

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire  
**Board of Selectmen**  
Meeting – July 2, 2013  
Swanzey Town Hall, 620 Old Homestead Highway, Swanzey, NH

**CALL TO ORDER**

Present were Selectmen Nancy L. Carlson, Kenneth P. Colby, Jr. and Deborah J. Davis. The meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy L. Carlson at 6:15 p.m. at Swanzey Town Hall.

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Also present were Town Administrator Shane O’Keefe, Administrative Aide Sandi Page and Deputy Tax Collector Warren Look. Attending later in the meeting were Carpenter Home Administrator Dawn Rice, Town Clerk Donna Munson, Deputy Town Clerk Karen Elliott, and Tax Collector Lori Belletete.

**MINUTES**

- Regular meeting of June 10, 2013 - deferred to next meeting
- Regular meeting of June 25-27, 2013 - deferred to next meeting
- Non-Public meeting(s) of June 25 & June 27, 2013. Colby made a **motion** to accept the non-public minutes of June 25, 2013, Davis seconded, and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.*** Colby **moved** to accept the non-public minutes of June 27, 2013, Carlson seconded the motion, and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Job responsibilities of Town Hall Administrative Aide**

Following up on Administrative Aide Sandi Page’s recent retirement announcement, the Board discussed her job responsibilities and workload. Her last day at Town Hall will be August 30<sup>th</sup> but she will continue working for the Sewer Department on a part-time basis thereafter. Page discussed her responsibilities other than that for the Sewer Department, which include welfare administration, Recreation Department coordination, and coordination of permits for gravel, yield and timber taxes. It was acknowledged that there is no job description for her position. She mentioned that the welfare duties have been growing significantly due to many factors, including socioeconomic forces, and that recreation activities have been down a bit owing to alternative recreational activities for youth. The paperwork for welfare administration has increased.

Dawn Rice entered the meeting at 6:17 p.m.

Page handed out spreadsheets, one breaking out the percentage of time she spends on efforts for different departments and one depicting caseload trends in welfare cases. She went on to describe the increased welfare responsibilities and how she works with other towns and agencies to assist clients. O’Keefe mentioned that 54% of Sandi’s pay and 50% of her benefits are contributed by the Sewer Department and that by her retention of Sewer Department responsibilities the Town will have to budget approximately \$30,000 should the Administrative Aide position remain full-time.

With the elimination of the Sewer Department functions from the Administrative Aide position, Carlson suggested adding the human resources functions of the finance office to this position to relieve pressures in the finance department.

O’Keefe suggested the Board consider instead bringing the Health Officer responsibilities to this position as they often are dealing with the same clientele, and the existing health Officer is not located in or near

Swanzey. In addition, from a recruiting standpoint, the skill sets for an HR employee and a welfare coordinator are quite different. Colby stated that the Board needs to consider changes to Town Hall functions and not outside functions at this time, and that this position can handle multiple duties.

Colby also brought up a potential cost-saving idea for the Town, which is to produce “Swanzey Uncovered” on a primarily online-only basis with only a handful of hardcopies for those who prefer them and for the libraries.

The Board was in agreement that the Administrative Aide position should take on the finance offices’ human resources functions and asked O’Keefe to put together a job description in the next two weeks for review by the Board.

Page and Loock left the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

### **OTHER MATTERS**

#### **General discussion of Carpenter Home matters**

Dawn Rice updated the Board on Carpenter Home matters, handing out a written report of activities and status. She mentioned that she presently has a very nice group of residents who all seem to get along. Two residents have contracted pneumonia. She mentioned some of the trips that residents have made, and indicated that the van – which had been donated to the Town a few years back by the family of a resident – needed some work.

She said that new staff is working out very well, that staff is working hard, and that one staff member has been quite ill recently.

Regarding the Carpenter Home facility itself, Rice mentioned that the kitchen floor and range work is soon to be completed. She said that she does not know the schedule for the window replacement project. She mentioned there is one window needing replacement that she has been complaining about for some time. It was agreed that Rice would seek a price from an outside vendor for this window, and others as necessary.

She mentioned that the clinical state inspection recently took place, and that the facility/fire/safety inspection has not taken place yet, but that the facility permit has expired. Rice stated that she was complimented on almost all inspection items except management of personnel files. She said that one of the inspectors was not a good person and had made things up in the report, in a particular a personnel matter on a person for which there is no record of employment with the Town. Rice stated that she had verbally reported the inspector’s errors to the State of New Hampshire. Colby suggested that Rice go on the record with the State that the Town is requesting issuance of its permit.

Rice left the meeting at 7:15 p.m., while Town Hall employees Donna Munson, Karen Elliott, Lori Belletete and Warren Loock entered the meeting at that time.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Authorize expenditure(s) over \$1,000 – Public Works Department**

The Board reviewed a request from Public Works Department Lee Dunham to authorize an expenditure of up to \$2,500 to replace the two rear tires on the 2003 backhoe. O’Keefe said that this expense would be paid from the Highway Tires budget line which has a balance of \$3,918 of the \$4,000 budget.

Colby **moved** to authorize the expenditure by the Public Works Department of up to \$2,500 on backhoe tires, the funds to come from the Highway Tires budget line. Davis seconded the motion and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

**Accept unanticipated funds per RSA 31:95-b (#1)**

The Board was asked to accept checks as follows, totaling \$1,050.00, as donations to Whitcomb Hall:

- \$1,000.00 from Frazier & Son Furniture
- \$50.00 from Kenneth R. and Janice Sevene

Davis **moved** to accept the funds as listed and to remit them to the custody of the Trustees of Trust Funds to be held in the Whitcomb Hall Non-Restricted Fund trust account established on March 19, 2013. Colby seconded the motion, and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

**Accept unanticipated funds per RSA 31:95-b. (#2)**

The Board was asked to accept checks as follows, totaling \$390.00, as contributions to the Town for Old Home Day activities:

- \$50.00 -- Joanne C. & A. Bernard Stroshine
- \$25.00 -- Theodore & Elizabeth Bemis
- \$30.00 -- Erik's Import Autoworks, LLC
- \$30.00 -- David A. Gauffin
- \$25.00 -- Jeanne M. & Mark F. Pride
- \$50.00 -- Diana L. Ashford
- \$25.00 -- Linda L. Hagg
- \$25.00 -- Tamara L. Barrett
- \$50.00 -- the Pit Stop Smokehouse
- \$30.00 -- Garner Auto Body, Inc.
- \$25.00 -- James A. & Linda E. Lamothe
- \$25.00 -- William & Colleen Lauer

Colby **moved** to accept the funds as listed and to remit them to the custody of the Trustees of Trust Funds to be held in the Old Home Day Non-Restricted Fund trust account established on April 30, 2013. Davis seconded the motion, and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

**Old Home Day Non-Restricted Fund trust account**

O'Keefe reviewed and discussed with the Board expenses related to Old Home Day, specifically a charge of \$430.00 for brochures and flyers from the Keene Sentinel Print Shop, and a charge of \$112.00 from Professor Thomas C. Hubka for mileage related to his speaking at the event. Colby **moved** to authorize the expenditure of funds of \$542.00 from the Old Home Day Non-Restricted Fund trust account for these specific expenses. Davis seconded the motion, and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

**Accept unanticipated funds per RSA 31:95-b (#3)**

The Board was asked to accept a check in the amount of \$125.00 from the Townsend, Massachusetts Fire EMS Relief Association as a donation to the Fire Department in recognition of assistance granted by the Swanzey Fire Department – the West Swanzey Fire Station was made available about a month ago for use as a half-way rest stop for a fundraising motorcycle ride. It is the intention of the Fire department that these funds be directed to the Fire Department Gifts & Donations Trust Fund account. Colby suggested that maybe the Townsend Fire EMS Relief Association should keep the funds for their charitable cause. It was agreed to discuss this matter with Chief Skantze when he meets with the Board next.

**Discuss Town Hall matters**

Carlson stated that at the Board's continuation meeting on June 27, 2013 it was decided to have a meeting with Town Hall staff to clarify staff expectations.

Belletete stated that she was disappointed that the Board decided not to accept the resignation of Bookkeeper Theresa Louder and that Louder could stay on indefinitely. She stated that Louder has

been and continues to be an issue for Town Hall employees and others, and that the Board's action does not change anything at Town Hall.

Munson stated that Louder abuses some Town Hall employees with her behavior and asked the Board why they continue to allow for this.

Carlson stated that the meeting with Town Hall staff would be held on July 9, 2013 at 8:30 a.m., that all Town Hall employees would be present, and that they would discuss a number of issues. It would not be a complaint session, but would instead be an information session on Board expectations of staff.

Belletete asked if there would be an opportunity to have a separate meeting during which complaints could be lodged.

Carlson mentioned that Louder's job is extremely important and that no one in Town Hall can do her job. Belletete said that her job functions are not unique and others around the state can do what she does. Colby said that the upcoming meeting would help clear the air.

Elliott stated that she has worked under Louder for four years and knows what it is like to work with her - she treats co-workers poorly and does not work well with other people. The Board needs to do something about this, and hopes their plan will work.

Carlson reiterated that the Board will meet with Town Hall employees and talk about what the Board members expect with Town Hall culture and attitude. O'Keefe asked to give notice of the meeting to Town Hall employees.

Munson, Elliott, Belletete and Look left the meeting at 7:34 p.m.

Colby stated that he hopes for an open, concise statement of expectations of Town hall employees, that everyone has to work together. Davis said that she hopes the meeting works to get people to work together.

### **Recycling Center matters**

The Recycling Center was briefly discussed and Colby stated that Bob Osterhout is doing a great job and the facility is looking good. Carlson said she is hearing good things about the operations of the facility. Colby mentioned a concern about an elderly Recycling Center customer.

### **Discuss summer meeting schedule**

The Board members discussed schedules and meetings and decided not to meet on July 23, 2013.

### **Cheshire Fair parade**

The Board members reviewed an invitation from the Cheshire Fairgrounds Association to participate in the annual Cheshire Fair Parade. Board members will check their schedules and Carlson will respond to the invitation.

### **Update on Demolition of the West Swanzey Athletic Association Building**

Colby said that the site is looking good. O'Keefe reported that the building materials are almost completely gone.

### **Bates property, 127 Homestead Avenue**

It was noted that it appears little cleanup work has been done at the Bates property and the Recycling Center disposal authorization will expire shortly. This matter was briefly discussed.

### **Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3II(a), Personnel Matters.**

The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 7:55 p.m. **Motion passed.** Present were the Board members and Town Administrator O'Keefe.

**Motion** by Davis to seal the minutes of the non-public session. The motion was seconded by Colby. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to seal the minutes. **Motion passed.** **Motion** by Davis to leave non-public session and return to public session. The motion was seconded by Colby, with all in favor. **Motion passed.** Non-public session ended at 8:30 p.m.

### **Capital Improvements Program Committee**

O'Keefe mentioned that the kickoff meeting of the CIP Committee was held that afternoon and that it went well, with site visits scheduled for next week. Committee meetings look to be held at 5:00 PM on Mondays as necessary, which Davis confirmed should work for her.

### **Town Hall steps**

Colby noted that the treads in front of Town Hall were wearing and should be refinished and he recommended a product he had recently used. O'Keefe was asked to have Francis Faulkner look into this and get it done.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Motion** by Davis to approve the Consent Agenda, authorizing the chair to sign where necessary. Second by Colby. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

- Raffle Permit #2013-25. Pitcher Mountain 4-H Hot Shots – Raffle of assorted donated items on 11/9/2013 at the Connecticut River Sportsmen's Club.
- Raffle Permit #2013-26. Cast 'n Brass Antique Machinery Club – Raffle of assorted donated items on 7/31/2013 to 8/4/2013 at the Cheshire Fairgrounds.
- Event Permit #2013-23. The Village Church – Music Concert on 7/27/2013 at the Potash Bowl. Police/Fire services are not required.
- Junkyard License. Buffum Auto Parts (Map 52, Lots 28 & 30).

**ADJOURNMENT** – **Motion** at 8:39 p.m. by Davis to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Colby. All were in favor. **Motion passed.** The next meeting is scheduled for July 9, 2013.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shane O'Keefe, Town Administrator

Approved on July 9, 2013.