

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2009, 5:00 p.m.

Corner Meeting House

Chairman Ronald Cormier called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.; also present were Selectman Jon Pike, Selectman David Morse, Town Administrator K. Jeanne Beaudin, Administrative Assistant Cary Lagace, Fire Chief Jim Davis, Deputy Fire Chief Sean McCarty, Public Works Director Jim Fortin, Donna Cilley, Building Inspector Steve Dalton, Adam Segelstrom, Ron & Gerrie Mitchell, Linda Frawley, Daily Sun Reporter Kinney O'Rourke.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

Selectman Pike moved to accept the minutes of the March 4, 2009 meeting as written. Chairman Cormier seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Swearing in of New Officials

Town Clerk Cynthia DeRoy performed the swearing in of newly elected officials; David Morse, Board of Selectmen; Ward Peterson, Budget Committee; Linda Frawley, Budget Committee, Marshall Ford, Zoning Board; and Claude Patten, Planning Board.

Welcome New Board Member

Chairman Cormier welcomed new Board of Selectmen member David Morse and wished him luck with his new position.

Election of Officers & Committee Appointments

Selectman Pike moved to re-elect Ron Cormier as Chairman of the Board. Selectman Morse seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Morse moved to elect Jon Pike as Vice Chairman of the Board. Chairman Cormier seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Cormier moved to appoint Selectman Pike as representative to the Planning Board. Selectman Morse seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Cormier moved to appoint Selectman Morse as representative to the Conservation Commission. Selectman Pike seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Morse moved to appoint Chairman Cormier as representative to the Budget Committee. Selectman Pike seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Morse moved to appoint Chairman Cormier as representative to the Heritage Commission. Selectman Pike seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Donation – General Assistance Department

Town Administrator Beaudin explained that the General Assistance Office had received a generous donation of \$100 from Belmont resident William Chase.

Selectman Pike moved to accept the \$100 donation made to the General Assistance Office by Mr. Chase. Selectman Morse seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Eagle Scout Project Presentation

Adam Segelstrom was in present to review a proposed Eagle Scout project. Adam presented a PowerPoint slide show illustrating his desire to create an outside gathering area for the seniors and other members of the community. Adam is proposing to build a handicap ramp to an area behind the Mill building that will provide benches and picnic tables for outdoor enjoyment. He explained that he has to get Board approval and then go back to Eagle Council for final approval.

Selectman Pike thanked Adam for his presentation and expressed that the Town is lucky to have him. Selectman Morse asked how much of a drop there is that the ramp would have to progress down. The Board pointed out that the Building Official and Public Works Director would be good resources for Adam to coordinate with. They are concerned about the drop and ramp length, but feel the project overall would be a good addition to the community.

Chairman Cormier moved authorize Adam to go ahead with the project with the condition that he can meet the regulations. Selectman Pike seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Director of Building & Code Enforcement Appointment

Town Administrator Beaudin expressed that this appointment is postponed until the Board's April 6, 2009 meeting.

Other New Business

Town Administrator Beaudin explained that she had received a request from the Union that the Board consider allowing domestic partner dependents coverage under the health insurance. The Board expressed that if it were allowed there could not be any associated costs to the Town. Chairman Cormier asked Town Administrator Beaudin to contact the insurance company and get further information regarding the process and cost and the Board will further discuss it at their next meeting.

Keith Bennett has sent a request to the Board that he be appointed to a full position opening on the conservation Commission. He indicates that he has met with the Commission and they support his appointment. The Board asked Selectman Morse to discuss the matter at the next Conservation Commission meeting and requested he update the Board at their next meeting. Appointment would be considered at that time.

Results of 2009 Annual Town Meeting

Town Administrator Beaudin reviewed the results of the SB2 vote. She noted that the budget as approved is \$8,460,048. There were some important items that did not get approved. The warrant article that included accrued liability, municipal facility capital reserve, property revaluation and information technology was not approved. Chairman Cormier expressed that the maintenance contract portion of the appropriation poses a significant problem to the Town and suggests that funding be found to offset this from the operational budget; the new equipment isn't as big a deal. And the revaluation based on a sales update is important as values have risen to 108% of fair market value. He indicated that the Board would try to move funds around in an effort to fund the sales update and maintenance portion of the information technology budget. Selectman Morse noted that although there is approximately \$8,000 in the capital reserve for information technology he would recommend not using that on maintenance expense and reserve it for if there is a hardware breakdown. Selectman Morse also discussed spreading the computer maintenance expense over all departments. Selectman Pike noted that he had heard that the stimulus going to the Police Department may allow funds for rural crime and communications which may free up some funding in that department.

Town Administrator Beaudin went on to explain that the cost of the sales update is \$39,500 and although there is approximately \$20,000 in capital reserve, the abatements for 2007 have not been finished and may require those funds for appraisals and legal fees. She added that the update would be necessary because the market changes haven't been uniform; some types of homes have lost more value than others so statistically applying a percentage change would not be appropriate across the board.

There was discussion regarding the SB2 process and what could be done differently next year to get a better response from the community. Although the SB2 process drew more voters, they may not have completely understood what they were voting on. Chairman Cormier noted that there were some complicated items such as the BRATT articles that if someone wasn't following it wouldn't have really understood what they were voting for or against. Selectman Pike suggested that a direct mailing may be the way to go. Selectman Morse noted that he was pleased that the operating budget received 2/3 support. It was noted that although the ballot length can be a problem the votes seemed to have been consistent throughout the ballot.

Chairman Cormier added that the Sewer Commission article passed which means that next Town Meeting the Commission will be dissolved and the Sewer Department will become part of the Public Works Department.

The Board signed the Report of Appropriations for the DRA. Town Administrator Beaudin explained that BRATT Phase I and II have been submitted for ARRA which is the stimulus funds program. She will be meeting with DES to review the 5 previously submitted applications to determine where they stand in the process. She will attend mandatory training to ensure compliance with stimulus rules. Ron Mitchell noted that if the BRATT project receives stimulus funding it is his understanding that he won't need matching funds. Town

Administrator Beaudin explained that she has heard that the stimulus would be 60% and the state would fund 40% but noted that there isn't enough money to fund all projects. Ron Mitchell added that because the BRATT project is moving slowly he believes people think the project is dead and he needs to find a way to get the word out to people that it isn't.

Donna Cilley asked what the projected tax rate is, Town Administrator Beaudin indicated that if assessed values remain the same, the tax rate will go down approximately 6 cents, however if the assessed values are adjusted through a sales update there would be an increase of approximately 39 cents.

Chairman Cormier added that the article for the plow truck was also defeated, Public Works Director Jim Fortin commented that they would band aid the truck due to be replaced for another year. Selectman Pike commented that he would like to see estimates of the repair work before the work is done to the current truck.

Chairman Cormier stated that although the fire truck article also got defeated he would still like to see the equipment out of the Winnisquam Station. Selectman Pike commented that he would like to see the estimates on the fire department equipment prior to repair also. Fire Chief Davis said he was surprised by the defeat of the article for the fire truck, which throws a wrench into the previous proposal to eliminate equipment from Winnisquam but will rework the proposal over the next couple of weeks. Selectman Morse asked how many calls the truck that was to be traded in, went on last year and perhaps the truck could just be sold, Chief Davis didn't have that information with him but indicated that he could put it together for him. Selectman Pike added that the truck was to be traded in on the new vehicle and there likely wouldn't be a buyer for such a vehicle.

Donna Cilley added that although there were some negatives coming from the vote she feels that if the voting public had been aware that the potential increase in tax rate for school and town combined was going to be \$1.70 it would have been a much worse outcome and next year could be very bad if the economy doesn't turn around. Selectman Pike commented that if that is the case then the Board may have to decide what services the Town can do without such as curbside trash pickup.

Town Administrator Beaudin noted that the Union Contract article was approved with an updated wage scale which resulted in a 3% wage increase for them and also has union staff paying 10% of their health insurance cost, the same as non-union staff. The contract expires in 2010.

NHMA Membership Meeting Update

Town Administrator Beaudin reviewed with the Board the information that was presented at the last NHMA Membership meeting regarding support or non-support of certain proposed changes coming from the State. She stated that the membership supported a proposed increase in the rooms and meals tax as long as it continues to be distributed as it is currently. They did not support the proposed phone tax or the proposed retirement funding increase. The gambling bill issue went back and forth and was ultimately tabled. They supported proposed shared/co-op services (regionalization) and an increase in registration fees, grandfathering the bottom level.

Chairman Cormier noted that he had heard that 2 senators were holding out on the gambling bill, so he is trying to determine who they are so he can have conversation with them regarding the bill.

Acceptance of Pleasant Valley Project Note

Town Administrator Beaudin reviewed with the Board the funding proposals for the Pleasant Valley Project, noting the Laconia Savings Bank has the best proposal with 3.36% on a 15 year note and 3.63% on the 20 year note. She explained that she had gone back to them to see if they would waive all or part of the origination fee and they indicated that they couldn't. The origination fee is 1%. Northway proposed 4.22% for 15 years and 4.51% for 20 years no origination fee. There are no prepayment penalties on either option. She noted that the project has progressed to the level that funding needs to be secured now. She noted that pre-applications have been filed for stimulus money in the areas of the project that are eligible. She stated that even with the origination fee the overall cost is better with the Laconia Savings Bank offer.

Selectman Pike moved to accept the proposal from Laconia Savings Bank for a 15 year bond at 3.36% with no prepayment penalty for the Pleasant Valley Project. Selectman Morse seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Non-Public Session

Chairman Cormier called the non-public session to order at 6:30 pm in accordance with RSA 91-A: 3 II (c). Roll call was taken and those present and voting were Ronald Cormier, Jon Pike and David Morse. Also present were Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin and Public Works Director Jim Fortin.

Chairman Cormier closed the non-public session at 7:30 p.m.

Next Meeting

The next regular Board of Selectmen's meeting will be Monday, April 6, 2009 at 5:00 p.m., at the Corner Meeting House.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.

Ronald Cormier, Chairman

Jon Pike, Vice Chairman

David Morse