

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

Joint Work Session with Sanbornton Board of Selectmen

April 30, 2007, 5:00 p.m.

Corner Meeting House

Chairman Cormier called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m., also present were, Selectman Reginald Caldwell, Selectman Jon Pike, Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin, Administrative Assistant Cary Lagace, Deputy Fire Chief James Davis, Sanbornton Town Administrator Bruce Kneuer, Sanbornton Selectmen Patsy Wells, Steve Ober and Andrew Livernois, Sanbornton Deputy Fire Chief Scott Taylor, Gail Ober with the Citizen and Ray Carbone with the Daily Sun.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Discussion with Sanbornton Board of Selectmen

Chairman Cormier began by thanking the Sanbornton Board of Selectmen for coming and explaining to those present that this is a work session between the two Boards and there would be no audience participation. There would not be Mutual Aid or regionalization discussions except as it might pertain directly to the topic of the medical and fire coverage of the Lower Bay area of Sanbornton. He noted that although there has been much discussion through the media this direct conversation is necessary for each Town to express their opinion of the direction for medical and fire coverage in the Lower Bay area previously covered by the Winnisquam Fire Department.

Sanbornton Chair Patsy Wells thanked the Belmont Board of Selectmen for holding the meeting and expressed that the Sanbornton Board of Selectmen share the frustration of Belmont of this topic playing out in the media and they have come to hear directly, how Belmont is dealing with calls in the Lower Bay area and calls that were previously handled by the Winnisquam Fire Department. She explained that they would like to know how Delta or Echo

calls, which to her understanding are the highest levels of emergency calls, are handled at both the Sanbornton and Belmont Stations.

Sanbornton Deputy Chief Taylor indicated that when that level of call is received in the Lower Bay area of Sanbornton both Sanbornton and Belmont Departments are toned. Deputy Chief Davis explained that when Belmont receives such a tone for service, a crew is dispatched from Belmont Central station until such time as a Winnisquam unit is staffed and responds or they get turned around because Sanbornton is handling the call or they arrive on the scene and take command. Chairman Cormier clarified that when Winnisquam Fire Department was handling that area there were not units dispatched from the Belmont central station, they were only dispatched from Winnisquam.

Sanbornton Chair Wells indicated that she would like to get a sense of Belmont's terminology between regular calls and Mutual Aid calls. Chairman Cormier explained their understanding of Mutual Aid is that it is just a back up, second responder when a community isn't able to handle the call due to the severity of the call or lack of staff. Not as first response. He went on to say that since the absorption of the Winnisquam Fire Department Belmont is trying to figure out how it fits into Belmont's plans for the future. It worked well when it was a 3 community endeavor and Belmont is hesitant to staff it. Chairman Cormier added that if he were in Sanbornton's situation he believes the funds necessary to fund Belmont's assistance would be better used to enhance the Sanbornton Department. The Mutual Aid agreement would be honored but Belmont would not be a first responder to that area.

There was discussion of signing an agreement between the two communities for coverage in the Lower Bay area and Chairman Cormier explained that with the volume of calls Belmont is receiving right now it is hard to make that kind of commitment when Belmont units may not be available if they are already servicing their own community.

Sanbornton Selectman Livernois asked if Belmont had arrangements with other communities, Deputy Davis explained that there are other communities but they are in different counties so the arrangement is a little different and Canterbury pays for their ambulance coverage because they don't have one.

The Board's discussed the calls to the Lower Bay area from November 2006 to present was 16 calls; Deputy Davis indicated that Belmont transported approximately 50 % of the time. Sanbornton Town Administrator Bruce Kneuer explained that of the calls being discussed 9 times an officer was on the scene that responded directly.

Chairman Cormier pointed out that from the recent study that was done on the Fire Department it was determined that there are a significant number of calls that have Belmont equipment leaving Town to help service other communities. Selectman Caldwell commented that there have been no final decisions made on the Winnisquam Station and it could go away. Chairman Cormier noted that he just recently learned that Belmont was responding out of the Central Station which would probably have the same response time of getting equipment out of the Winnisquam Station.

Sanbornton Chair Wells indicated that it appears there are approximately 60 calls per year to the Lower Bay area which works out to approximately \$300 per call. She added that there was confusion as to the staffing at the Winnisquam Station and wanted it clarified that it is only

manned during truck checks but otherwise is un-staffed. Selectman Ober asked if there was any intention of staffing the Winnisquam Station as some Sanbornton residents thought it was going to be manned. Chairman Cormier indicated that it has never been a manned station and to do so would just be financially staggering and would not be a good use of taxpayer's money, primarily due to its location, Sanbornton would be asked to contribute more funds and it is an odd place in the community which is not a good service point.

There was a brief discussion regarding the availability of call personnel with Deputy Davis explaining that Belmont has a waiting list for the call force however, the expense and time involved in training an individual to the level that is useful in the field is extreme. He also noted that even with the call personnel coming in to back up the Station after a first call, multiple calls would again leave Sanbornton with out coverage from Belmont.

Chairman Cormier expressed that at this time he believes Sanbornton is better off utilizing there funds to better their own Department and working out a first response schedule structure similar to what Belmont has with other communities. He added that it is all about response time and Sanbornton should invest in their own Department and work out run cards to an agreeable response schedule. Selectman Livernois expressed that if Sanbornton were to build on its own Department they would be able to offer more reciprocal help to other communities.

Sanbornton Chair Wells thanked Chairman Cormier for his candid response. She added that the fire service has changed a lot. Selectman Caldwell noted that the common goal is to keep everyone as safe as possible. Following a brief discussion regarding Meredith's all call department; Selectman Pike noted that the call forces are very important to all communities.

Chairman Cormier thanked everyone for coming.

Miscellaneous

Town Administrator Beaudin advised the Board that Chief Siegel had advised her that a new E911 coordinator needs to be appointed. Chief Siegel had been the coordinator since 1994. After a brief discussion the Board asked Town Administrator Beaudin to have Deputy Chief Davis nominate a Lieutenant for the position.

There was a brief discussion regarding Old Home Day and Town Administrator Beaudin advised the Board that she has heard that Tina Fleming will be taking over as the head of the Old Home Day Committee.

Non-Public Session

Chairman Cormier moved to open the non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (b) at 5:56 p.m. Roll call was taken and those present and voting in the affirmative to enter non-public session were Ron Cormier, Reginald Caldwell, and Jon Pike. Also present was Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin and Administrative Assistant Cary Lagace.

Chairman Cormier closed the non-public session at 6:15 p.m. No decisions were made.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Ronald Cormier, Chairman

Reginald Caldwell

Jon Pike