

Selectmen's Meeting – June 29, 2010

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Chairman Carlson.

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

Tire Amnesty Day. It was reported to the Board that 126 tires were received at the Recycling Center during the town's amnesty day conducted on June 26th. Since 2001, more than 2,000 tires (reducing mosquito breeding habitat) have been turned in by residents during the town's annual amnesty days.

Brown Field Concession Improvements. Selectmen were advised that the town's grant application seeking to improve the range hood/fire suppression system in the concession was approved by the East Hill Foundation. A public hearing to provide an opportunity for testimony regarding accepting and expending the funding award will be scheduled.

Citizen Concerns. Alan Gross met with Selectmen expressing pleasure at the improvements made at Richardson Park over the past few years – improving the pavilion, adding lifeguards and a gate monitor – and the positive impacts those actions have had on the experience of going to this park. He thanked the board and park staff for their efforts to enhance resident's park experience. He asked Selectmen consider establishment of a no smoking policy at the park as an additional measure to improve the park experience for residents and their families. Selectmen thanked Gross for his positive feedback and advised they would investigate the matter and queried whether establishing a "designated smoking area" might be an alternative if it was deemed that designating the entire facility "no smoking" was not feasible.

Consent Agenda. Selectmen reviewed and approved the following consent agenda items:

- Authorized the chair to execute a request to PSNH to erect US flags on utility poles to celebrate the upcoming holidays and Old Home Day. Old Home Day Committee member Bill Carson will be completing the application on behalf of the town. .
- Authorized adjustment BMSI tax data following the Vision data merge establishing leased portion of 471 Old Homestead Highway as taxable – Attachment #3.
- Added Property Tax Warrant #2010-2, \$4,328.
- CDBG Payment Request #9 - \$2,000, Page Homestead Senior Housing.
- Raffle Permit #2010-18.
- Follow up letter to Homestead Woolen Mill agent Bruce Treat.
- Land Use Change Tax Warrant \$976.44.

Non-public session – RSA 91-A:3IIb, Hiring – Emergency Management. Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3IIb at 6:17 p.m. Present was EMD Bruce Bohannon and Town Administrator Fox. Selectmen came out of non-public session at 6:32 p.m. Selectmen discussed a proposal to hire Brian Bohannon as one of the town's RADEF officers. The position participates in training, drills and exercises related to Vermont Yankee and (barring an event requiring activation of the VY plan) requires no more than 20 hours of work annually. The town's nepotism policy was reviewed and Selectmen determined that the RADEF officer position qualified as a temporary employee (pursuant to Section 4) approving the hiring of Brian Bohannon.

Public Hearing – RSA 41:14-a, Replacement of existing septic system on Town owned property- Richardson Park. Chairman Carlson called the hearing to order at 6:33 p.m. reading the public notice provided. This is the second hearing required by statute. Comment from the public was solicited. Bruce Bohannon asked what the matter was about and was advised that it related to replacement of a septic system allowed on the town’s Richardson Park property by easement approved by Town Meeting voters for a cottage abutting the town’s parcel. No other public testimony was received. Chairman Carlson closed the public hearing at 6:35 p.m.

NHDOT - Proposed Sale of State Owned Land in Swanzey & Keene to Franklin Buffum Sr. & Judith Buffum. Selectmen reviewed correspondence directed to Fox dated 6/22 regarding the proposed sale of land (acquired years ago by the State for a planned Route 10 “bypass”) to abutter Franklin & Judith Buffum. The parcel to be conveyed to Buffum's will be subject to a conservation easement. In response to Oldenburg’s query, Selectmen advised that the town did not have an interest in acquiring the parcel proposed for sale to Buffum and that they would support the sale of this property (initially acquired by the state for right of way purposes) to its abutter.

Health Inspections – Day Care & Foster Home, 17 Highland Circle. Selectmen approved (acting as the Board of Health) licensing inspections conducted at 17 Highland Circle by CEO Weston.

Kona Ice Cream Truck – Richardson Park. Selectmen considered expanding the approval granted last year to allow the vendor to visit the town’s park on weekends only to allow visits on weekdays. Selectmen approved visits to the facility on weekdays (although not daily) as well as weekend reserving the right to withdraw approval.

Request from Michael Newman, 121 Pondview Road to waive the town’s demolition permit fee (\$50). The manufactured home at this location was severely damaged by fire last week and requires demolition. The property owner does not have insurance and has requested the town waive the demolition permit fee. Selectmen approved waiving the permit fee for demolition of the unit damaged by fire.

Non-public session – RSA 91-A:3IIa, Personnel. Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3IIa at 6:47 p.m. Present for the session were Bill Hutwelker and Fox. Selectmen came out of non-public session at 6:58 voting by roll call to seal the minutes of the session indefinitely.

Monadnock Regional School District & SAU #38. Selectmen met with School board members Pat Bauries, William Felton and Eric Stanley, Assistant Superintendent David Hodgdon, Principal Betty Tatro and Jane Fortson. The withdrawal report, subject of a public hearing last week – Attachment #1, was reviewed. Unfortunately, the public hearing was poorly attended by district residents. Stanley advised that withdrawal committee felt that the action recommended was not “just about the money” but about providing greater administrative support for the schools of the Monadnock District and more administrative accountability to the Monadnock Board. As a separate supervisory unit, Monadnock would benefit from the full attention of its superintendent and control the personnel issues impacting our district. Consent of an SAU Board, focused on 3 separate districts, would not be required. The withdrawal committee also felt that special education services would benefit greatly from the full attention of its supervisor (without the distraction of 2 other districts). Fortson advised withdrawal required support of 60% of the voters and if defeated could not be considered again for 2 years. Board member Felton cautioned against moving hastily to withdraw emphasizing his view that that current SAU arrangement had served the three districts

well with little conflict until recently. Concerns regarding parity of educational opportunities district wide were discussed including the decision to expand to full day kindergarten at Gilsum – but not provide that same service to other towns in the district. The Northern School Study results and whether they supported equity in resource allocation or opportunity for all the students in the district was discussed at length. Work of the district’s All Day Kindergarten Committee is needed to resume discussion of this issue. AYP progress at various schools was discussed. The group requested Selectmen’s support of the Withdrawal Committee Report anticipated to be considered by voters later this year.

Cheshire TV. Selectmen met with Lee Perkins (Executive Director of Cheshire TV) and Rebecca Landry (representing the City of Keene) to discuss the board’s June 8th determination that it did not wish to participate in the proposed 3 town agreement. Landry advised that Marlborough had executed the proposed agreement Monday evening and the City Council is scheduled to consider either executing the proposed agreement or considering extension of the current agreement on Thursday. Landry offered to review the provisions of the proposed agreement with board members. Selectman Carlson advised that was probably really not necessary as the Selectmen’s real concern is whether Swanzey (as a community) and its residents receive sufficient benefit from Cheshire TV (as Keene and Keene matters appear to dominate its content). Perkins outlined several measurable benefits to Swanzey residents including production of a weekly show by a resident and participation of several Monadnock Regional School District students in production training through the Cheshire Career Center and the Upward Bound Program at KSC. Equipment and training is available to residents who choose to take advantage of that opportunity. Unfortunately, there is no way to measure who from Swanzey watches the channel. Perkins advised they receive lots of positive feedback about the content on the channel so he thinks those in Swanzey who do watch it enjoy the programming provided. Unfortunately, he cannot make people take advantage of the opportunities presented by Cheshire TV to produce programming but he thinks he can do more to encourage participation from our town and plans to do more outreach at MRHS. Lack of a point of origin in Swanzey, the board desire to place that point at the high school, Time Warner’s obligation to place that point at Town Hall and the franchise holder’s lack of responsiveness to the town’s queries regarding the point of origin were discussed. Perkins offered to assist in coordinating between the town and Time Warner regarding the point of origin. A letter from Selectmen designating him as authorized to represent the town in such matters would be required. Cost to run the feed to the high school would be higher than Town Hall. Perkins and Landry suggested the town could consider raising its franchise fee to cover that expense. Perkins reviewed the staffing and services being provided under the existing franchise fee and agreement to the City assigning personnel to tape meeting etc. He advised he would be willing to provide that same level of service to Swanzey if the town was interested. He felt that recording and airing Swanzey meetings would generate more interest in our town in Cheshire TV. He advised they had produced a PSA for Old Home Days and planned to have a camera at the upcoming event. Equipment is also available for loan from Cheshire TV for residents who might want to record this or other events and develop productions from those recordings to air on Cheshire TV. In addition to being viewed on Channel 8, Cheshire TV is also streamed on the internet. On behalf of the City and Town of Marlborough, Landry expressed concern that Swanzey’s deciding to no longer participate in Cheshire TV could negatively impact the organization’s ability to serve Keene and Marlborough. Currently, Swanzey’s funding is a significant portion of the Cheshire TV budget with Marlborough providing approximately \$700 a month in support, Swanzey \$3,400 and Keene \$10,000. Concerns were also expressed by Landry and Perkins about what Swanzey might do with the franchise fee dollars it collects and that cable subscribers in Swanzey might react negatively to paying a franchise fee that did not go to support local access television. Selectman Carlson expressed concern about being able to measure the value the town was receiving for the \$3,400 a month. Ideas to develop interest in the community were discussed. Information regarding the

point of origin and confirmation that the school is still willing to participate is needed. Selectmen agreed to give further consideration to the town's support of Cheshire TV. In order to provide time for that consideration, Selectmen voted to grant an additional 2 month extension (to the initial six month extension) establishing an expiration date for the current agreement between the town and Cheshire TV of September 21, 2010.

Abatements 2009. Selectmen considered abatement applications resulting from the 2009 Update of assessed values taking action as detailed – Attachment # 2.

July meeting calendar. Selectmen reviewed the July calendar setting meetings on July 6, 13 & 27th. Selectmen requested scheduling of the DPW Director and Fire Chief for the July 6 meeting.

Consideration of Minutes of Previous Meeting. Selectmen reviewed and approved the minutes of their meeting of June 15, 2010 approving the public and non-public sessions as written.

Non-public session – RSA 91-A:3IIc. Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3IIc at 9:20 p.m. Selectmen came out of non-public session at 9:22 p.m. voting by roll call to seal the minutes of the session indefinitely.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Submitted by,

Elizabeth A. Fox
Town Administrator