

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – July 20, 2016
Swanzey Town Hall, 620 Old Homestead Highway, Swanzey, NH

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Kenneth P. Colby, Jr. at 6:00 p.m. at the Swanzey Town Hall at 620 Old Homestead Highway. W. William Hutwelker III joined the meeting at 6:02 pm. Present were Kenneth P. Colby, Jr., and Sylvester Karasinski and W. William Hutwelker III. Also present was Town Administrator Michael Branley and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

OTHERS PRESENT

Code Enforcement Mike Jasmin, Resident Mike Gomarlo, Police Chief Tom De Angelis, Resident Gus Lerandean, Richmond resident Pam Bielunis, and Conservation Commission Chair Wally Smith

PUBLIC INPUT

The Chair asked for input and there was none at this time.

MINUTES

- The special meeting Minutes of July 9, 2016 were considered. There was a **motion** by Karasinski to approve the special meeting Minutes of July 9, 2016. The motion was seconded by Colby. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**
- The regular meeting Minutes of July 13, 2016 were considered. There was a **motion** by Karasinski to approve the regular meeting Minutes of July 13, 2016. The motion was seconded by Colby. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**
- The non-public meeting Minutes #1, #2, #3 and #4 of July 13, 2016 were considered. There was a **motion** by Karasinski to approve the non-public Minutes #1, #2, #3 and #4 of July 13, 2016. The motion was seconded by Colby. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by Colby to approve the Consent Agenda. There was a second by Karasinski. There was no further discussion. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

- Payroll Manifest
- Payables Manifest
- Report-of-cut Operation 15-441-19 – Map 51 Lot 1-8
- Personnel Action Reports

APPOINTMENTS

Police Chief Tom De Angelis – Wage & Compensation Study

De Angelis spoke about being in favor of a wage survey to be done for all the staff of the Town of Swanzey by a third party. Colby said he was not impressed with Jacobs as the person to do a survey. Hutwelker said he did not agree with Colby and pointed out that an unbiased view was important when doing a wage analysis of this kind. Karasinski said he doesn't understand why certain towns were chosen for the comparison done by De Angelis in 2015. He also determined that officers who leave the employ of the Town of Swanzey often go to the police department for the City of Keene or to the New Hampshire State Police. Karasinski said he would like to see the entry level wages for Keene police, the State Police, and surrounding towns, and also include senior police personnel as well. Karasinski said he felt that the police are underpaid and he asked if the police would accept other types of compensation than salary increases like educational benefits, longevity pay, stipends, or bonuses.

Branley said that the Town of Swanzey already offers good benefits to staff, including some of the items Karasinski mentioned. De Angelis noted a pay scale exists with the City of Keene. Branley spoke about the importance of having a plan for the future for police officers so they can see where their wages project in the future with effective performance. De Angelis said that veteran police are very valuable and you need to compensate them to keep them.

Colby said that he has to see something that will give the Town the best bang for the buck. Hutwelker said that the decision not to move forward is frustrating to him. The Board considered the possibility of moving ahead with a proposal from Thornton Associates, who performed a similar analysis for Alton. Karasinski said he wanted additional information because he felt that Thornton might compare the Town of Swanzey to towns which it should not be compared to because those are not the towns that we lose the police to. Branley suggested that whoever does the study, the Board can select the towns to compare.

De Angelis said that he will do whatever the Board wants him to do regarding this issue. De Angelis also mentioned that the police may want to decide to go with a union which would have a negative impact on the Town. De Angelis spoke about the costs associated with training a new employee which costs \$30,000 to \$50,000.

Karasinski pointed out that raising a police officer's salary won't guarantee the officer would stay in Swanzey since Keene can offer more money no matter what the initial salary is. He said it is not apples to apples unless you include the City of Keene as an element in comparison. De Angelis stated Swanzey offers a better working environment and if the Town can cut down on the pay gap with Keene he'll have a better chance keeping employees.

Hutwelker asked if there was agreement to solicit from Thornton. Karasinski said yes, but that he still needs to see information from the City of Keene. Colby said that Thornton should come and be prepared to make a proposal. The Board agreed by consensus.

Enforcement Officer Mike Jasmin –

- **Carpenter Home Facility Improvement**

Jasmin requested funds for improvements to Room 6. The George Whitcomb Jr. - Carpenter Home Income Common Fund has an estimated balance of \$2,802.68.

- Window/ screen - \$400 .00
- Lumber - \$50.00
- Sheetrock - "in-stock"
- Trim - \$50.00
- Paint - "in-stock"
- Labor 32 hrs. x \$25.00 = \$800.00

For a total of \$1,200.00

Colby **moved** to approve the expenditure of up to \$1,200.00 from the George Whitcomb Jr. - Carpenter Home Income Common Fund for improvements to Room 6. There was a second to the motion by Karasinski and no further discussion. All were in favor. **Motion passed.**

- **Enforcement at 393 Flat Roof Mill Road**

Jasmin spoke about receiving a complaint from a neighbor of 393 Flat Roof Mill Road. He said he did a drive-by of the property and once he pulled records, he realized there was a legal agreement between the property owner and the Town of Swanzey that had been in place for some time and which the property owner is not in compliance with. He said that the Town Attorney has also reviewed the agreement. Jasmin said that he would like to send a letter for clean-up based on the agreement and investigate for leaks of

automotive fluids regarding the nearby river, and that the agreement would be null and void and there be added a clean-up provision with the property, should the property change hands. Jasmin said he also wants to address the concerns of the neighbor as best as possible.

Hutwelker left the meeting at 6:47 pm

There was a discussion about the possibility of the Town cleaning up the property and how the Town would be compensated for that work.

Colby and Karasinski agreed for Jasmin to produce the letter requesting clean-up based on the agreement in force and investigation for leaks regarding the nearby river which could mean State of New Hampshire involvement, and that the agreement would be null and void and add a clean-up provision, should the property change hands.

- **Town Record Storage**

There was a brief discussion regarding storage of Town records.

NEW BUSINESS

Application Pursuant to RSA 76:21 for proration of assessment due to unintended fire –Map 24 Lot 52

The subject property was the site of a fire on 6/15/16 and the owner is requesting a proration of assessed value pursuant to RSA 76:21.

Karasinski **moved** to approve the proration of assessment pursuant to RSA 76:21 for Map 24 Lot 52. There was a second to the motion by Colby and no further discussion. Colby and Karasinski were in favor.

Motion passed.

Review of Job Descriptions: Recording Secretary, Janitor, Licensed Nursing Assistant, and Caregiver – Tabled

Appointment of Karen Elliott as Deputy Town Clerk

Karasinski **moved** to approve Karen Elliott as Deputy Town Clerk. There was a second to the motion by Colby and no further discussion. Colby and Karasinski were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

Appointment of Karen Elliott as Deputy Tax Collector

Karasinski **moved** to approve Karen Elliott as Deputy Tax Collector. There was a second to the motion by Colby and no further discussion. Colby and Karasinski were in favor. ***Motion passed.***

OLD BUSINESS

Facility CIPC/MFRC Meeting Follow-up – Tabled

Falls Brook Project Update

Branley said that this project is on schedule.

Main Street Information Session

There was a brief discussion about the preparations for the Thursday information session.

PUBLIC INPUT

Painting of Whitcomb Hall

Mike Gomarolo asked if the Town would pay for half of the cost for painting Whitcomb Hall from the general fund, with fund-raising for the rest. Colby said he would like Hutwelker to be included on any decision of this kind. It

was decided by Colby and Karasinski that this item will be on the Agenda for the first meeting in August. There was a discussion about the possibility of a special meeting.

Main Street Project

Mike Gomarlo spoke about the upstairs of Whitcomb Hall in need of a sprinkler system, which will need water. He spoke about a number of ways to bring water to Whitcomb Hall. Gomarlo said that it would cost \$60,000 to supply sprinklers to all the floors of the Hall. He said there needs to be a water line to Whitcomb Hall. Colby said that an engineer would need to respond to what it would take to provide a water line to the building. Branley noted that the water line was removed from the plan since the Brown family would have had to expand the franchise agreement and Rob Hitchcock had stated that they were not interested in doing so. He also noted that if the pipe sat in the ground with no water in it, the pipe would deteriorate over time.

Gomarlo spoke about a pump house beside the bridge as a possibility for taking water from the river and said there is a cistern that the Town owns which could be used. He suggested a pipe from the pump house to the cistern to the building. There was a discussion about the existing cistern. Karasinski said that the pump house is above the river and is dry. Karasinski suggested the possibility of a Fire Watch any time the building is occupied with more than 50 people.

Wage & Compensation Study

Wally Smith noted that the work level needs to be comparable not just the title – if person A is doing five additional things, than that justifies extra salary for person A. He said there needs to be productivity increases if the Town is going to be paying more salary for police.

Carpenter Home

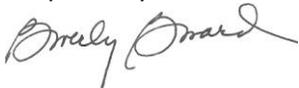
Pam Bielunis spoke to the Board. She said she is a physical therapist who has a client residing at the Carpenter Home. She said the staff at the Carpenter Home does a wonderful job with Respite Care. As for activities for the clients she said they also do a great job. She suggested donations from the residents of the town that could go toward the Home. She said she wanted the Board to know how well the staff works together and with the clients. Colby said the Board appreciates Bielunis's comments. She offered to help in any way that she could. She asked if fund-raising could be done for the Home, like bake sales, or tag sales, and Branley and Colby said there isn't any reason why they couldn't. Branley suggested something like a "Friends of the Carpenter Home" group could be established and then the funds collected could be donated to the Town for the benefit of the Carpenter Home. Bielunis asked if the Board could establish such a group and Branley said that it would have to be initiated by the folks who were willing to be part of such a group. Lerandeau suggested that Bielunis words be placed in the record.

There was a brief discussion about preparation for the information session regarding Main Street Project.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Karasinski. The motion was seconded by Colby without further discussion. All were in favor. **Motion passed.** Adjournment occurred at 7:33 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary
Approved on August 3, 2016