

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – January 29, 2015
Swanzey Town Hall, 620 Old Homestead Highway, Swanzey, NH

CALL TO ORDER

Present were Selectmen W. William Hutwelker III, Deborah J. Davis, and Kenneth P. Colby, Jr. The meeting was called to order by Chair Kenneth P. Colby, Jr. at 8:00 a.m. at the Swanzey Town Hall. Also present were Town Administrator Shane O’Keefe and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

OTHERS PRESENT

Fire Chief Norm Skantze, City of Keene Fire Chief Mark Howard, Rob DiLuzio of DiLuzio Ambulance Service, Planning & Community Development Director Sara Carbonneau, Code Enforcement Officer Michael Jasmin, Interim Carpenter Home Administrator Judy Bohannon, Residents Grace Ford and Bruce Bohannon.

MINUTES

- The regular and non-public meeting Minutes of January 20, 2015 were deferred.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Board reviewed and approved accounts payable and payroll manifests.

NEW BUSINESS

Ambulance Service Agreements

City of Keene Fire Chief Mark Howard and DiLuzio Ambulance representative Rob DiLuzio met with the Board, along with Chief Skantze, to finalize discussions on ambulance service agreements. The Board reviewed the proposed intercept transport service agreement with the City of Keene, and the existing ambulance service agreement with R.J. DiLuzio Ambulance Service, LLC. Colby said that one concern is the availability of Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) services. Davis asked Howard if there would be a guarantee of providing a paramedic under the proposed agreement. Howard said there is no guarantee on the coverage; it is dependent on resources available.

Skantze said there was a meeting last week with the City of Keene Manager who noted that the City wants the Town of Swanzey to make a decision on the proposed agreement. Skantze spoke about the fact that transportation costs are usually paid by users, but if the patient does not pay, the Town is billed for the service. He said that he estimates the total cost of the contract could be about \$28,000. Howard spoke about why the City of Keene sent the letter to the Town asking for a contract, and said that they have been providing paramedic intercept services to Swanzey without a contract in the past. Howard mentioned the costs associated with providing that service. He said that they also had concerns about their personnel getting into someone else’s ambulance, which could create a liability. He pointed out that the Town of Swanzey is the largest town receiving the services without a contract and this doesn’t make sense from a business point of view for the City. Howard said that the City provided ambulance services to the Town of Swanzey twelve times and ten times medical care was needed. Discussion occurred about mutual aid fire coverage, which the Town can provide, but cannot provide mutual aid ambulance coverage.

Skantze said he researched the number of calls and they come to about a call every 8 days since the beginning of November, which comes to about 44 calls per year according to a quick calculation by Hutwelker. There was a discussion regarding a list of costs provided by Skantze to the Board. Davis asked

if the Town doesn't sign a contract for this year, can they join next year. Howard said the current contracts are set for only one year which is up in June 2015. And yes, they would invite Swanzey to join the group of towns who have contracts with the City of Keene for intercept transport service once again. Howard said the Town of Swanzey is using the City of Keene ambulance services more than Winchester, New Hampshire which pays for a contract, while Swanzey does not. Howard stressed that they want to provide the service, but the goal is to sustain the service with revenue coming in from the communities that are using the service. Colby asked what the bottom line fees are. Howard said the fee is the base standby fee, plus whatever patient insurance doesn't pay.

The Town budget was discussed and Howard addressed monthly invoices as a possibility. Numbers of calls was discussed. Howard looked at year 2014 calls for paramedic intercept and whether or not there was transport. Ten calls were transport calls, which would have been billed to the patient, and if the patient couldn't pay the Town would have to pay. There was a discussion about the percent of calls covered by patient insurance. Howard said a high percentage of patients transported are Medicare or Medicaid patients. DiLuzio spoke about how call volume is increasing and said that DiLuzio Ambulance will still provide the best service.

Hutwelker asked for harder statistics for the Board to work with and help them make a decision. He noted that the Board needs to have a better understanding of what the costs might be. Howard said he could provide to the Board information as to the number of times the City of Keene came to Swanzey over the past five years with ambulance services. He said he would email this information to Skantze who could pass it along to the Board. The Board thanked DiLuzio and Howard and they left the meeting at 8:44 a.m.

Temporary occupancy of recreational vehicle/mobile home, 3 Fords Road (Map 73, Lot 6)

On behalf of the property owner of 3 Fords Road, whose home was destroyed by fire on January 11, 2015, Code Enforcement Officer Michael Jasmin requested permission for the property owner to erect a recreational vehicle or mobile home on the site while a replacement home is being built or installed. The request is for a maximum of six months as permitted by Section III.V of the Zoning Ordinance.

Jasmin spoke about the need of the owner to have a State registered plan for a septic system. The owner, Grace Ford, said she is applying for a loan from a bank to be able to replace the destroyed home. O'Keefe noted that the Town holds a mortgage on the property. Carbonneau noted there is no requirement for a site assessment but they are required to have a State approved septic design. Jasmin said that the owner and the other 4 residents have no place else to go and are currently living in a hotel room. There was a discussion regarding access to water on the site. The owner said there is a spring on the property.

Colby pointed out that the Board cannot make a decision until certain issues are determined, such as septic system viability and water availability. Carbonneau said the Board could approve the request with conditions. She noted that the owner might use a Recreational Vehicle (RV) on the property, and the Board could approve temporary occupancy subject to proper disposal of septic from an RV. There was a brief discussion about a local campground allowing dumping of septic waste there.

Noting that the property owner verified that there is adequate water supply at the site, **Motion** was made by Davis to permit temporary occupancy of a recreational vehicle at 3 Fords Road for a period not to exceed six months per Swanzey Zoning Ordinance Section III.V., subject to acceptable verification of proper disposal of the septic waste. A second to the motion was

made by Hutwelker. No further discussion. At the vote, Hutwelker abstained. Davis and Colby were in favor. **Motion passed.**

OLD BUSINESS

Health Officer Position

O'Keefe reminded the Board that in response to the Board's request to the Commission of the NH Department of Health and Human Services regarding the Health Officer, the State has recommended nominating a new Health Officer at this time. It was noted by O'Keefe that at a previous Board meeting Fire Chief Norm Skantze offered to fill the position on an interim basis. Carbonneau provided a proposal and a timeline to have more contact with the Health Officer. She said she would like to move ahead as quickly as possible so that a permanent Health Officer can be hired. She suggested Bruce Bohannon be the interim Health Officer. She said she would like to see a permanent Health Officer by May of 2015. Carbonneau suggested that the Board establish clear goals for the Health Officer.

Davis said that she didn't want to see more layers of government added, and that she believed that the Board is not considering a full-time Health Officer. Hutwelker said he liked the suggestion of Bohannon as an Interim. Colby pointed out that pay for the Health Officer is established by a discussion between the Health Officer and the Board.

Regarding his previous offer to work as the interim Health Officer, Skantze said he was the Health Officer for other towns in the past. He said he offered to fill the position on a temporary basis because he wants to build value into the inspection program within the Fire Department. He said that some of the calls that Fire Inspection goes to are the same as the Health Officer would go to, duplicating efforts. He said that in the long run the Board should look at consolidation of these services.

Colby said that Skantze has a lot on his plate and he needs to concentrate on the Deliberative Session and the vote in March and address the ambulance services proposed contract. Colby said that he would like to consider the opinions of both Skantze and Carbonneau as to what role the Health Officer plays in the future.

Hutwelker **moved** to recommend to the Commissioner of the NH Department of Health and Human Services that Bruce Bohannon be appointed as the interim Health Officer for the Town of Swanzey in conformance with RSA 128:1 through May 30, 2015 or longer as necessary. There was a second to the motion by Davis and no further discussion. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

The Board executed the required State nomination form and O'Keefe will submit it to the Department of Health and Human Services for action on the appointment.

Carpenter Home Capital Expenses

O'Keefe reminded the Board that at the previous meeting the Board briefly discussed with Interim Carpenter Home Administrator Judy Bohannon repairs that need to be made at the Home in response to a 2014 State inspection. He also noted that a code compliance consultant has reviewed the building and in December provided a report of improvements to bring the facility up to applicable codes. Code Enforcement Officer Mike Jasmin met with the Board to present a prioritization list with estimates of cost.

O'Keefe informed the Board that funds are available to pay for improvements (as of December 31, 2014) as follows:

SOURCE	AMOUNT
2015 Building Maintenance budget line	7,500.00
Carpenter Home Expendable Trust	16,287.36
J. Edgar Bouvier Common Trust Income Fund	1,445.93
Lucy Carpenter Common Trust Income Fund	147,238.07
Edna C. Whitcomb Common Trust Income Fund	6,693.83
George Whitcomb, Jr. Common Trust Income Fund	22,943.70
TOTAL	<u>\$202,108.89</u>

Authorize use of Carpenter Home Trust Funds

Jasmin spoke about the proposed repair of the Carpenter Home boiler, which requires a new circulator and flanges. The Town has received an estimate of \$1,951 from Pinney Plumbing & Heating for the work. Judy Bohannon pointed out that should the repairs not be done expeditiously, the Carpenter Home could be without heat or hot water.

Hutwelker **moved** to authorize expenditure of up to \$2,250 for repairs to the Carpenter Home boiler circulator and flanges to be paid from the Edna C. Whitcomb Common Trust Income Fund. Second to the motion was made by Davis and all were in favor. Motion passed.

Bathroom Remodel at the Carpenter Home

Jasmin spoke about the details of the proposed remodel. He said that he is hoping to get the work done within a two week window of time. Jasmin said he would monitor the contractor closely, and said he understood that \$17,000 was already set aside for this specific task. There was a discussion regarding the bidding process. He passed out a list of safety code action items to be fixed and those that would be repaired in the future. Bohannon asked if the Board wanted to authorize a certain amount of money for these repairs. There was a discussion about the money in the Carpenter Home operating budget to be used as needed. It was noted there is \$7,500 for building maintenance in the budget. There was discussion about using Trust Funds to fund the bathroom remodel. It was agreed by the Board that Bohannon should pay the bills she already has from her operating budget and Jasmin will get pricing for the larger expenses to be incurred in the future, which may be funded through trust fund money.

Jasmin left the meeting at 9:36 p.m.

Discuss February 3, 2015 Deliberative Session

The Board discussed with Skantze how to handle the session and in particular the bond article. Skantze said that he would like to see the Selectmen speak positively about the proposed fire station at the session. Davis made the point that bond rates are currently low and construction costs cheap today and adding on to the structure in the future might actually cost more in the long run since bond interest might be more expensive in the future, not to mention construction costs. Skantze spoke about the architect being exclusively a fire station architect and Davis agreed that fire station architects are not readily available locally. Colby said that he would say some positive words and asked Davis and Hutwelker to speak to the issue as well. Davis said that it should be stressed to taxpayers that the Board is not going to implement plans for other facilities until several years down the road. There was a discussion about doing public buildings on the cheap. The Police Station was mentioned as an example of building cheaply to save costs and determining soon thereafter that the building has needed repairs and new insulation, and is already too small. Skantze said the proposed fire station is modest and adequate to the needs of the Town.

The Board continued discussion of the mechanical details for running the meeting. There was a discussion about the role of the Moderator and the possibility of amendments from townspeople at the meeting. The Board asked O'Keefe to prepare the amount of taxes that would be paid on a house valued at \$100,000 if the fire station bond passes. Also it was noted that the Board should point out that it is proposed to be a declining bond over time and currently the bond rate is low, versus adding on at a later date when bond rates and construction costs might be higher.

Discussion was held about beginning the Board meeting at 6:30 p.m. and not ending the meeting until after the Deliberative Session is over in case Board decisions in response to the Deliberative session are needed.

Skantze left the meeting at 9:51 a.m.

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 a Public Employee(s). The motion was seconded by Hutwelker. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to go into non-public session at 9:52 a.m. **Motion passed.** Present were the Board members Kenneth P. Colby, Jr., Deborah J. Davis, W. William Hutwelker, III, Town Administrator Shane O'Keefe, Interim Carpenter Home Administrator Judy Bohannon and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

Motion was made by Hutwelker to leave non-public session and return to public session. The motion was seconded by Davis, with all in favor. **Motion passed.** Non-public session ended at 9:54 a.m.

Motion was made by Hutwelker to seal the minutes of the non-public session. The motion was seconded by Davis. The Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call to seal the minutes. **Motion passed.**

Mr. and Mrs. Bohannon left at 9:54 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS

Open Space Committee (OSC) appointments

The Board received a request from Open Space Committee members Theresa DiLuzio and Victoria Reck Ames to exchange their appointments prior to Town Meeting. DiLuzio was appointed as a regular OSC member on April 3, 2012 to a 3-year term that expires at the 2015 Town Meeting. Ames was appointed as an Alternate member of the OSC on March 18, 2014 to a 2-year term that expires at the 2016 Town Meeting.

Davis **moved** to appoint Theresa DiLuzio as an alternate member of the Open Space Committee, with a term extending to Town Meeting 2016, and appoint Victoria Reck Ames as a regular member of the Open Space Committee, with a term extending to Town Meeting 2015, in effect swapping their respective appointments as previously made by the Board. There was a second to the motion by Hutwelker and no further discussion. **Motion passed.**

Home Occupation

O'Keefe informed the Board that Richard & Valerie Robichaud, 35 Main Street (Map 57, Lot 78) have submitted an application for Home Occupancy for the subject property to establish a sewing,

upholstery, and furniture refinishing shop with retail sales within a barn attached to a residence. This proposed business is moving to the proposed location from 627 West Swanzey Road. At 288 square feet of space, the total area of Home Occupancy is no greater than 300 square feet according to the application. There was a brief discussion which confirmed there is to be one part-time employee.

Davis **moved** to qualify as a Home Occupation the proposed use of a portion of an existing structure accessory to a residence at 35 Main Street (Map 57, Lot 78) as a sewing, upholstery, and furniture refinishing shop with retail sales of handmade items, antiques and collectables, 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. There was a second to the motion by Hutwelker and there was discussion about retail and whether or not Main Street was in the Business District. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

OTHER BUSINESS

Discuss 2014 Annual Report

O'Keefe informed the Board that Assessing Coordinator Coleen Birmingham is assembling and preparing the annual report and will need to have the Selectmen's report as soon as possible in order to make print deadlines. He also provided a draft of the report and a draft of the report cover for review. Davis said she needs to be able to read the material before approving it. After reviewing the cover and seeing that it is a business photo, Colby noted it is not in keeping with the past covers that were more historically oriented. Davis and Hutwelker said change was good.

CONSENT AGENDA

- None

In addition to items discussed as part of the agenda, the Board received the following documents:

- Police Department Quarterly Report.
- Articles from New Hampshire Town & City magazine

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Hutwelker, second by Davis. No further discussion. All were in favor. **Motion passed.** Adjournment occurred at 10:22 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary

Approved on February 3, 2015.