

SELECTMEN'S MEETING – NOVEMBER 12, 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.

SPECIAL GUESTS Cub Scouts from Weeblos Pack 297 Den 3, along with Den Leader Hughes and several parents, attended the Selectmen's meeting to observe local government in action.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

Selectmen reviewed and approved accounts payable and payroll manifests.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Carlson called the meeting to order at 6:25 p.m.

CITIZEN CONCERNS – none presented

APPOINTMENTS

6:40 – 7:00 Wayne Lechluder (see **NEW BUSINESS**)

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

7:00 – 8:20 DPW Director Lee Dunham (see **OLD BUSINESS**)

NOMINATIONS -- Alternate position on the Conservation Commission

CONFIRMATIONS – none pending

ENFORCEMENT – none pending

PUBLIC HEARINGS – none scheduled

CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

Carpenter Home Rates – 2009 Fox appraised Selectmen of an error in the rates, and provided a corrected, updated rate sheet that also reflects a 5% increase in the high acuity rate.

Motion by Carlson to adopt the rate structure as presented. Second by Davis. All in favor.

Budget 2009 – Department of Public Works Selectmen and DPW Director Dunham continued discussion of the DPW Highways/Streets/Bridges, Cemeteries, Parks and Facilities Maintenance, Street Lights and Dams budgets. The group reviewed numbers resulting from discussion at the November 5 meeting, and continued to develop the DPW/Cemeteries, Parks and Facilities Maintenance budgets.

Dunham provided additional information:

- Salt use has averaged 1,500 tons/ year (over a five-year period) and 1,300 tons/year (over a 10-year period). At \$60/ton, Dunham recommends budgeting \$92,000 for salt.
- Anticipated buildings and fields maintenance projects -- Lane Field: replace door of cook shack and re-roof shack with double-coverage, replace doors to the lime room; the septic system soon may require attention. Brown Field: install railings on bleachers, and replace doors on the shack.

- Thompson Covered Bridge work has been pushed back until November 2009, with scour countermeasures scheduled to begin in October 2009. Delays in bridge work continue to force postponement of DPW work on Main Street.
- Dunham recommended that funding for Town bridges remain at 2008 levels.

The group also discussed topics that may result in future changes to policy or practice:

- Dunham suggested providing DPW staff with a clothing allowance for Category 2 high visibility T-shirts to wear instead of safety vests.
- Fox expressed concern about nighttime visibility of the DPW staff when wearing navy blue winter clothing.
- Selectmen asked Dunham to encourage department-wide consistency in use of budget categories.
- Fox and Selectmen suggested a conversation with Tom Little and a representative from the Recreation Committee to consider recreational uses of the Brown field in addition to softball. Dunham recommended development of a written agreement that formalizes allocation of responsibilities between the Town and user groups.
- Selectmen and Dunham discussed strategies for managing and collecting trash and recyclables at recreational fields and Richardson Park. Selectmen asked that Dunham and Faulkner confer to consider options, and present their most cost-effective recommendation to the Board.
- Selectmen expressed the goal of capping budget increases to a specified percentage; Dunham expressed support of a cap.
- As a long-term goal, Carlson advocated establishment of a Town recreation department.

In the near future, Dunham said that he will:

- Advertise the position for the new full-time seasonal employee discussed at the November 5 Selectmen's meeting.
- Obtain an updated quote on a new sidewalk tractor (the vendor has been slow in returning phone calls).
- Review accounts to provide more detail on anticipated new equipment purchases, and more detail on equipment repairs and maintenance.
- Finalize the road plan, and present a report at the November 19 Selectmen's meeting.
- Confer with an expert, like UNH Cooperative Extension staff, for guidance about most cost-effective fertilizer application rates.

Selectmen recommended devoting another special meeting to consideration of the DPW budget, and also asked for information regarding DPW sources of funding planned to cover budget items that have been spent.

Budget 2009 – Debt Service, Economic Development and Insurances Selectmen reviewed figures for debt service, economic development, and insurances.

Fox reported that debt for Wilson Pond area road improvements has been paid off. Instead of managing leases through operating budgets, Fox proposed budgeting for leases through debt service. Fox proposed adding administrative costs of the new Economic Development Advisory Committee to the Economic Development budget.

Fox reported no increase in health premium rates, and outlined some potential changes to insurance coverage for the Board's consideration. Selectmen discussed details and alternatives, and supported further exploration of the options Fox presented.

Elderly Exemptions Selectmen discussed and supported the methodology used. Selectmen asked Fox to take the necessary next steps.

Gocht Septic System Selectmen reviewed November 11, 2008 correspondence from Town Counsel written in response to an October 28, 2008 message from Fox and an October 14, 2008 letter from attorney Tom Hanna. Fox said that the Zoning Board of Adjustment will consider the issue at their November 17th meeting. Attorney Fernald will be present at the meeting on behalf of the Town.

1997 Ford F-350 pickup truck bid opening The one bid received was opened offering \$3,227 for the truck and plow. Selectmen awarded the truck to the only bidder, subject to confirmation with Town Hall staff that no additional bids had been collected that day but not left for the board.

Appointment of Conservation Commission alternate member Selectmen considered nominees for the balance of the vacated alternate term, which expires in March 2009.

Motion by Tatro to nominate Jane Johnson. Second by Davis. All in favor.

CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

Home Occupation Selectmen reviewed a request by Peter Nikiforakis for a home occupation of light machine shop work, to be conducted at 38 North Winchester Street.

Motion by Davis that light machine work qualifies as a home occupation, subject to the Planning Board concurring with the use of an outbuilding that is in excess of the 300' maximum allowable square footage for a home occupation. Second by Tatro. All in favor.

Request for waiver of Recycling Center disposal fees Selectmen considered a request from W. Lechlinder (representing United Church of Christ) for the Town to waive fees of \$50 to dispose of roof shingles from the parsonage garage. Fox explained that past fee waivers have been granted only in the case of loss of a building to fire. Selectmen felt that the Church request did not match that precedent.

Request for permission to take wood – Mt. Caesar W. Lechlinder appeared before the Board to request permission to remove burnable wood from the top of Mount Caesar near the beacon. The City of Keene cut down approximately eight to ten trees during a logging operation conducted at least five years ago. Lechlinder said that he has been piling the resulting brush to clean up the area, and would like to cut up and remove the logs for burning at his home. Selectmen reminded Lechlinder that any brush burning would require permission of the landowner – in this case, the Town.

Motion by Tatro to permit Lechlinder to remove the wood downed during the City of Keene logging operation, in exchange for cleaning up and piling the brush. Second by Davis. All in favor.

School Budget Committee – Lechlinder requested the Board's recommendations regarding warrant articles for school construction projects. Selectmen advised Lechlinder that reasonably priced, well-justified renovation projects would likely have more success with the voters than new construction. Selectmen encouraged the Budget Committee to provide voters with a clear, detailed financial analysis of any proposed expenditures.

Land Use Change Tax Penalties Selectmen reviewed the assessing card for the 2.16 acre parcel at 78 Woodland Heights Drive, and agreed to base the land use change tax on 10% of sales price of \$67,070.

CONSENT AGENDA

Selectmen reviewed and executed the following:

- Timber tax warrant for \$1,529.33.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Amend page 2, OLD BUSINESS, Sidewalk Committee Sidewalk work plan Committee members reported no activity in 2008. Repairs are planned for Maple Street (85'), Cobble Hill Road (270'), Eaton Road (40') and Spring Street (400') in 2009.

Motion by Davis to approve, as amended, the minutes of the November 5, 2008 regular meeting. Second by Tatro. All in favor.

NON-PUBLIC SESSIONS – none scheduled

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Tatro to adjourn; second by Davis. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:06.

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).