

**FINAL MINUTES**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING                      MINUTES**

**February 22, 2010**

**1.        Call Meeting to Order**

Chairman William Campbell convened the Board at 6:45 pm to interview a citizen for one of the Boards in town. He then reconvened the Board at 7:00 pm in the Nowak Room of the Town Office Building. Mr. Campbell introduced the other members of the Board: Mr. Bob Eastman, Ms. Julie Gilman, Mr. Bobby Aldrich, Mr. Matt Quandt and Town Manager Russ Dean.

**2.        Public Comment – None.**

**3.        Minutes and Proclamations**

**a. Regular Session Minutes of February 8, 2010**

**Mr. Aldrich moved to approve the minutes of February 8, 2010 as presented. Mr. Quandt seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

**b. Regular Session Minutes of February 16, 2010**

**Mr. Aldrich moved to approve the minutes of February 16, 2010 as presented. Ms. Gilman seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

**c. Non Public Session Minutes of February 1, 2010**

**Ms. Gilman moved to approve the non public session minutes of February 1, 2010 as presented. Mr. Aldrich seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

Mr. Eastman stated that he felt that the non public session minutes should be included in the selectman meeting packets.

**4.        Appointments - None**

**5.        Department Reports**

**a. Planning**

Ms. Von Aulock gave a powerpoint presentation entitled “A Decade of Residential Development in Exeter”. (see copy attached)

Ms. Gilman asked if similar information was available for commercial properties. Ms. Von Aulock said that they have the data but it is not currently in the same format.

**6.        Discussion/Action Items**

**a. Bid Opening – Engine 4 Replacement**

Mr. Campbell opened 8 sealed bids for the Engine 4 Replacement pumper truck which they hope to have approved at the town vote in March (see attached bid opening summary).

**Mr. Quandt moved to refer the bids to the Fire Department. Mr. Aldrich seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

**b. Lincoln Sesquicentennial Presentation – Exeter Historical Society**

Laura Gowing, Program Manager for the Exeter Historical Society, and Barbara Rimkunas, curator for the Exeter Historical Society, gave a powerpoint presentation on plans for the upcoming Lincoln Sesquicentennial Celebration. The celebration commemorates the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lincoln’s visit to Exeter. Abraham Lincoln visited Exeter in the Spring of 1860 before he was president or even a

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candidate for president. He arrived in New Hampshire on February 29, 1860 and went on to make speeches in several towns. He spoke at Exeter's Town Hall on March 3, 1860. The American Ballot newspaper recorded much of his speech. Lincoln's son Robert was attending Phillips Exeter Academy.

There are many aspects to the Lincoln Sesquicentennial Celebration. An online resource center entitled "Lincoln in NH" has been created largely by Exeter High School students. A geocaching adventure has been created with the help of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, as well as a Lincoln "pocket project" for 4<sup>th</sup> graders. Geocaching is a high tech treasure hunt. The pocket project is a program for Lincoln visits to 4<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms. The goal is to familiarize students with historical objects common at the time that Lincoln made his visit and to illustrate the differences between that time period and the present.

Lincoln Event Week highlights include:

- The Harold Holzer Program
- Rick Schubart and author / editor Mike Prides' presentation
- Guided walking tours (the Exeter Historical Society has created a booklet entitled The Abraham Lincoln Walking Tour)
- Children's Activities at the Public Library
- Civil-War Era Band
- Lincoln, portrayed by Steve Wood, will return to the Exeter Town Hall for a speech as the culmination of the activities

There will be a Lincoln Art Show for 2 weeks surrounding the event that will display mostly artwork from SAU16 students as well as some from professional artists. The Exeter Historical Society will feature a Lincoln and NH Exhibit with many items on loan from the New Hampshire Historical Society. This exhibit will run from March 3, 2010 through March 4, 2011. The Lincoln self-guided walking tour map will also be part of a children's coloring contest.

Ms. Gilman asked if there were any concerns with the geocaching that places could be damaged due to people searching for items or trespassing issues. Ms. Gowing said that the individual who took the lead on designing the geocaching search was Tony Baldisaro, assistant superintendent. Tony is an avid geoacher himself. The search has been carefully planned and there will be some virtual geocaching in sensitive areas. Ms. Gowing and Ms. Rimkunas wished to thank all of the many celebration sponsors and supporters.

### **c. Sportsmen's Club Waiver Request**

Mr. Campbell said that the Sportsmen's Club had requested a waiver for Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup> to shoot no more than 250 rounds beginning at 10:00 am instead of noon. Mr. Bud Fields was present to answer any questions or address any concerns. There was no public comment or questions.

**Mr. Quandt moved that the Board of Selectmen approve the waiver for the Sportsmen's Club for April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at 10:00 am until Noon. Mr. Eastman seconded. Vote: 4-0 Ms. Gilman abstained.**

### **d. River Hazards Policy Review**

Mr. Quandt said that the River Committee has been working on the River Hazards Policy for over a year now. Mr. Dean explained that the policy was created to address issues related to trees or other hazards in the Exeter River as well as to develop a procedure for removing them if needed. The Exeter River is not Town property, but rather is held in the public trust by the State. The Town is a stakeholder and so does

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have some responsibility for some things with respect to the river. Mr. Quandt pointed out that the policy is not for navigable hazards, but for hazards that could lead to bigger problems in the future. An example would be a tree in the river that by its position will collect more trees which could lead to flooding or erosion.

Mr. Campbell suggested a revision to item 3 under Procedures that would add more information for the removal of hazards located on private property, such as stating that removal should be done as per DES guidelines. He said that he felt there should be instruction as to how one should go about actually removing the hazard. Mr. Quandt said that there are state guidelines and the policy must match with those. The emergency management director will be the key point person if a hazard is identified. If a hazard is determined to exist, the emergency management director will begin the process to address and deal with it. The policy is not intended to address recreational or navigable hazards.

This policy now goes back to Mr. Quandt and the River Committee.

### **e. Review Finance / Budget Follow Up Items**

Mr. Dean said that the Board has asked for a list of recommendations to address the five deficiencies identified in the Town's 2008 audit report. The Board would like to know what has to be done in order to bring the Town into compliance.

The five material weaknesses were:

1. Implement Regular Departmental Internal Audits and Risk Assessment
2. Improve Financial Reporting and Accounting System
3. Centralize the Accounting Function
4. Improve Treasurer's Cash Book
5. Establish Capital Asset Record and Implement GASB 34

In 2006, the Town commissioned Municipal Resources Inc (MRI) to do an internal controls assessment of the Town through the Local Government Center (LGC) and identify areas in Exeter's financial operations that needed improvement. MRI does work for many New Hampshire towns and is very knowledgeable in municipal processes. One of the findings was that the Finance Department and Tax Collector's offices have too many duties and too few personnel to adequately perform their assigned work while providing oversight, review, and internal auditing of the financial operations of the Town, as well as an adequate separation of duties. The level of staffing makes it difficult to utilize one of the most effective internal controls which is segregation of duties. As a result a position of accounts receivable clerk was proposed by the Finance Department but was not supported in the 2007 budget. The finance director subsequently left employment with the Town in September 2007. Melanson and Heath were hired to conduct the Town's audit in 2007 when the previous auditors said that they would no longer be able to do the Town's audits. The hiring of a staff accountant is the recommended way to solve some of the noted deficiencies. The Town does not have the resources to conduct internal audits at this time. The finance director is currently doing thousands of journal entries each year. This is not typical work responsibility of a finance director. A staff accountant could do these journal entries instead and free up some of the finance director's time to address other issues.

Mr. Dean said that the Town is getting better at material weakness # 2 which is improving the financial reporting and accounting system. The Munismart system has more capacity to store historical data and provides a balance sheet function. It has a stronger tax and utility billing module. The Town does not prepare its own financial statements and will require additional resources to get to the point that it can.

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The Town has made some progress with centralizing the accounting system which was the third material weakness identified. The installation of a new fiber line has made it possible for other departments such as Public Works to use Munismart on a regular basis. Some departments still don't have it. There are two parts to this process. The first is getting the system out to all of the departments and the second is training people to use it. The auditors are asking to centralize all funds including special revenue funds and Trustee of Trust funds. Additional resources will be needed to facilitate the process of pulling this all together.

The Town plans to contract with MRI to ensure appropriate programs are adopted to address the fourth material weakness cited to improve the Treasurer's Cash Book. Cash reconciliations are complete for 2009. The Town has encumbered \$ 19,162.50 from 2009 to address remaining GASB34 compliance issues which was the last material weakness cited.

Mr. Eastman said that Mr. Dean has a good start on resources for 2011, but questioned where these resources will come from in 2010. He questioned whether or not the Board has the authority to add positions that were removed by deliberative session. Mr. Eastman said that he didn't care what the Town's lawyers had advised and said that he thought the Board should take the Town to court for a decision. He asked to see revised budget figures for the maintenance and finance departments as requested at a previous meeting a few weeks ago. Mr. Dean said that he thought this had been done and that information should be in the Selectman's office. Mr. Dean said that it was usual and traditional not to input budget numbers to Munismart until the Town knows which budget it is working on after the vote. Mr. Campbell said that he is concerned that the new auditors Melanson & Heath are questioning whether or not they can continue to do the Town's audits due to risks if the Town can't improve and he feels that the Board really needs to do something.

### **7. Regular Business**

#### **a. Accounts Payable and Payroll Manifests**

**Mr. Aldrich moved to approve a weekly payroll warrant dated February 17, 2010 in the amount of \$ 145,981.61. Mr. Quandt seconded. Vote: Unanimous**

**Mr. Aldrich moved to approve a weekly accounts payable warrant dated February 12, 2010 in the amount of \$ 100,851.22. It is a payment to NH Retirement System. Ms. Gilman seconded. Vote: Unanimous**

**Mr. Aldrich moved to approve a weekly Accounts Payable warrant dated February 19, 2010 in the amount of \$ 561,097.82. Big Ticket Items: \$ 264,000 to Caldwell Tanks for the Epping Road tank project, \$ 10,000 to Holland Company for chemicals for DPW, \$ 227,000 to LGC Health Trust for an insurance payment and \$ 17,000 to TI Sales for new meters and parts for the water department. Mr. Eastman seconds. Vote: Unanimous.**

#### **b. 2010 Budget Department Update – None.**

#### **c. Tax Abatements & Exemptions**

**Mr. Aldrich moved to approve a Veteran's Tax Credit for Map 74, Lot 10 in the amount of \$ 1,000.00. Mr. Quandt seconded. Vote: Unanimous**

**Mr. Aldrich moved to approve a Disability Deferral in the amount of \$ 1,595.00. Mr. Quandt**

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**seconded. Vote: Unanimous**

**Mr. Aldrich moved to approve 3 Elderly Exemptions all in the amount of \$ 152,251.00 each. Ms. Gilman seconded. Vote: Unanimous**

**Mr. Aldrich moved to deny 4 abatements for:**

**Map 64, Lot 3**

**Map 95, Lot 64, Unit 113**

**Map 104, Lot 79, Unit 118**

**Map 79, Lot 25**

**Mr. Eastman seconded. Vote: Unanimous**

**d. Water / Sewer Abatements - None**

**e. Permits**

**1. Exeter Area AFWC request to use the Town Hall for craft fair on 7/16 & 7/17/10**

**2. Exeter Elementary PTO request to use Town Hall for fundraiser on 5/27,28 & 29**

**Mr. Aldrich moved to approve both permits as presented with the fee waivers. Mr. Eastman seconded. Vote: Unanimous**

**f. Town Manager's Report**

Mr. Dean said that he met with HR this past week and they continue to make progress on the draft personnel policy. They are currently in the process of circulating it for comments and will make more changes before they bring a second draft back before the Board for review again. The Water Supply Alternative Study Final Report by Westin & Sampson has been received and lays out a good plan for the decision making process moving forward. It is very complete and very thorough. The study will be made available on the Town's website. Mr. Dean would like to schedule a future work session with the Board and Westin & Sampson. Work continues on the Gilman Park easement and the Little River easement. Currently it is in the hands of legal counsel and title research is ongoing. Final copies will be coming soon.

**g. Legislative Updates**

This is a new agenda item. Mr. Quandt will provide updates on items of interest when the State Legislature is in session. Mr. Quandt said that a bill to repeal the downshifting of the Room and Meals tax has been passed by the House, but it is not expected to pass the Senate. Bill # 1486 would prohibit mandating fire sprinklers in single family homes and duplexes. Only a few towns have this mandate. Manufactured housing units cannot have sprinklers because they must be HUD certified and HUD Certification doesn't have this in it. Putting sprinklers in a manufactured housing unit voids the HUD Certification. Any Town passing such an ordinance effectively bans manufactured housing units. Some interesting bills coming up include changes to the Right to Know Law, placing limits on liability of town and city health officers and overseers of public welfare and changes to court records research fees. These research fees include background check costs which keep increasing. New Hampshire has been dropped by some vendors providing background checks because it is such a small state. Bill # 425 has a 91A law change that would make Board members not subject to civil penalties for violating 91a law.

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### **h. Selectmen's Committee Reports**

Mr. Eastman had nothing to report.

Ms. Gilman said that the Energy Committee has submitted 3 applications for EECBG grant funding. The applications are for an HVAC system for the Town office building, heating and ventilation efficiency improvements to the Public Safety Complex and \$ 50,000 for the power purchase agreement proposal. Mr. Kevin Smart drove members of the Energy Committee to Concord in a snowstorm to file the applications in time to meet the deadline. The Energy Committee has also submitted two Letters of Intent to the Division of Historical Resources for funding for a historical survey at the Winter Street Cemetery and a window rehabilitation. The study at the Winter Street Cemetery is to determine the best way to restore it without doing any damage.

Mr. Aldrich had nothing to report.

Mr. Quandt announced that the River Committee met last Thursday morning and is putting together a subcommittee to the advisory committee for dealing with the dam removal procedure. The Cable Committee met last week and will meet again this week on Wednesday at 5:30 pm. The Cable Committee meets with Comcast this week. Mr. Dean said that they continue to make good progress with this and will be making a presentation to the Board soon.

Mr. Campbell had no committee reports but wanted to mention that April 30<sup>th</sup> is the end of the terms for volunteer Boards. If anyone is interested in joining any of the Boards please put your name forward. Please feel free to call Mr. Dean or Mr. Campbell if interested. They can use help on all of the Boards. The Board interviewed a resident earlier this evening for the Exeter Development Committee. He asked if Mr. Eastman and Mr. Quandt would be present at next week's scheduled meeting because Mr. Aldrich and Ms. Gilman will not be there and he wanted to make sure there would be a quorum. Both Mr. Eastman and Mr. Quandt indicated their intention to be present at next week's meeting.

### **i. Correspondence –**

#### **1. Letter from Elie Sehnaoui re: Park sign**

The family that sold the land that is now the town common was promised a sign to recognize the contribution made by himself and his wife. This needs to be investigated.

#### **2. Letter from Robert Holzworth regarding the River Dam**

The letter expresses one citizen's opinion regarding the effect dam removal would have.

#### **3. Letter from Lavelle Associates re: Shoreland Application**

Someone wants to build a home within the Shoreland district.

#### **4. Public Notice re: Absentee Ballots**

Absentee ballots are available at the Town Clerk's office during regular business hours of 8:30 to 3:30. To qualify an individual must be out of town that day or unable to come down to vote due to disability, religious observance or work commitments. The ballots must be returned by 5:00 pm Monday March 8<sup>th</sup> or via mail by March 9<sup>th</sup>. Detailed information is available on the Town's website.

**8. Second Public Comment – None.**

**9. Non-Public Session – None.**

**10. Adjournment**

**Mr. Eastman motioned to adjourn at 8:30 pm. Mr. Aldrich seconded. Vote: Unanimous.**

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Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Mancinelli  
Recording Secretary