

SELECTMEN'S MEETING – DECEMBER 10, 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

Keene Paramedic Intercept Selectmen received a copy of the letter sent by Attorney Bradley to the City of Keene.

Memo from Police Chief Busick Selectmen reviewed information regarding Police Department operating budget funds.

CITIZEN CONCERNS – none presented

APPOINTMENTS – none scheduled

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

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

CONFIRMATIONS – none pending

ENFORCEMENT – none pending

PUBLIC HEARINGS – none scheduled

CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS

Nominations to fill School Board vacancy through March 2009 Selectmen discussed selection criteria, and the qualifications of applicants who had submitted the nominations received and distributed the prior week.

Motion by Tatro to recommend Bruce Barlow to fill the Town of Swanzey's vacancy on the School Board. Second by Davis. All in favor.

Route 10 bridge replacement project. Tatro reported the outcome of a December 9, 2008 meeting of NH-DOT staff, Winchester town officials, and Swanzey representatives (Town Planner Carbonneau, DPW Director Dunham, Police Chief Busick, and some residents of the Westport neighborhood). The group discussed traffic management during the bridge replacement project, and concluded that a detour through Westport would not be practicable. Instead, a temporary bridge will be installed adjacent to the bridge undergoing replacement.

DPW winter maintenance policy Selectmen reviewed the draft policy distributed the prior week. Board members discussed staffing, minor details of routes, and policy issues related to sidewalk maintenance. Fox will obtain a legal opinion as to the advisability of identifying, in the winter maintenance policy, the sections of sidewalks that cannot be plowed under certain weather conditions with existing Town equipment. Selectmen recommended adding a reference to the applicable Town ordinance, recommended including language that would call for reporting to a supervisor insufficiencies in road conditions, and recommended condensing a section pertaining to Town-maintained parking areas.

Fox will incorporate the recommended changes, seek the requested legal opinion and arrange for proofreading of the policy.

Budget 2009 Fox presented the latest complete iteration of the budget. Fox reported that working tallies show a relatively minor increase in expenses, but said that deep reductions in anticipated revenues – beyond the Town’s control -- result in an overall increase in the Town tax rate. To locate any remaining possibilities for additional cuts, Board members again reviewed budget numbers.

Discussion of the Fire Department budget resulted in the Board’s recommendation that purchase of complete Class 3 uniforms be postponed; Selectmen endorsed purchase of short-sleeve polo shirts with Fire Department insignia. Selectmen recommended continuing use of the point system, with a 4% increase in the points pool, through the end of 2009.

Fox encouraged the group to classify three types of activities funded by capital reserve accounts: 1) needed activities that are not currently underway, 2) needed activities currently underway, and 3) needed activities that require Town funding to qualify for out-of-Town funding. Selectmen adjusted requested appropriations accordingly.

Short Term Disability Insurance and Life Insurance and FSA Referencing communications with the Town’s insurance carrier, Fox said that accounts established on January 1, 2009 will go into effect on February 1, 2009. Employee education will take place in December 2008. During the first year of the new plan, the carrier recommends setting at \$750 the maximum election amount for FSA. Selectmen concurred, and agreed on \$250 as the minimum amount. Fox recommended setting up benefit cards to minimize paperwork. As with previous policies, the new benefits will be available only to regular, full-time employees. Selectmen authorized Fox to proceed.

Truck bid opening Selectmen received two bids. Board members discussed removing all references to Swanzey from the trucks, and agreed to award the 1971 Mack truck and 1977 Mack truck to Gerry Bell, with the stipulation that the trucks will be de-marked before being re-registered.

Conservation Easement – Moore Nanotechnologies Selectmen received a letter from Town Attorney Bradley in response to the draft easement, and asked Fox to forward Bradley’s recommendations to Jim Phippard (Brickstone Masons). Selectmen noted that the Swanzey Conservation Commission would monitor the easement.

CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS

Homestead Dam removal mitigation Fox reported that she met with Historical Resources personnel to discuss mitigation of adverse impacts on the West Swanzey village resulting from removal of the Homestead Dam. The current mitigation proposal calls for placement of a “historical location” sign.

Fox said that Historical Resources representatives asked about Town interest in other types of mitigation – for example, design of a West Swanzey Village walking tour, with accompanying brochure. Selectmen endorsed exploring this and additional ideas (including consideration of formalizing a West Swanzey Historical District), and suggested that Fox contact Swanzey residents John Bridges, Mike Gomarolo and Richard Scaramelli to gauge their interest in being part of a steering committee. Carlson noted that a recently released inventory of the Village’s historical structures provides extensive background material.

Personnel policy changes Selectmen discussed changes and corrections prepared by Fox, which include re-integrating the Police Department into the provisions of the personnel policy, additions and corrections to health insurance personnel policies, increases in policy value, and proposed changes and limitations in short term disability. Fox also outlined changes in tracking sick leave and notification of illness, and an addition to the family medical leave clause. In the ICMA section, Fox has matched the new IRS number and updated language to add a reference to fire personnel. Fox said that another set of personnel policies, pertaining to employee practices, is still under development.

Other matters Fox reported that the Court has required \$200 regular monthly payments from Brnger, in lieu of previously assessed and as yet unpaid fines and penalties.

CONSENT AGENDA

Raffle Permits #2008-31 & #2008-30.

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 December 3, 2008 regular meeting and non-public session. Second by Tatro. All in favor.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Davis to adjourn; second by Tatro. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:55.

Submitted by

Victoria Reck Barlow
Recording Secretary

LIST OF FUTURE AGENDA/PENDING ITEMS

1. Personnel policy updates – drafting of updates ongoing. Distribution of initial amendments 12/10/2008.
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 – additional revisions suggested and request for legal opinion by BOS.
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).