

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – November 5, 2013
Swanzey Town Hall, 620 Old Homestead Highway, Swanzey, NH

CALL TO ORDER

Present were Selectmen Nancy L. Carlson, Deborah J. Davis and Kenneth P. Colby, Jr. The meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy L. Carlson at 6:13 p.m. at Swanzey Town Hall. Also present were Town Administrator Shane O’Keefe and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

OTHERS PRESENT

Members of the Conservation Commission: Bob Goodrich, Jane Johnson, Stephen Stepenuck, Gary Coburn, and Ric Dell’Erba. Also present was Ann McBride from the Monadnock Conservancy.

MINUTES

- Regular meeting of October 29, 2013 – Colby **moved** to accept the regular Minutes of October 22, 2013. The motion was seconded by Davis and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***
- Non-Public meeting #1 of October 29, 2013 - Colby **moved** to accept the non-public meeting minutes #1 of October 29, 2013 with changes in paragraph four. The motion was seconded by Davis and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***
- Non-Public meeting #2 of October 29, 2013- Colby **moved** to accept the non-public meeting minutes #2 of October 29, 2013. The motion was seconded by Davis and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***
- Regular meeting of November 2, 2013 – Colby **moved** to accept the regular Minutes of November 2, 2013. The motion was seconded by Davis and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearing opened at 6:14 p.m.

Acquisition of property interest in Map 70, Lots 1, 3 & 4, per RSA 41:14-a (Hearing 2 of 2). The second of two public hearings was held as required under RSA 41:14-a for the proposed acquisition of an interest in property presently owned by Robert Evans King located at Tax Map 77, Lots 1, 3 and 4, consisting of approximately 246 acres. The first hearing took place on October 22, 2013.

At the same time the Conservation Commission opened a public hearing held in conformance with RSA 36-A:5,II, which is required prior to the use of Conservation Funds for the purchase of any interest in real property or for a contribution to a qualified organization for the purchase of property interests under RSA 36-A:4-a, I(b).

Background: The Monadnock Conservancy is proposing to acquire a conservation easement over this property within the California Brook Natural Area, a portion of which is located in Swanzey. It is the intention of the Board to acquire a contingent right to administer and enforce the conservation easement. The total project cost is \$371,300, and the Conservancy had asked the Town to contribute \$22,500 toward the purchase. On September 9, 2013 the Conservation Commission voted to contribute a maximum of 20% of \$22,500 (\$4,500) from the Conservation Fund, and on October 1, 2013 the Board of Selectmen voted to contribute \$18,000 from the Conservation Land Acquisition Capital Reserve Fund and \$4,500 from the Conservation Fund toward the project.

Ann McBride representing the Monadnock Conservancy was present to respond to questions and comments from the public. No public were present with comments or questions.

Public Hearing closed at 6:15 p.m. Ann McBride left at 6:16 p.m. Conservation Commission members left at 6:17 p.m.

O'Keefe noted that RSA 41:14-a provides that the Board's vote on whether to acquire the property interest must take place no sooner than 7 days nor later than 14 days after the second public hearing, and that he planned to place this matter on the agenda for the next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Home Occupation – Michael & Michelle Slocum, 144 Goodell Avenue (Map 25, Lot 12)

An application for Home Occupancy was submitted for the subject property to establish a craft store in a portion of an accessory barn structure.

Property owner Michelle Slocum was present to speak to her proposed Home Occupation business, to be called "Simplify". She showed the Board some photos of the property. She said the driveway is 284 feet long with six parking spots. She commented that while 312 square feet is the entire space in the barn, she will not be using more than 300 for her retail business. O'Keefe noted that the property information he has shows the building extension to contain 420 square feet. The Board reminded Slocum that she needs to be scheduled with the Planning Board for review of any signage once the Selectmen rule on the Home Occupation.

Colby **moved** to qualify as a Home Occupation the proposed use of a portion of the barn structure at 144 Goodell Avenue (Map 25, Lot 12) as a craft shop, subject to Planning Board review, all limitations specified in the application, and continued compliance with all applicable provisions of the Town Zoning ordinance, and furthermore to authorize the Chairperson to execute any necessary documentation on behalf of the Board related to this decision. The motion was seconded by Davis, no further discussion, and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Slocum left at 6:34 p.m.

Discuss 2014 Budget

Emergency Management budget

Emergency Management Director Bruce Bohannon joined the meeting at 6:36 p.m. to discuss the Emergency Management Budget for 2014. A discussion was held regarding a request to Bohannon to cut his budget by 15%, which Bohannon has succeeded at doing. Bohannon mentioned Disaster Plan/SWRPC line item of \$6,000 and a grant he is waiting for.

Bohannon told the Board that in regard to the reverse 911 notification system currently it was unanimously decided by the Town's emergency response departments to stay with the Code Red program now being used. He said the program the Town is using is costly but is stable, while the State of New Hampshire program has problems. Carlson and Colby noted that a recent Vermont Yankee siren had sufficient notice and was loud enough to be heard throughout Town.

A discussion was held about decommissioning the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Plant located in Vernon, Vermont. Colby asked about the need for 60 years of Safe Store mode for on-site handling

nuclear material. Colby expressed interest in safety during that time and Bohannon said that once the fuel rods are out of the pool and separated from the generator, then there are few safety issues. Bohannon said that by 2016, the Town won't have to be involved any longer.

The Board went on to say they had no problem with the Emergency Management proposed budget. A quick review occurred regarding \$5,000 proposed to be put into the Emergency Management Expendable Trust and Emergency Communications Expendable Trust. It was noted that the latter account shows \$22,500 being proposed, which is the same amount as for 2013, but that only \$10,000 is being requested to date by departments. The Board was concerned that the table of Capital Reserve funds and Expendable Trust funds only shows the amount raised and then directed to the funds, which were are the same amounts. O'Keefe said he would get a spreadsheet to the Board for next meeting, reporting the actual Capital Reserve and Expendable Trust balances.

Bohannon left the meeting at 6:53 p.m.

Fire Chief Norm Skantze joined the meeting at 6:54 p.m.

Fire Department Wages & Budget

Following up on the previous meeting, Chief Skantze presented spreadsheets for Wage Adjustment Plan for the Fire Department to the Board. A discussion was held regarding the wage increases being asked for by Skantze. He provided an alternative to show implementation over two years. He said that the wage scale is based on certifications obtained by the Firefighters. Upper certifications are required for wage increases. Davis asked about replacement for officers. Skantze said that he never replaced the Second Lieutenant from East Station. He then discussed hourly rates for 2013 and 2014, for two year phase-in wage increases. Figures for 2015 are approximations only since anyone on the list could change certifications during the year. Davis pointed out that the Board could not approve any more than one year at a time. Carlson said it was her feeling that the change he is asking for is a big change. Colby said that at a previous meeting Norm noted that part-time salary wages wouldn't change.

Colby said maybe a two year implementation is worthwhile, but perhaps a three-year implementation would be preferable. Skantze said many changes occur in three years. Davis said that some of the pay issues regarding moving some employees to full-time wages need to be considered. If a worker moves from part-time to full-time, you have to account for that change in wages as well as benefits.

Colby said he appreciates what Skantze is trying to accomplish but he would like to see a three year implementation for wage increases. Colby said the Fire Department personnel are worth every penny, but the Board needs to offer a budget the voters can accept. Davis emphasized the Board wants the Fire Department budget to pass. Skantze said he will figure out a three year plan and work with O'Keefe to develop the spreadsheet.

Fire Department Capital Budget

A discussion occurred regarding the Capital Reserve & Expendable Trust accounts for the Fire Department. Skantze is recommending refurbishing a rusty truck. He presented a budget estimate of \$37,550 to fix doors, frame, and a list of maintenance, which will extend the life of the truck for about twenty years. He said the East Swanzezy Fire Station needs doors replaced which would come out of Fire Station Maintenance Expendable Trust. He estimated \$18,975 to fix the roof at the West Swanzezy Station.

He went on to discuss the air packs used by the Department. The Fire Department now has forty air packs, and he said he believed that only thirty are needed. He reported that the packs have improved over time and now cost about \$6,000 each. Skantze said it is cheaper to buy all thirty at one time, rather than replacing them at five per year over six years. Colby asked about the life expectancy for the packs. Skantze said it would be estimated at ten years. Davis pointed out that the Town doesn't have as many fires as in the past. Skantze said the packs are used in conditions other than in a fire and that they are used often by the Department. \$30,325 is the balance in the Fire Department Tools & Equipment Expendable Trust account and by adding \$10,000 he can replace thirty air packs at one time which would mean that the packs would be the same style. Skantze suggested completing a Warrant Article to present to the public instead of using the trust funds. Colby said he would prefer that Skantze have a firm figure to work with that is not in danger of changing by the time of Town Meeting. Carlson agreed that replacing the air packs should go to Warrant Article.

Interest payments on ALS Monitors

The Board and Chief Skantze went on to discuss a five year lease/purchase contract for ALS Monitors which was approved by Warrant Article in 2010 and which unfortunately did not include lease interest and fees on the equipment which total \$4,911.50. The Board was asked to consider posting the interest and fees to the Fire Department Operating Budget in 2013 or 2014, or a combination of both. The Board also considered the option of transferring funds from anywhere in the budget to help cover this expense.

Carlson said the interest should have been included in the contract at the outset, but given the situation now, the funds should come from the Fire Department Operating Budget. The Board reviewed the various line items in the Fire Department Operating Budget to see if \$5,000 could be gleaned to cover the expense. After further review of the budget, Skantze suggested using the Non-Disposable Medical Equipment line item (#01-4220-2-646) to cover the expense and the Board agreed. Skantze left the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Land Use Budget

Carlson discussed whether or not land use conferences should be included in the budget managed by newly appointed Director of Planning and Community Development Sara Carbonneau. O'Keefe suggested Carbonneau meet with the Board on November 26 2013 to further discuss the issue and the Board agreed.

Health Insurance Review

O'Keefe reported that the Affordable Health Care Act requires the Town to provide information about the plans available to employees. O'Keefe reviewed his analysis of various health care plans and calculated costs to the Town. The Board considered no longer offering the Blue Cross plan or providing to employees the option for Blue Cross with additional premium in order to bring the Town's cost in line with the Matthew Thornton plan. The rate of increase for Blue Cross would be 23.3%. The Board also considered other options, including increasing employee contribution percentages for the Matthew Thornton plan to either 18% or 20%, or changing to altogether lesser cost plans, and agreed to go with plan 2 as present by O'Keefe: Adjust the employee contribution of the Blue Cross plan to meet the Matthew Thornton plan impact on Town.

Motion by Davis to keep the existing Matthew Thornton plan with a 15% employee premium contribution, and keep the existing Blue Cross plan with an employee premium contribution increased to 23.3%. The motion was seconded by Colby. All are in favor. **Motion passed.**

Recreation Department

O'Keefe informed the Board that he understands that Recreation Director Judy Bohannon will remain on the job through next summer. Carlson said a new hire will be needed for September, October, November, and December. She said to plan on four months at 12 hours per week at a pay rate of \$14.00 per hour.

Dental Plan

Dental plan alternatives were reviewed by the Board and discussed. The Board agreed to change to an increased-benefit Option 3A plan with an employee premium contribution of 15%. Presumption is that staff can opt out in they wish.

Budget 2014 continuation

The Board returned to a review of the 2014 proposed budget. O'Keefe noted that Worker's Compensation cost increased substantially. O'Keefe is going to discuss this further with Ron O'Keefe with Property Liability Trust.

O'Keefe noted that Carpenter Home and Wastewater Treatment budgets have been separated from the General Fund in his spreadsheets as approved previously by the Board.

Tax Situation

Anna Luce has an agreement with the Town to pay her taxes and she has not been paying them. They discussed the possibility of reaching out to elderly services. O'Keefe reported that other Town staff has been on the case.

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3II(b), Hiring of Public Employee(s)

Motion by Davis to enter Non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3II(b), Hiring of Public Employee(s), seconded by Colby. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 8:48 p.m. **Motion passed.** Present were the Board members, Town Administrator Shane O'Keefe, and Recording Secretary Bernard.

Motion was made by Davis to leave non-public session and return to public session. The motion was seconded by Colby and all were in favor. **Motion passed.** Non-public session ended at 8:52 p.m.

Motion was made 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.**

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3II(a) Personnel

Motion by Davis to enter Non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3II(a), Personnel, seconded by Colby. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 8:52 p.m. **Motion passed.** Present were the Board members, Town Administrator Shane O'Keefe, and Recording Secretary Bernard.

Motion was made 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 8:59 p.m.

Motion was made 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.**

Capital Improvement Program Committee (CIP) Proposal regarding Request for Proposal (RFP)

O’Keefe updated the Board on the status of the CIP RFP for facilities analysis. Davis said that the CIP Committee would like to include the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Recycling Center in the analysis. The Committee chose three engineering companies who submitted proposals for further consideration and will schedule interviews for November 20, 2013.

The three chosen by the Committee were:

- SMP Architecture – Concord, NH
- Daniel V. Scully Architects – Keene, NH
- Warrenstreet Architects, Inc. – Concord, NH

The Board agreed to add the Recycling Center and DPW as an addendum to the RFP.

Evaluations

Davis reviewed the copies of the Department Head evaluations in her possession. It was noted that she did not have possession of some of the originals.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Personnel Action Report(s)
- 2013 Equalization Survey

ADJOURNMENT

Motion for Adjournment by Davis, second by Colby. **Motion passed,** and the meeting adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary

Approved on November 12, 2013.

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Non-Public Meeting Minutes #1 – November 5, 2013

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3II(b), Hiring of Public Employee(s)

Motion by Davis to enter Non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3II(b), Hiring of Public Employee(s), seconded by Colby. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 8:48 p.m. **Motion passed.** Present were the Board members, Town Administrator Shane O'Keefe, and Recording Secretary Bernard.

The Board was asked to consider the annual hiring of a seasonal winter maintenance worker in non-public session.

Motion was made by Davis to extend an offer to Paul Fassett employment from December 2013 to March 2014 as a seasonal winter maintenance worker at rate of pay \$15.00 per hour and to authorize the Town Administrator to complete necessary paperwork. The motion was seconded by Colby, and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

Motion was made 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 8:52 p.m.

Motion was made 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.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary

Approved on November 12, 2013.

These Minutes unsealed by the Board of Selectmen on January 14, 2014.