

FINAL MINUTES

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

MINUTES

November 8, 2010

1. Call Meeting to Order

The Board met in the Wheelwright Room for committee interviews at 6:40 pm and then Ms. Gilman reconvened the Board in the Nowak Room of the Town Office Building at 7:00 pm. Other members of the Board present were: Mr. Bobby Aldrich, Mr. Matt Quandt, Mr. Bill Campbell, Mr. Don Clement along with Town Manager, Russ Dean.

2. Public Comment –

Mr. Fred Ami told the Board that he is concerned about the proposed TIF district in the train station area. He said that he had participated in the Train Station Design Charrette and that he was interested in the development in the area and the effect it would have on the residents in the area. He would like to see the Town charge for parking in the train station area since it is now free and there could be some revenue there. Ms. Gilman said that the possibility of a parking payment machine had been researched by the Train Committee and the cost is more than they thought it would be.

Ms. Deb Johnson was concerned about the effect on the Town of Exeter that a TIF district may have. She cited examples from other towns in the region that have been negatively affected by the TIF program.

3. Minutes and Proclamations

- a. Regular minutes of October 27, 2010

Mr. Campbell moved to approve the regular minutes of October 27, 2010 as presented. Mr. Quandt seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

- b. Non-Public Session: October 18, 2010

Mr. Campbell moved to approve the nonpublic minutes of October 18, 2010 as presented. Mr. Aldrich seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

4. Appointments – Economic Development Commission

Mr. Aldrich moved to appoint Don Briselden to the Economic Development Commission for a term expiring April 30, 2014. Mr. Campbell seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

5. Department Reports – Building

Building Inspector Doug Eastman was in attendance to give the Building Department report. He reported that there have been a number of certificates of occupancy issued lately to the following: The Blue Moon Restaurant, a home on Wright Lane, the Meeting House project on Epping Road, Provident Bank on Portsmouth Avenue, and two others on Court Street. There have been 696 permits issued in total so far for 2010. There have been 18 new home starts in 2010 compared with 2 in 2009. Revenue is up to \$139,198 for 2010, up from \$104,000 in 2009. Cost of construction projects so far in 2010 is \$18,220,868 which is up from last year's total of \$14,759,000. Mr. Eastman also reports that there are a lot of remodels this year and that the Zoning Ordinance Review Committee is hard at work.

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6. Discussion/Action Items

a. New Business

i. TIF Discussion

Ms. Gilman spoke of the Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) program that is available to the town if it is approved by the voters in a town election. Ms. Gilman spoke of the recent Plan NH Design Charrette which attracted 15 professionals to come to Exeter for 2 days and use their professional skills to offer ideas that could help to improve the Train Station area. She said that the Town of Exeter received about \$30,000 worth of professional services for a \$1,000 investment in the Plan NH program. The advantages of the TIF program are that it would stimulate an area for economic development and also allow for improvements in the infrastructure in that same area.

Mr. Dean said that there are limits to the TIF program in terms of acreage that can be considered as well as the assessed value of the TIF district. The program proposal must be fully itemized before it is brought to the voters so there is a full understanding of the project. There have been some successful proposals that are written in simple language such as the 2006 Northfield TIF program. There have been a few other notable TIF projects recently such as Peterborough's 2 TIF districts and the Newmarket downtown TIF project. Deb Johnson said that Portsmouth Avenue was not a TIF district and there have been a lot of improvements to the area anyway. Mr. Aldrich said that if it had been a TIF district, it may have paid for part of the \$3.9 million Water/Sewer project that will be ballot.

Gerry Hamel said that he thinks a TIF is good in a good economy but we are in a bad economy, so it would be a bad idea now. Mr. Quandt wondered if a TIF district would make Exeter more attractive to developers. Barry Sandberg of the Economic Development Commission said that the EDC is in the early stages of reviewing the TIF program and its advantages and that the EDC welcomes input from the public regarding this program. Jim Knight asked if Water Sewer improvements could be made from this tax money that is stimulated by the TIF program. Mr. Aldrich said that infrastructure is an identified allowable expenditure in this program. Ms. Gilman said this is the first discussion of many on the subject should the Town decide to go forward with a TIF district.

ii. Historical Society Lease Agreement

This discussion is to review a proposed update to the Historical Society lease agreement to include and update to the maintenance of the building. Mr. Aldrich said that in August the Historical Society itemized a list of 11 maintenance projects that needed to be completed on their building, some of which are minor and some are major CIP items. Ms. Gilman would like to know which ones are proposed to be done by the Historical Society and which would fall to the Town. The language in the updated lease is vague. Mr. Aldrich suggested that the Town Manager and the Public Works Department decide who would be responsible for each project, but also thinks the Town should review the rental rate. If the Town will be paying to do major projects on the building, perhaps the Historical Society should be paying more in rent. He would like to see what the Town was charging Provident Bank per square foot and use that as a starting point but not too much as to compromise their endowment funds. Don Woodward suggested that since the Historical Society is a nonprofit they may want to apply for nonprofit energy tax credits for energy projects like a new boiler.

iii. Fund Balance Discussion

The current Fund Balance is \$1,357,162 and the Town has already committed to purchase property on Continental Drive for \$249,333. Mr. Dean said that the advice of the Town Treasurer is to not go below \$1 million in the Fund Balance because this is not cash; it is a balance on paper only. This balance is only real if all of the revenue is collected. Mr. Campbell said that revenues were down this year and

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that it could get worse next year so the Board may want to save more of the Fund Balance than they had in other years.

Mr. Aldrich moved to use \$357,162 of the Fund Balance to reduce the tax rate. Mr. Campbell seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

b. Old Business

i. Water Sewer Rates Committee Update

Mr. Dean reviewed the proposals of percentage increases in the Water/Sewer rates by percentages. Mr. Campbell noted that there is a 3 month lag time to implement the increases. Mr. Aldrich said that the uncollected balance that is over 90 days past due in Water and Sewer billing is around \$250,000. Mr. Campbell would like to see the Board have a consensus of their recommendation prior to the public hearing on this item and the Board agreed that they would support a 2% increase in rates, which would go into effect on January 1, 2011.

ii. Discussion - Cell Phones

From the information provided in the packet, all town plans for cell phones are through Verizon. Mr. Aldrich wondered if the Board would prefer to continue to offer the town plans or if the town should offer only reimbursement for employee's own phones. Mr. Aldrich prefers the town plans as so the rest of the Board. The next step should be to see if there is a better plan that can be negotiated with Verizon for the Town as a whole.

7. Regular Business

a. DRA Revenue Sales Ratio Study Summary and Certification of Sales-

Assessor John DeVittori has submitted this form for the Board's signatures. It is an annual document that must be submitted to DRA and this year Exeter's ratio is 98.1%. The forms were signed by the Board.

b. Accounts Payable and Payroll Manifests

Mr. Clement moved to approve the Police Longevity and Holiday payroll warrant for the week ending 10/31/2010 in the amount of \$56,230.26. Mr. Aldrich seconded. Vote: Unanimous

Mr. Clement moved to approve the regular weekly payroll warrant for the week ending 10/24/10 in the amount of \$161,275.54. Mr. Campbell seconded. Vote: Unanimous

Mr. Clement moved to approve the regular weekly payroll warrant for the week ending 10/29/10 in the amount of \$157,049.08. Mr. Aldrich seconded. Vote: Unanimous

Mr. Clement moved to approve the accounts payable warrant for the week ending 10/29/10 in the amount of \$92,586.93. Mr. Aldrich seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

Big ticket items are: Holland Co., \$10,000;
River Bend Mason \$15,700;
Weston and Sampson \$17,000.

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Mr. Clement moved to approve the accounts payable warrant for the week ending 11/05/10 in the amount of \$2,215,428.93. Mr. Aldrich seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

Big ticket items are: Exeter Coop Schools \$1,096,000
Exeter Schools \$908,000
Retirement \$103,000
DES \$60,000

c. Budget Updates –

Mr. Aldrich handed out a proposed schedule to the rest of the Board for the rest of the year for the budget review and said that the Budget Recommendations Committee would complete their process on November 17.

d. Tax Abatements and Exemptions –

Veteran's Credit-

Mr. Campbell moved to approve the Veteran's Credit relief to the indicated resident. Mr. Quandt seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

Intent to Cut:

Map 68 / Lot 4

Mr. Quandt moved to approve the intent to cut for Map 68 / Lot 4. Mr. Aldrich seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

e. Water/Sewer Abatements – none

f. Permits –

1. A request for Family and Friends to use the Town Hall on December 17 and 18, 2010 for a play.
2. A request for Veteran's Council for a Veteran's Day assembly in Gale Park on November 11, 2010 from 10:30am – 12:00pm.
3. A request for Music and Arts to use the Town Hall on January 25-28, 2011 for student recitals.
4. A request for YMCA to use the Town Hall on November 16, 2010 for childcare training.

Mr. Aldrich moved to approve these permits as presented. Mr. Campbell seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

g. Town Manager's Report – Mr. Dean reported that Thursday, November 11 is a holiday for the Town of Exeter, so town departments will be closed on that day, but that trash pickup would be on schedule all week.

h. Legislative Updates – Mr. Quandt reported that this year the legislature has a very large freshman class. Mr. Campbell suggested inviting the new representatives to talk to the Board before the legislative session begins and the rest of the board was in agreement.

i. Selectmen's Committee Reports

Mr. Quandt – Nothing to report

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Mr. Campbell – Mr. Campbell reported that the Planning Board is reviewing development in the VFW area.

Ms. Gilman – Ms. Gilman reported that Plan NH will be presenting their recommendations after the first of the new year.

Mr. Aldrich – will be attending meetings for the Conservation Commission and the Personnel Plan review in the coming days.

Mr. Clement – Mr. Clement attended a Council on Aging meeting where they discussed creating a flyer to generate interest in the Council, at the River Study meeting they got an update on Water Sewer projects and federal mandates from Jennifer Perry. Mr. Clement also wished to thank all of the volunteers at the recent election at Talbot Gym, saying he thought the election went very smoothly thanks to their contributions.

j. Correspondence –

1. Rockingham Planning Legislators forum invitation.

8. Review Board Calendar – The next Board of Selectmen meeting will take place on Monday, November 15 at 7pm. Mr. Aldrich said he would like to present the Board with a list of the major changes to the Personnel Policy before the entire plan is presented in order to move the discussion along. Ms. Gilman said that the Board's email was out of commission for the past 10 days due to a technical problem but that it would be resolved shortly. Ms. Gilman also noted that the Board needs to develop a policy regarding email now that it is web based and can be checked from outside computers.

9. Non Public Session

10. Adjournment

Mr. Campbell moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:18 pm. Mr. Quandt seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Geis
Recording Secretary