

Draft Minutes

Exeter Board of Selectmen Meeting

August 12, 2013

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Don Clement called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Offices building. Other members present were Vice Chairman Dan Chartrand, Selectman Frank Ferraro, Selectwoman Julie Gilman, and Selectman Matt Quandt. Town Manager Russell Dean was also present.

2. Public Comment

Gerry Hamel said he was told there are pools in Stratham testing positive for West Nile Virus and asked if the Board had any information. Chairman Clement said he did not but he would look into it.

3. Minutes & Proclamations

a. Regular Meeting: July 29, 2013

Selectman Quandt said on Page 9 the Motion was left off to go into a non-public session to discuss a fee waiver, which was made by himself and seconded by Vice Chair Chartrand. The role care all voted in favor. Also left off was the Motion to adjourn said hearing which was made by Selectman Quandt and seconded by Selectwoman Gilman. Motion carried. The Board stood adjourned at 10:05 pm.

A Motion was made by Vice Chair Chartrand and seconded by Selectwoman Gilman to approve the minutes of July 29, 2013 as amended by Selectman Quandt. Motion carried – all in favor.

Chairman Clement said there were no proclamations; however there was something he wanted to ask the Board. He went on to talk about the controversy with Victoria Arlen about an eligibility issue, saying Senators Ayotte and Shaheen and Governor Hassan have written letters to the commission about protesting their actions and he would like the Board to weigh in and write a letter as well. He said he thinks the whole Board agrees a potential injustice was done and he asked Mr. Dean to craft a letter. Mr. Dean said he would be happy to.

A Motion was made by Selectman Ferraro and seconded by Selectman Quandt to allow a letter to be written on behalf of the Board of Selectman to the Paralympics Committee. Motion carried – all in favor.

4. Appointments

No appointments.

5. Discussion/Action Items

a. New Business

I. Discussion: Economic Development Resources

Mr. Dean talked about the upcoming Economic Development Director position that was decided should be added to the town staffing. There is a deadline of September 1 to come up with the remaining specifics for the job, i.e. job description, cost of the position, etc. He said this is a position that has been developed over the past two years. There are many communities in NH that have funded for this generalized position. Mr. Dean drafted a memo to this effect which is provided in the packet.

Mr. Dean went on to say this position would be different. It would make things happen as opposed to saying whether or not they can happen. It is suggested that this be a full-time position. He said these are draft ideas for the Board to think about. He thinks they should be more proactive and competitive with other communities and expand their commercial tax base.

Selectman Quandt asked if other community job descriptions are for full-time. Mr. Dean said most of them were. Vice Chair Chartrand thanked Mr. Dean for the thorough presentation. He is in favor of the position and thinks it should be a full-time salary position. Selectman Ferraro agreed with Vice Chair Chartrand. He said Mr. Dean's memo hits the nail on the head. However, he would add that the person hired give some type of periodic report to the Board. Selectwoman Gilman agrees and likes what's in the job descriptions. Selectman Quandt agrees and also thinks it should be a full-time position. Chairman Clement said he is leaning more toward part-time and going to full-time. He said there will be a discussion with the EDC. He thinks it is time for Exeter to hire someone for this position. He thinks the person should work together with other people in that department. He asked if there could be a lay out for both part-time and full-time. Mr. Dean said he is worried that if they go the part-time route, not as many qualified people will apply. Vice Chair Chartrand sees this as an investment in developing an economic commercial tax base.

Chairman Clement asked what should be done next. Selectman Quandt said he wants to see what the EDC has to say before they give Mr. Dean the go ahead. Selectman Ferraro added they are expecting performance and they are not putting this money out there lightly. Selectwoman Gilman asked for examples of other town's success with this position. Mr. Dean said Claremont, Dover, and Rochester are all have active economic development departments and he will research to see how they've been doing.

Vice Chair Chartrand asked to put the report of the EDC's take on the next BOS agenda. Chairman Clement asked if there is enough time to put this together. Mr. Dean said it should be doable.

Mr. Kennedy spoke, asking the Board to consider a higher salary. He thinks the salary should be in the \$80,000 range. He asked what incentives they can give.

Gerry Hamel said he is looking at other towns and also looking at their regulations. He said one of Exeter's biggest downfalls is all the regulations. He said it's been getting harder and harder to develop land. He wants the Board to look at other town's regulations and see what they're doing.

Chairman Clement said they will hear back next meeting. He said they will wait to see what EDC says and get some input from other towns to see what kind of impact this position has had on the town.

II. Quarterly Financial Report

Doreen Ravell, Finance Director, spoke about the towns finances. She said they completed their annual audit. She said they are finalizing drafts and working on budgets for 2014 with department heads. She gave an update on revenues, saying property tax collections remain the same. Revenues are relatively stable. Building permits and fees are down from last year. Income from departments is down \$20,000 from last year. She said total water/sewer revenues are \$1,960,000 or 48%. All other revenues are flat.

In regards to the expense analysis, the BOS numbers pop out the most, at 144% spent. Legal is at 70%. Other categories are looking normal. Snow Removal is at 92% and Special Events is at 86%. Total general funds spent is 47%, water fund is at 35%, and sewer fund is at 36%. Mr. Dean commented, saying the Town does not spend an equal amount each month due to large payments like debt service coming due. He said overall things are looking good.

Revolving funds as of June 30; not a lot of activity yet. Net income is \$109,000. Chairman Clement asked how it compares with last year and Ms. Ravell answered it is comparing well with last year.

Ms. Ravell went on to report about cable tv, saying there is a small net loss, but she does not anticipate a huge loss. Selectman Ferraro asked if there are budgets for different revolving funds. Ms. Ravell said she can get that information to him.

The YTD for the Ambulance Revolving Fund is \$87,571. Mr. Dean said the ambulance lease is \$62,000/year and a payment for half is included in the fund report.

Accounts receivable for property taxes as of June 30: 77% of taxes billed in May are paid. As of July 1, 92% were paid. Typically 95% are paid at this point of the year.

Ms. Ravell gave information involving all numbers which are provided in the packet.

Mr. Dean said they continue to give shut off notices for unpaid water/sewer bills, but he said if the debt is strictly sewer it is hard to shut off. He talked about writing off certain balances as uncollectable due to bankruptcy or other reasons.

Chairman Clement asked Ms. Ravell what her sense was on the audit. She said she had a good sense, that it moved quickly and she should hear back next week.

III. Fund Balance Policy

Mr. Dean said many towns have a fund balance policy. He said the school numbers in the information he provided is a guess. He gave reasons why to have a policy, including payment schedules, large debt payments, tax collection rates and distributions, and to ensure and maintain proper cash flow. Selectman Quandt asked if he had worked with the town treasurer on this. Mr. Dean answered yes, they spoke the week prior. Vice Chair Chartrand asked how far away they are from low end percentage. Mr. Dean said he will know when they get the audit results back. He said schools, by law, cannot have a fund balance, so he's there except for schools.

Mr. Dean said the next step is to review the policy and adopt a policy at a future meeting. Selectwoman Gilman said she likes the policy because of its definitions. She said it is a good teaching tool.

b. Old Business

I. NHDOT Grant Update: Welcome Center

Mr. Dean said he met with NHDOT a few weeks ago to talk about the Welcome Center on Lincoln Street and get a better understanding of the NHDOT regulations. He talked about petitioning the NHDOT to approve the engineering study with THA. He said they asked for a couple things so he won't hear back for a few more weeks.

Selectwoman Gilman said the NHDOT has not been fully clear in their communications. She said there is a lot to digest. There is an idea that there might be additional funds, which she says would be great.

Gerry Hamel spoke, saying he was confused why the project is so expensive. Selectwoman Gilman answered there are a lot of requirements for using grants. They are looking at what to do next and step to go in.

Mr. Dean said the total cost for the project is \$403,000 based on the 2011 warrant article. He said the town raised \$72,000 and the grant from NHDOT is \$282,000. Planned in-kind services make up the difference.

ii. Ports Ave Water/Sewer Project Traffic Control Plan

Paul Vlasich, Town Engineer, presented a map showing the detour route when the Portsmouth Ave work starts. He went over the two options presented: 1) the detour, saying the total mileage is 2.5 miles and the traffic between Green Hill Road and High Street is one-way inbound, and 2) night work, saying Underwood Engineers estimated this option will cost \$130,000-160,000 more because of more lighting, keeping paving plants open at night, and night time project inspectors. He went on to say some work will have to be done at night regardless.

Mr. Vlasich went on to talk about other potential options and gave reasons why they would not work. He said they have come up with no more options. Chairman Clement asked Mr. Vlasich if he has a time estimate for the night work. Mr. Vlasich answered it would take longer for the night work.

Mr. Vlasich thinks extra signage will be appropriate so people won't use shortcuts and also to advertise the detour. Chairman Clement asked if a flagman or police presence was going to be needed and said he would take to Chief Kane about it.

Selectman Ferraro had a question about footnote 2.1. Phil MacDonald, from Underwood Engineers, said it means the detour will only be in effect from 8-5 or whenever work hours are. Mr. Vlasich said High Street will be two-way traffic at all times.

Chairman Clement asked when the work will start. Mr. Vlasich said it will start in October but he is not sure of a completion date. Chairman Clement said they need to start promoting dates and traffic routes as soon as possible to the public. Mr. Vlasich talked about having a neighborhood meeting to inform of phone numbers and such in case they have a problem. Chairman Clement said this will be an inconvenience but the town will get through it. He is hoping for patience. He said he thinks the Board all agrees the best option is the detour/day time work. The Board agreed.

The nighttime work that has to be done will start at 9pm. There is going to be a request for more crew so it gets done faster. Selectman Ferraro asked if traffic will be one-way during this time. Mr. Vlasich answered he would have to see where the hole will be, but it will mostly be two-way. Chairman Clement asked Mr. Vlasich to get a start date the Board and he agreed he would.

iii. Third Reading: Epping Road Extension Parking Ordinance Amendment

Chairman Clement said he drove by the area and notice there are 40+ vehicles on the lot, some needing repair. He said there is no spot on the site for parking. He would like to have the code enforcement officer go there and determine if all codes are being obeyed. He asked if the town/state imposes a maximum vehicles allowed on a lot. He would like to table the third reading until those results are back.

A Motion was made by Vice Chair Chartrand and seconded by Selectwoman Gilman to table the third reading until the code enforcement officer has a chance to look into this. Motion carried – all in favor.

Selectwoman Gilman talked about looking at old minutes to see why the change was made to make the road no parking in the first place. Mr. Dean said he would look into that.

iv. Amendment to Commerce Ordinance: Alcohol Consumption on Town Property

Mr. Dean reminded the Board about a change to 809.4, informing that he made that change. He said Mr. Schidlovsky is comfortable with the non-profit language. Mr. Dean said they will vote on all sections in the final reading. Selectwoman Gilman asked to clear up the application process. Vice Chair Chartrand recommended on 809.3 replacing “create” with “require”.

6. Regular Business

a. Bid Openings /Surplus Declarations

Chairman Clement gave the following bids for a powered activated carbon feed system:

1) Atlantic Pump & Engineering	\$104,300
2) Acrison Inc.	\$40,583
3) Kempco System LP	\$112,135
4) Metcon Sales & Engineering	\$72,450

A Motion was made by Vice Chair Chartrand and seconded by Selectman Quandt to forward the bids to the appropriate authorities at Public Works for recommendation. Motion carried – all in favor.

b. Tax, Water/Sewer Abatements & Exemptions

A Motion was made by Selectman Quandt and seconded by Vice Chair Chartrand to sign a Notice to Quit to evict the last property owner at 2a Gary Lane. Motion carried – all in favor.

Mr. Dean talked about a conservation easement regarding the addition of snowmobiles to the uses. He is looking to have the original signed. Chairman Clement said the Board has already taken action.

c. Permits and Approvals

There is a permit application to use the Town Hall for a Cub Scout event on October 26. A Motion was made by Selectman Ferraro and seconded by Selectman Quandt to approve the application. Motion carried – all in favor.

d. Town Manager's Report

Mr. Dean talked about the following:

- A CIP meeting he attended
- Information about the new water treatment plant
- A request for information on Jady Hill
- He wanted to acknowledge Mr. Vlasich for providing a detailed report

e. Legislative Update

None.

f. Selectmen's Committee Reports

Selectman Ferraro reported the Water and Sewer Committee met. They reviewed financials and talked about the new water treatment plant. He said the Planning Board met and talked about a site walk of a Captains Way proposed house.

Vice Chairman Chartrand had nothing to report.

Selectwoman Gilman had nothing to report, but said the CIP work was one of the BOS goals to accomplish.

Selectman Quandt reported the Swazey Trustees met. They looked at bids for bench parts and ruled the bids were too high.

Chairman Clement reported the Exeter Housing Authority met. He talked about success with weatherization. The Exeter River workgroup gave updates for the dam issue alternatives. He said August 14 is the last day to submit comments. He talked about putting out a call for the first 2014 Budget Recommendation Committee meeting which should be sometime in the end of August.

j. Correspondence

Chairman Clement talked about the following correspondence:

- NH Dept of Safety about a \$27,000 grant.
- A report from Mr. Swanson on EXTV for July.

7. Review Board Calendar

Chairman Clement said the next BOS meeting will be August 26. He would expect some updates at the next meeting.

A Motion was made by Selectman Quandt and seconded by Vice Chair Chartrand to go into a non-public session under RSA 91 A exceptions c and e at 9:15 pm. Roll call vote: Clement aye, Chartrand aye, Ferraro aye, Quandt aye, Gilman aye. Motion carried – all in favor.

Selectman Chartrand moved to adjourn, seconded by Selectman Quandt. The Board stood adjourned at 9:30 p.m..

Respectively submitted,

Nicole McCormack
Recording Secretary