

## SELECTMEN'S MEETING – NOVEMBER 19, 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 6:10 p.m.

### **INFORMATION**

Page Homestead (Route 12) Water/Sewer Selectmen reviewed a copy of the invitation to bid for installation of utilities and construction of a common driveway. Fox advised the Board that the invitation to bid will be released during the current week.

### **CITIZEN CONCERNS**

Representative Gus Lerandean appeared before the Board to recommend that Selectmen invite town officials from Harrisville, Marlborough and Troy to join Swanzey officials at a meeting with District 6 county legislators in December, prior to January preparation of the county budget.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

6:25 – 7:00 EMD Bruce Bohannon (see **OLD BUSINESS**)

6:15 – 6:25 Kristen Goodenough (see **NEW BUSINESS**)

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

7:05 – 8:25 Fire Chief Norm Skantze (see **OLD BUSINESS**)

**NOMINATIONS** – none considered

**CONFIRMATIONS** – Jane Johnson, Conservation Commission alternate

**ENFORCEMENT** – none pending

**PUBLIC HEARINGS** – traffic regulation, Carlton and Webber Hill Roads

Chairman Carlson called the hearing to order at 7:00, and read the public notice, which invited public testimony regarding adoption of a highway regulation creating a four-way stop at the intersection of Carlton Road, Carlton Road Extension and Webber Hill Road. Selectmen received testimony from Bruce Bohannon. No other members of the public were present.

Carlson closed the public hearing at 7:03. Selectmen discussed advantages and disadvantages of adding stop signs to the intersection.

*Motion* by Tatro to install stop signs at the intersection. Second by Davis. All in favor.

### **CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS**

Budget 2009 – Emergency Management Emergency Management Director Bruce Bohannon and Selectmen reviewed the worksheet detailing the department's 2009 budget request. Bohannon noted that a budget increase reflects training for two Vermont Yankee drills scheduled for spring 2009, as well as a Vermont Yankee graded exercise. A portion of these expenses will be reimbursed. Bohannon said that other funds can leverage his department's

funding request for updating the Town's hazard mitigation plan and emergency management plan. Bohannon advised Selectmen that successful grant applications require updated plans.

Bohannon requested authorization to use remaining 2008 funds, which will be reimbursed by RERP, to purchase a new generator and transfer switch. The equipment will be located at the West Swanzey fire station. Selectmen discussed the request.

**Motion** by Davis to approve expenditure of \$4,030 for purchase of the generator and transfer switch. Second by Tatro. All in favor.

Bohannon requested Selectmen's authorization to upgrade the generator for the Police Station/EOC. Bohannon said that the estimated cost, including installation and propane purchase, is approximately \$20,000, and proposed funding the project through the expendable trust accounts for the police station and emergency management facilities. Fox said that funds in both accounts are sufficient to cover the upgrade. Bohannon advised Selectmen that the price of the upgrade will increase \$1,820 if ordered after November 27, and reported that Police Chief Busick endorses the purchase.

**Motion** by Tatro to authorize expenditure of not to exceed \$21,000 for the upgrade, including installation and propane purchase, with the expenditure to be funded partially by expendable trust account for the police station and partly by the emergency management facilities expendable trust account, and with the order to be placed prior to November 27, 2008. Second by Davis. All in favor.

MOU between Town and Monadnock Regional School District EMD Bohannon asked Selectmen for their review and comments on a draft updated agreement between the Town and School District related to use of the high school as an emergency shelter. The agreement incorporates use of the high school as a secondary dispensing site in the event that the primary site (Keene High School) became overburdened. Upon the Board's approval, a copy of the MOU will be provided to the District for execution.

Selectmen requested clarification of Item #3 and Item #6. Bohannon will revise the language.

Other emergency preparedness issues Bohannon advised Selectmen that his test of the generator at the high school indicated that the equipment is undersized, and capable only of powering a limited number of lights along with a limited number of the boiler room's circulating pumps. Bohannon said he intends to re-create the list of functions required of this generator, and then meet with appropriate staff to determine next steps. Selectmen and Bohannon also discussed the emergency power supply for Town Hall.

Carpenter Home heat specifications Selectmen discussed a RFQ for professional services and burner replacement prepared by Francis Faulkner and distributed at a prior meeting by Fox for the Board's review. Board members concluded their discussion with a request that Faulkner release the RFQ and schedule a pre-bid meeting; Board members and Fox will evaluate the project as it proceeds.

Budget 2009 – Fire Department Selectmen and Fire Chief Skantze reviewed the Fire Department's proposed 2009 budget. Discussion included the option of replacing the current point system for call pay with a set hourly rate that recognizes experience and credentials. Skantze said that his concept of the proposal would eliminate stipends. Fox noted that a new system would need to distinguish time spent in response to calls from time spent in scheduled training and at monthly meetings that include training. Selectmen agreed that they would like to further consider the effect of the change on the budget.

Selectmen noted that increases in several line items are expected costs associated with the transition to full time fire chief. Skantze said that the review and inventory process required

for preparing the proposed budget also functions as the foundation of a longer-term master plan for the department.

Skantze reported that he is setting up a new system for maintenance of the department's fleet. He described plans for on-going training.

Selectmen reminded Skantze that all expenditures in excess of \$1,000 require approval of the Board of Selectmen. Skantze said he is instituting practices to help each station keep track of expenses. He said he also is setting up a schedule for vaccinations for all personnel, and has been researching the potential cost of a Class C work uniform for firefighters.

Skantze and Selectmen discussed funding of the capital reserve accounts for fire trucks, relative to staffing, water availability, and tankers. Selectmen recommended budgeting for rehabilitation of fire ponds; Skantze said that he has asked firefighters to review hydrants and other water supply equipment. Regarding existing equipment, Fox said that the Town purchased 65 pagers in 2004 through an OEM grant. Fox recommended that Skantze discuss funding opportunities with EMD Bruce Bohannon.

Skantze and Selectmen briefly reviewed possible modifications to the West station that would create office space for administrators as well as for the Fire Chief and Grounds and Facilities Maintenance Supervisor Faulkner. Skantze will return to the Board with detailed drawings and estimated costs.

Budget 2009 – General Government Fox and Selectmen reviewed items in the general government budget. Selectmen discussed overall payroll strategy, and agreed on a cost of living increase of 2.5% and a pool of 1.5%. Selectmen discussed proposed changes to insurances, which would result in premium savings for the Town and could result in a decrease in premium cost sharing. Selectmen recommended engaging a representative from Local Government Center to present information to staff on ways to take best advantage of changes in coverage.

Fox reported that the combination of declining revenue and increased expenses increases the tax rate impact of the proposed 2009 budget. Fox said that overall the current 2008 budget will not end the year in a deficit position. She advised Selectmen that she anticipates that general assistance will be 20% to 30% over budget.

Fire Suppression Systems – Thompson & Cresson Bridges Fox reported that the State has agreed to eliminate the preliminary engineering study phase for these projects and proceed directly to design, thereby reducing engineering services costs by \$9,000. Engineering services for the two projects is estimated to total \$46,003.

*Motion* by Davis to authorize Fox to execute the engineering agreements for the bridge fire suppression systems, subject to receipt of State approval of the revised scope. Second by Tatro. All in favor.

Gocht Septic System Fox reported that Mr. Gocht has expressed a desire to meet with Town officials to further clarify his application. Fox suggested that she and Town Planner Carbonneau meet with Gocht prior to scheduling a conversation with the Board. Questions include construction and location of the existing system, whether the system warrants an amendment to the easement, and whether the proposed system differs from the existing system. Selectmen endorsed Fox's suggestion for a meeting, and said that they would like to have Town Counsel present if Gocht wishes to discuss the matter at a Selectmen's meeting.

## **CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS**

Cable TV – franchise fee and rates Selectmen reviewed a rate increase notice and current rates provided by Fox from the web site of Time Warner. Fox reported that the Town's agreement with Time Warner provides for an opportunity to increase from 2% to as much as

3.25% the franchise fee assessed to customers and passed though to Cheshire TV to support the PEG channel. Fox said that the Cable Commission seeks feedback from the Selectmen regarding their support of increasing the franchise fee to provide more funding for the PEG. Currently, Swanzey customers generate almost \$40,000 a year for the PEG.

Selectmen advised against any additional cost increases for Swanzey citizens.

Fire Department Payroll 2008 Selectmen reviewed a draft of the 2008 Fire Department “payroll,” as well as a history of point values. Fox reported that points ended up being worth \$8.80. Selectmen agreed to transfer approximately \$4,000 in unpaid stipend dollars to the point pool.

*Motion* by Tatro to authorize Fox to transfer \$4,000 to point pool line item from the stipend budget line.. Second by Davis. All in favor.

Page Homestead CDBG Grant – sub-recipient agreement with SCS Selectmen reviewed a proposed agreement from SWRPC related to the grant received by the Town on November 19. Fox advised Selectmen that the agreement is in the format required by the funding agency.

Hours for Voting – Town & School Official Ballot Voting 2009 Fox advised Board members that setting hours for open polls is within the purview of Town. Selectmen discussed changing hours, and agreed to discuss the matter at a future meeting.

School Board resignation Kristen Goodenough advised the Selectmen that she is resigning from the School Board. Goodenough offered her continued support to the Town and school. Selectmen expressed their appreciation for her service.

#### **CONSENT AGENDA**

1. Acceptance of Tax Rate Form – DRA.
2. Approval of Elderly Deferral Application – Tax Map 70 Lot 1
3. Letter to Will re: Abatement 2006.
4. Abatement # 2008-3, M. Goodell - \$276.
5. Land Use Change Tax Invoice – Tax Map 14 Lot 4-24.
6. Raffle permit #2008-27
7. Winter maintenance stipend
8. Notices of liens, Tax Map 20, Lot 84; Tax Map 87, Lot 2-5035; Tax Map 18, Lot 215.

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

*Motion* by Davis to authorize Carlson to sign the home occupation request from Peter Nikiforakis considered by the Board at the November 12, 2008 meeting. Second by Tatro. All in favor.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES**

*Motion* by Davis to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2008 regular meeting. Second by Tatro. All in favor.

#### **NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

*Motion* by Carlson at 9:50 to enter non-public session, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3II(a), to discuss personnel. Second by Davis. Vote by roll call. All in favor. Present were Carlson, Tatro, Davis and Fox.

Selectmen left non-public session at 10:14 p.m.

***Motion*** by Davis to seal minutes of the session indefinitely. Second by Tatro. Vote by roll call.  
All in favor.

**ADJOURNMENT**

***Motion*** by Tatro to adjourn; second by Davis. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 10:15.

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).