

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – February 25, 2014
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 6:06 p.m. at the Swanzey Town Hall. Also present was Town Administrator Shane O’Keefe and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

OTHERS PRESENT: Ashuelot Rail Trail Project Manager Bruce Bohannon, Fire Chief Norm Skantze, Boy Scouts Ethan Bradbury, Evan Bradbury, and Hayden Budzik working for merit badges, resident Jim McConnell, and Keene Sentinel Reporter Megan Foley

MINUTES

- Regular meeting of February 18, 2014 – **motion** was made by Colby to accept the regular meeting minutes of February 18, 2014. The motion was seconded by Davis and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***
- Non-Public meeting minutes of February 18, 2014 – Davis **moved** to accept the non-public meeting minutes of February 18, 2014 and to unseal them. The motion was seconded by Colby and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Unseal Non-Public Minutes

There was a **motion** by Davis to unseal the minutes of a number of non-public sessions that took place the late 4th quarter of 2012:

- November 27, 2012 #2 - December 11, 2012 #3
- December 4, 2012 #1 - December 18, 2012 #1 and #2

The **motion** was seconded by Colby, and all were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

NEW BUSINESS

Authorize expenditure(s) over \$1,000 – Fire Department

The Board was asked to consider a proposal from Valley Fire Equipment to remove corrosion and restore the frame and body components on Fire Department Engine 2 at a cost of \$37,550.00. It was proposed that this be paid from the Fire Truck Capital Reserve, which as of December 31, 2013 had a balance of \$146,499. Chief Skantze told the Board that the repairs will extend the life of the truck and enable the Town to get ten more years of service from it. Skantze said he was happy with the Valley Fire Equipment quote of \$2,650 for parts and materials, \$4,500 for paint and supplies, and \$30,400 for labor for a total of \$37,550. Skantze noted that the life of a truck is approximately 25 years. Davis pointed out that there have been problems with this particular truck in the past. Skantze said all those past problems have been fixed. Carlson asked how long the truck would be out of service and Skantze responded that the truck would be out of service for between thirty and sixty days. In anticipation of that absence, Skantze said that Engine 3 will be moved back to East Station and Engine 1, the newest truck, will be moved to Central Station. Skantze noted that he did not obtain three quotes for the work because the special nature of the work limits the vendors who can perform the repairs. Colby suggested that Skantze continually monitor the vendor to make sure the truck is back in service in an appropriate amount of time.

Davis **moved** to accept the proposal from Valley Fire Equipment for repair of Fire Department Engine #2 at a cost of \$37,550 including parts & materials, paint & supplies, and labor, and to authorize the expenditure of up to this amount from the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund for this service, and to authorize the Fire Chief to execute any documents necessary to procure the services from this vendor. The motion was seconded by Colby, and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

Colby asked Skantze what the cost would be to replace the truck and Skantze estimated the amount at about \$450,000.

2014 Recreational Trails Program

Bruce Bohannon met with the Board seeking authorization to apply for \$30,000 in funding through the Recreational Trails Program, sponsored by the Trails Bureau of the NH Department of Resources & Economic Development, Division of Parks & Recreation. The grant funding requires a \$7,500 match, which appears to be proposed as a non-monetary or “soft” contribution. The Board was also asked to appoint Bohannon as the “Recreational Trails Program Project Administrator”, which would give him numerous authorities spelled out in the authorization form. The soft match funds are those already in hand from donations and unspent funds from earlier segments of the overall project. Bohannon also referred to potential funding from the Quabbin to Cardigan (Q to C) Trail program of \$10,000 for which an application may be filed in the near future.

Bohannon said that the portion of the Rail Trail that will be worked on next is the Railroad Street to Homestead Avenue section. He also noted that there will be an opportunity for input at a public meeting with all the abutters on April 2, at 6:30 p.m.

Jim McConnell asked about the source of the grant money and whether the Town would be obligated in some way upon receiving the grants. Bohannon said funding comes from the federal government from gas taxes and is specified for trail programs. Bohannon went on to say that there are not any strings attached.

Colby **moved** to appoint Bruce Bohannon as the Town of Swanzey’s Recreational Trails Program Project Administrator, to authorize the Selectboard Chair to execute the necessary authorization form for this appointment, to authorize Bohannon to apply for funding of up to \$30,000 from the NH Bureau of Trails Recreation Trails Program for improvements to the Ashuelot Rail Trail, which would require a local match of \$7,500 for a total project expenditure of \$37,500, and to authorize the Town Administrator to sign a letter submitting the application to the Recreation Trails Program. The motion was seconded by Davis, and all were in favor. **Motion passed.**

Purchasing Policy

The Board reviewed a new purchasing policy draft that provides guidance for staff on purchasing matters. O’Keefe presented the new policy draft taken from the best elements from other communities and which incorporates input from Department Heads and the Finance Office.

Colby noted that shipping and freight costs should be part of the total costs used in establishing which level of purchasing authority is required. Colby said the Board needs to have all costs associated with purchasing included in the totals. Related to purchasing level categories, Carlson questioned what sort of purchases were “identified or anticipated” in departmental annual budgets. Chief Skantze said that

an example would be hose testing that is done every year. A discussion occurred on sealed bids. Colby noted that the Board owes it to the townspeople to get the best price for projects expenses.

Colby commented that **ALL** costs associated with a purchase including interest, installation, setup costs, programming charges and any other factors should be included. O'Keefe said that the words "shipping, freight, and all other obligated costs" will be added to the purchasing policy statement. Colby pointed out the past purchasing policy had \$999.99 as the discretionary limit for Department Heads and that given current pricing, it is a burden for the Board and Department Heads to ask the Board to approve every expense \$1,000 or above. Carlson said she agreed with the steps involved in the draft purchasing policy. Colby recommended they proceed. Carlson said she agreed and that the next step is to finish the "Disposal of Property" section and bring the draft back to the Board next week for review once again. The Board agreed to proceed.

2014 Town Meeting Voter Guide

The Board reviewed the text for the voter's guide for the upcoming Town Meeting. After review a discussion was held and a minor typographic error was found for correction. O'Keefe noted that he is hoping to get the text out to all residents (not just registered voters) this week or by March 3rd at the latest, and the cost will be about \$800. Discussion was held about encouraging residents to register to vote. Board members agreed to the following schedule for attendance at the Town Meeting vote: Davis from 8:00 am to 12 noon, Colby from 12 noon -3:30 p.m. and Carlson from 3:30 p.m. to past 7:00 p.m.

OTHER MATTERS

Town Treasurer position

With Town Treasurer Bill Hutwelker the sole candidate on the ballot for the soon-to-be-open seat on the Board of Selectmen and the fact that RSA 669:7.I provides that the positions of Selectman and Treasurer are incompatible, the Board discussed the process for appointment of a new Town Treasurer. Lynda Faulkner, Deputy Town Treasurer, was contacted by Colby and she agreed to take over as Treasurer. Colby suggested that the Board speak to her at next Tuesday's meeting. There was a brief discussion about the Town's use of a credit and the fact that Faulkner is also associated with the Cheshire County Credit Union which issued the credit card to the Town. Colby summarized the situation stating that Cheshire County Credit Union was the only bank willing to provide a credit card with rigorous restrictions and that he saw no conflict of interest. O'Keefe stated that the Town's auditors were aware of this connection.

Code Enforcement Officer Replacement

O'Keefe noted that Town Director of Planning and Community Development Sara Carbonneau has asked the Board if one of its members wishes to participate in interviews for the open Code Enforcement Officer position. O'Keefe some interview has already been held and there are good candidates.

Town Hall Computer Update

O'Keefe said that the new Town Hall computers have been installed and there has been a relatively easy transition for staff to new software and hardware. He noted there were a few minor snags in the process but on the whole most every issue has been resolved and staff seems to be happy with the results. Bernard noted that some difficulties in sharing files between herself and Carbonneau have been resolved due to the new software. O'Keefe also noted that computer hard drives will be securely stored for the time being in case any backup matters arise, but that they and any confidential information will be destroyed with the Town's IT consultant authenticating their destruction.

Boy Scout Merit Badges

Three Boy Scouts introduced themselves to the Board saying they are working on their Citizenship in the Community badges. The boys are Richmond residents Ethan Bradbury, Evan Bradbury, and Hayden Budzik. The Board congratulated them on their efforts and wished them well.

Non-public session(s) per RSA 91-A:3II(c), Reputation – Applications for Elderly and Disabled Tax Deferral

Motion by Davis to enter Non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3II(c) , Reputation – Applications for Elderly and Disabled Tax Deferral, seconded by Colby. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 7:11p.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 7:19 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.**

Audit Finding Regarding Use of Treasurer’s Signature Stamp

The Board referred to an email from Bookkeeper Theresa Louder to O’Keefe, who had passed it along to the Board, regarding the auditor’s concern about the use of the Treasurer’s stamp. Louder noted no one else uses the stamp and she only uses it when necessary and had always received written permission from the Treasurer before doing so. The auditors noted stamp usage by anyone other than the Treasurer or the Deputy Treasurer of the Town of Swanzey should not be condoned. The Board decided that this activity should not be allowed to continue into the future. Although it was noted that it is a relatively common thing to do in an emergency situation, the Town does have a Deputy Treasurer as well as a Treasurer and one or the other should be available to exercise the duty of signing checks. It was agreed that the stamp should reside with the Treasurer or have it in a lock box. Colby said that there should only be two stamps, one used by the Treasurer and one used by the Deputy.

CIP Committee Attendance

Davis mentioned that she thinks she needs to resign from the Capital Improvement Program Committee because of the times the meetings are scheduled. An upcoming meeting of architects looking for input on facilities usage is scheduled for 12:15 p.m. on a Wednesday and could go as long as three hours. She has clients and cannot be in attendance for that entire period of time. She said that someone from the Board should be there when she cannot be in attendance. The Board agreed that all three should try to attend the meeting so as to have at least one Board member present during the entire meeting. O’Keefe noted that he had passed along to the CIP Committee Davis’ request that Committee meeting be held late on Mondays if possible to accommodate her schedule.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- Event Permit #2014-01. Cheshire Fair Association/Atlas PyroVision Productions – Fireworks show and event on August 16, 2014 at the Cheshire Fairgrounds. Note: various requirements as approved by Board on February 11, 2014 – see permit form for details.
- Event Permit #2014-02. Cheshire Fair Association/Atlas PyroVision Productions – Fireworks show and event on October 11, 2014 at the Cheshire Fairgrounds. Note: various requirements as approved by Board on February 11, 2014 – see permit form for details.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Davis, second by Colby. **Motion passed.** Adjournment at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary

Approved on March 4, 2014.