manifests.

NHDOT – Meeting to discuss intersections of Lake Street/Route 12 and Swanzey Factory Road. Officials from NHDOT, Craig Green, Mike Dugas and Doug Graham, met with Selectmen, neighbors to the intersection, Representative Lerandean, Police Chief Busick, J.B. Mack of the SWRPC, Town Planner Sara Carbonneau, David Krisch and other members of the public to discuss this intersection identified as one within the state for improvements aimed at increasing safety through the Highway Safety Improvement Program. Craig Green provided an overview of the program through which approximately 35 intersections a year are identified based on their crash history. Federal funding of approximately \$5.5 million supports this program. Mr. Green reviewed the crash data available to the state. Chief Busick supplemented that data with additional accidents noted in the town's database. Some of the safety issues discussed by those present included line of site concerns (related to topography and other waiting traffic), speed, high traffic volume engaged in turning movements during peak commuter hours, how the failure of this intersection and traveler's concerns for safety related to it increase traffic at Park Street, parking by trucks along Route 12 in the vicinity of Dunkin Donuts, travelers use of this intersection to avoid using Route 12 and Route 32 and generally how intersection avoidance impacts travel in the area. Concerns related to safety of pedestrian traffic were also discussed. Craig Green advised they would review the concerns identified, conduct survey work in the vicinity of the intersection and look at design options to enhance its safety. He anticipated it would be later in the fall before NHDOT would return and meet with the town to discuss options to improve safety at this intersection.

Homestead Woolen Dam/NHDES/Town of Swanzey. Selectmen reviewed a draft contract between the Town, State and Homestead Woolen Mill Dam owner developed to facilitate the town's ability to serve as project manager and ensure that the dam removal, river restoration and needed bridge work occur in a sequenced manner. Town counsel has reviewed and pending a few adjustments, to ensure that the town is not required to serve as a grantee of the state for the dam portions of the project, recommends approval by Selectmen. Selectmen voted to approve the contract, subject to approval by Town Counsel of the final version. In addition, Selectmen voted to authorize Chairman Davis to execute the final contract agreement and any other documents which may be necessary for this contract on behalf of the Town of Swanzey.

Public Hearing – RSA 31:95-b, Ash Hill Road improvements – Planning Board Notice of Decision dated 5/13/2009. Chairman Davis opened the public hearing at 7:23 p.m. Funds received, totaling \$14,000 as required by item #6 of the planning board decision, are to be used to improve Ash Hill Road. Given the litigation pending related to this approval, it is likely funds will be placed in a segregated account. No public testimony was received. Chairman Davis closed the public hearing at 7:27 p.m. Selectmen voted to accept and authorize expenditure pursuant to RSA 31:95-b of \$14,000 as required by this Planning Board Notice of Decision to improve Ash Hill Road. In addition, Selectmen requested DPW Director Dunham develop a plan detailing the work proposed for board approval before proceeding. It was also noted that work on Ash Hill Road is likely to be delayed until the pending litigation is resolved.

DPW Matters. Fox relayed to the board the content of an email dated 7/29/2009 from DPW Director Dunham advising that paving work is scheduled to begin with milling August 5, paving 8/7 and 8/10. It was noted that this schedule is weather dependent.

Bid Phase Engineering Services, Thompson Covered Bridge Project. Selectmen voted to authorize the Chair to execute an agreement for Bid Phase Engineering Services between the Town and HTA noting that NHDOT had approved the scope of work.

Update of Assessed Values. Selectmen were updated on the project's status and the anticipated release next week of preliminary values to taxpayers. A copy of the notice to be sent was reviewed. At this point, release of commercial values may be delayed several weeks as work on those properties is continuing. Given that the bulk of the parcels in town are residential and that work is complete, it seems prudent to proceed to release that portion of the project. Trends in the residential update data were reviewed with Selectmen. The process to meet with Vision and review assessment information was also reviewed with Selectmen.

Open Space Committee. Selectmen concurred with the appointment of Jeanne Thieme as to serve as the Planning Board's representative to the Open Space Committee.

Land Use Change Tax Penalties. Selectmen acknowledge receipt of abatement application for lots off Flat Roof Mill Road.

Budget 2009. Selectmen reviewed 6 month expenditure and revenue data noting that the majority of department budgets have more than 50% remaining. Areas of concern, at this point include Legal expenditures – which given pending litigation are expected to outpace this year's appropriation. In addition, fire department expenditures (if adjusted for year end payroll) are of some concern. Working with some of the town's departments, expenditure savings of approximately \$100,000 have been identified. While some revenues are meeting projections, the State's decision not fund revenue sharing and loss in interest income are impacting the bottom line and contributing to an expected \$200,000 shortfall. Board members discussed how to proceed requesting that additional department savings be identified. Status of payroll adjustments (deferred by the board until conclusion of the state budget process) was discussed. Selectmen

requested department supervisors prepare for the board's consideration recommended pay rate adjustments for staff utilizing the parameters included when Budget 2009 was developed.

Maple Trees, Snow Property – 7 Old Lake Street. Selectmen reviewed correspondence from Rosanne Snow expressing concern that installation of the sewer lines may have damaged Maple Trees on her property. All sewer work done by the town within this area was within the town's right of way. Sewer Commissioner Page field reviewed the situation and has advised that work was too far away to impact the trees. Selectmen requested staff send a letter to Mrs. Snow advising the town does not feel it is responsible for the changing health of these trees.

Approval of Minutes of Selectmen's Meeting of July 22, 2009. Selectmen reviewed and approved the minutes of their meeting of July 15, 2009 as written.

Consent Agenda. Selectmen approved the following items on the consent agenda:

- a. RSA 31:95-b, Swanzey Rural Character Project. Accept and expend, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b proceeds from DVD sales totaling \$250.
- b. Approval of Veteran's Tax Credits subject to a variety of conditions: Tax Map 32/19-9, Tax Map 56 Lot 8 and Tax Map 20 Lot 25.
- c. Approval of Veteran's Tax Credits: Tax Map/Lot 26/22, 88/32, 37/22-1, 24/40-30, 33/44, 41/95, 72/10, 48/3, 14/4-44, 40/308 and 11/1.
- d. Designation of Chair to sign CDFA form transmitting 2008 audit.
- e. Event Permit #2009-13.
- f. Letter to the Editor expressing thanks to Old Home Day Committee volunteers.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Elizabeth A. Fox
Town Administrator