

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

April 4, 2005, 6:00 p.m.

Corner Meeting House

Chairman Brian Watterson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Also present were Selectman Ronald Cormier, Jr., Administrative Assistant Cary Lagace, Town Administrator Donald McLelland, Sr., Public Works Director Bob Bennett, David McLelland, Lieutenant Lewandoski, Ray Carbone of the Daily Sun, Melanie Nelson of the Citizen, Merlyn McLelland, Sharon Hampton.

Those present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

Selectman Ronald Cormier moved the minutes of the meeting held on March 21, 2005 as written. Chairman Brian Watterson seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Selectman Ronald Cormier moved the minutes of the meeting held on March 28, 2005 as written. Chairman Brian Watterson seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Public Hearings

Chairman Watterson opened the Public Hearing at 5:05 p.m. in accordance with RSA 31:95-b to accept a grant in the amount of \$ 988.25 from NH Police Standards and Training Council for specialized training. Selectman Cormier made a motion to accept this grant, Chairman Watterson seconded the motion. Lieutenant Lewandoski indicated that this grant is for accident reconstruction training. With no further discussion Chairman Watterson called for a vote, the motion passed unanimously. Selectman Cormier made a motion to close the Public Hearing, Chairman Watterson seconded the motion, the Public Hearing closed at 5:10 p.m.

Chairman Watterson opened the second Public Hearing at 5:10 p.m. in accordance with RSA 31:95-b to accept a grant in the amount of \$ 540.00 from State

Highway Agency for a Regional DWI Patrol. Selectman Cormier made a motion to accept this grant, Chairman Watterson seconded the motion. Lieutenant Lewandoski explained the grant is for additional DWI patrols. With no further discussion Chairman Watterson called for a vote, the motion passed unanimously. Chairman Watterson made a motion to close the Public Hearing, Selectman Cormier seconded the motion, the Public Hearing closed at 5:12 p.m.

Old Business

Underwood Engineers Proposal

Town Administrator McLelland explained to the Board of Selectmen that a situation in the Water Department had been brought to his attention today and the manner in which they look at Underwood Engineers proposal may need to be modified, to include Route 3. Bob Bennett explained that a contractor that has approval from the Planning board to build a plaza on Route 3 across from North East Tire had approached Water Technician David McLelland to find out where he would attach into the Belmont water system. Upon researching this, including a conversation with Frank Clairmont, indicated Frank had approved the connection last year. Frank informed Bob and David that the Town connected to a water line under the Belknap Mall parking lot which he did not believe the Town owned.

Discussion followed regarding the installation of the waterlines in that area and that the water line was installed when the Belknap Mall was built. The water lines and hydrants on the Mall property apparently belong to the Mall owner, Flatly Co., however, they were installed in 1972 by the original mall developer. Flatly Co. bought the mall in the 1980's from foreclosure.

Due to the Economic Development taking place on Route 3 (4 separate projects) Bob Bennett recommended that Underwood Engineers be retained to immediately review the situation.

Chairman Watterson made a motion to accept Underwood Engineers proposal for \$18,000 for the water rate study, route 106 development and funding assistance & public information and combine it with the previous route 3 study proposal of \$7,000 and enter into an agreement with Underwood Engineer not to exceed \$25,000, to proceed with the Route 3 study as soon as possible to be followed by the three other proposed studies including the water rate study, Selectman Cormier seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Watterson asked Bob Bennett if he had looked into the Peter Court repair request that came forward last week from the residents of that street, Bob indicated that he had and he felt they could do the repair this year. Chairman Watterson asked Town Administrator McLelland to advise the residents of Peter Court.

Chairman Watterson thanked David and Bob for attending the meeting.

Report from Representative Thomas

Chairman Watterson explained that Representative Thomas was going to advise the Board of Selectmen as to the status of House Bill HB 264-FN-A, which indicated that there would be no impact to the Town, Town Administrator McLelland indicated he had not heard from Representative Thomas. Selectman Cormier felt that the Town should file with the House as there is an error in the house bill, as it is being proposed, as it would have a negative financial impact to the Town. Selectman Cormier said he would take the issue to Concord and look into it.

New Business

Letter from Diane Marden

Town Administrator McLelland explained that Diane was requesting that the Town website link to her Belmont history website, he explained that in the past her site wasn't complete so at that time we did not link to it, however her site is now mostly complete and provides a lot of good Belmont history. The Board of Selectmen did not have a problem linking to Diane's website. There was additional discussion regarding getting quotes from outside firms to administer the Town's site for a more professional appearance.

Other Business

The Board discussed a letter submitted by Mark Mooney requesting that the Land Use Tax penalty be waived, due to improvements to the property that would in turn save the Town money. Selectman Cormier made a motion to waive the penalty; Chairman Watterson seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

It was suggested by Chairman Watterson that the Town move forward on the hiring of a consultant to perform a review of the operations at the Police Department as they had previously discussed. Town Administrator McLelland indicated he had researched four consulting firms and is recommending Terrance Martin from Acrecon out of Brattleboro, VT, whose qualifications are with smaller communities. Town Administrator McLelland explained that this type of review had been suggested for all departments but whereas the Police Department has a hard time hiring and retaining new officers it is suggested that this review take place in this department now. Lieutenant Lewandoski confirmed that it has been approximately 5 years since the department has had a consistent full force. Chairman Watterson made a motion to retain Terrance Martin subject to his references; Selectman Cormier seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

Sharon Hampton inquired if the engineering and consultant had been budgeted for? Town Administrator McLelland explained that the Economic Development budget would cover the Engineering while the Police consultant would be paid for through the Police Department budget and professional services in the Executive budget.

Chairman Watterson took issue with an email received from David Morse that was questioning the leadership and directional role of the Board of Selectmen. Chairman Watterson read the email and pointed out the inaccuracies, and stated the Board knows its statutory abilities and has no intention of telling the Planning Board how to conduct their business. The Board of Selectmen is not exceeding their authority. Town Administrator McLelland added that the Planning Board had requested the meeting in which the Board of Selectmen's actions are being questioned.

Chairman Watterson indicated that Selectman Caldwell is the representative to the Planning Board and keeps the other Selectmen informed to the best of his ability, and when during their joint meeting a vision committee was suggested and not well received the Board of Selectmen didn't pursue it. As long as inaccurate comments and documents are produced the Board of Selectmen will continue to address them. Selectman Cormier felt that everyone is entitled to his or her opinion, however, Mr. Morse's email was really inappropriate. Town Administrator McLelland had a conversation with Rick Ball regarding the Planning Board minutes of that meeting, he also felt the minutes were not accurate and Town Administrator McLelland asked him to have them amended.

Sharon Hampton addressed the Board of Selectmen regarding the BRATT committee and how they were to move forward with the project as she had heard the Board of Selectmen wanted a project manager to be hired. Chairman Watterson indicated that they had suggested a manager for the project because it is a huge project to move forward with, with just volunteers, there are processes that need to be followed in order to receive the grant. Town Administrator McLelland explained that the grant comes with conditions, one of which is that either a firm is hired to work with the volunteers or the Town's Land Use personnel is utilized, the Land Use department does not have the time for this project, so the chairman of the BRATT committee Ron Mitchell was advised that someone would need to be hired to work with the volunteers. Funds cannot be received for the project until the paperwork is completed.

Sharon Hampton also questioned why her neighborhood was chosen for the first portion of the assessment project and why she will be paying taxes on a higher assessment before the rest of the Town properties. Town Administrator McLelland indicated that the Town being split into quadrants for the reassessment process was the most economical way for the taxpayers, the first quadrant was chosen because it was felt that that this area of Town was most out of line in their assessments. He also noted that although she is in the first quadrant it would be many years before that area is reassessed.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was set for April 18, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. at the Corner Meeting House.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Brian Watterson, Chairman

Reginald Caldwell

Ronald Cormier, Jr.