

Final Minutes

Exeter Board of Selectmen

December 1, 2014

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chairwoman Julie Gilman called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Offices building. Other members present were Vice Chair Dan Chartrand, Selectwoman Nancy Belanger, Selectwoman Anne Surman, and Selectman Don Clement. Town Manager Russell Dean was also present.

As the entire Exeter High School Girls Soccer team was there, Chairwoman Gilman went right into proclamations. She asked the girls introduce themselves, so they went around told their names, grades, and where they're from. Selectwoman Surman presented the girls and coach with a plaque displaying 2014 Division 1 State Champions. Mr. Dean asked what their hardest challenge was this year and the coach explained their drive to win.

2. Bid Openings/Awards:

None.

3. Public Comment

Don Woodward asked to reserve some time for some upcoming agenda items.

Brenda Stringly, an Exeter resident, spoke on the bus situation. She said there are several disabled people who need the bus. For her, losing the bus means losing freedom. She suffers from a disability and relies on the bus to bring her to the mall to get craft stuff as part of her therapy. She crochets for her PTSD. She needs the bus. She asked to start being proactive so Exeter can keep the bus routes. She wants to prevent the conflict of now having it from coming up. Chairwoman Gilman said there was a meeting last Monday held by COAST. She said nothing will change soon, but there are some ideas out there. She said they can keep COAST in the loop with the resident's concerns and give them direct contact information.

Dana Draham, Exeter resident, said she is glad this is being looked upon. She said it makes a difference for the public to know the Board backs them up.

Pauline, an Exeter resident, said she needs the bus for independence. She is also handicapped and doesn't want to lose that independence.

Beth Dupell talked about Ring in the Season. She urged townspeople to come out and enjoy all the four days of activities around town. She said the schedule of events is in a flyer which was in the Sunday Portsmouth Herald and it is also on the website. She said in regards to holiday lights, they had a successful weekend the 22nd and 23rd putting lights up. She went on to go briefly through the schedule of events. Visit www.ringintheseason.info for a list.

Darius Thompson said the parade will be 12/6 at 5:30 and invited Mr. Dean and the Board to walk in it. He also mentioned that he likes the improvements on Portsmouth Ave. He said he would like the crosswalks to be repainted to brighten them up around town.

4. Minutes and Proclamations

a. Proclamations/Recognitions

See above.

b. Regular Meeting: November 17, 2014

A Motion was made by Vice Chair Chartrand and seconded by Selectwoman Belanger to accept the minutes of the November 17, 2014 BOS minutes as submitted by Nicole Piper. Motion carried – all in favor.

5. Appointments

None.

6. Discussion/Action Items

a. New Business

i. FY15 Budget and Warrant Articles

Chairwoman Gilman said the Budget Recommendation Committee came up with a 1.36% increase over 2014. The recommended budget is \$17,314,056. She said she appreciates all the work done by the BRC.

There is a memo in the packet which breaks down the warrant articles. She went through them.

Chairwomen Gilman said there will be a couple more meetings on the budget.

Corey Stevens, Chair of the BRC, gave a quick overview of what the Committee does. He said the BRC was outstanding this year. He thanked everyone for their time and effort.

Chairwoman Gilman thanked Mr. Stevens and said it was a good season. She said thoughtful decisions were made. The Committee was full of experience and she said she likes what they have come up with. Mr. Stevens said there were a lot of good projects presented. It is all about how things are presented and if something didn't pass then it will get looked at in the future.

Vice Chair Chartrand thanked Mr. Stevens and the rest of the Committee and said everyone executed very well. He said there were no projects that were turned down that shouldn't have been. BRC operated at its highest level.

Selectman Clement thanked Mr. Stevens and the Committee as well. He said the 1.36% increase is incredible. The Committee has done a great job. He said there are a couple small things he would like back at. He has some questions on some warrant articles but said that is for another time.

Mr. Dean wanted to recognize the financial department too as they put a lot of work and extra hours into this.

Harry Thayer said the Procedure Guidelines Committee this summer was a highlight in how things went this budget season.

Vice Chair Chartrand asked how they should proceed with any questions. Chairwoman Gilman suggested putting their questions together for the next meeting. Vice Chair Chartrand there are four things he would like to look at: a new position, paving funding, the maintenance project list, and the snow-go unit replacement (not pursuing it.) Deferring or level funding some things will stabilize and/or bring down the tax rate even more. Selectman Clement agreed with holding off on the sno-go replacement.

Selectwoman Surman also thanked the BRC. She said it was a good question and answer experience. She thinks the Fire Alarm Bucket Truck can be put off this year.

Selectman Clement is in full support of the Sidewalk Program for downtown. He would like to look at the additional money that was put in for the sidewalks. He said he has gone back and forth on the Fire Alarm Bucket Truck. He would like to look at the Street Sweeper Replacement and have a conversation.

Selectwoman Belanger was concerned about the town hall stairway money, and thinks more should go back into that fund. She also said the sidewalks in town are a huge issue and need to be painted and brightened.

Chairwoman Gilman had a couple concerns with some water/sewer stuff. She asked the Board to get all their concerns together and bring back questions to the next BOS meeting.

ii. 2015 COLA Discussion

Chairwoman Gilman said it is being recommended that the Board adopt a 1.6% COLA adjustment for full time and part time employees not covered by a union contract.

Selectwoman Surman had some questions about the step raises and COLA adjustments all at once. Mr. Dean said yes, people will get both. He said they are trying to make things more consistent. Selectman Clement asked if non-union employees all get step increases. Mr. Dean said yes, at the first pay period of July.

Chairwoman Gilman asked if everyone was comfortable with the 1.6% or if they need more time to think about it. Mr. Dean said the 1.6% came from the DLS so it is an accurate number.

A Motion was made by Vice Chair Chartrand and seconded by Selectwoman Belanger that the Board approve a 1.6% COLA adjustment for full time and part time employees not covered by a union contract, effective the first full pay period of July, 2015. Motion carried with a 4-1 vote, Surman votes nay.

iii. 2014/15 Fuel Contract

Chairwoman Gilman went through the memo in the packet regarding a contract for fixed gas prices with DK Burke which has recently expired. The DPW requested locking into a new contract.

A Motion was made by Vice Chair Chartrand and seconded by Selectman Clement that the Board, in advance, authorize the Public Works Department, with the concurrence of the Town Manager, to lock in favorable gasoline rates with DK Burke in order to capture and contract on the day of quote the best price obtainable for the 2015 operating budget. Selectman Clement asked if the new lock in price would be a higher price. Mr. Dean said that is pretty a-typical. With a Motion on the floor, the Board voted all in favor, Motion granted.

iv. Road Acceptance: Winslow Drive

Chairwoman Gilman asked to put this conversation off until they get more details. She would like to have a DPW employee there for the conversation.

Don Woodward spoke, saying this road abuts his property. There is an access road for ambulances and such that runs into his neighborhood. Plowing snow on the access road has flooded some properties. Heavy construction vehicles have been using the access road for and they would like this to not happen. He wants to make sure snow will not be dumped at the end of their driveways. To sum up, Vice Chair Chartrand asked if Mr. Woodward was requesting that the snow not be piled up against the access road gate. Mr. Woodward said yes.

v. Road Acceptance: Squire Way

This agenda item was also put off until there is more information.

vi. Snow/Ice Capital Reserve Fund Withdrawal

A Motion was made by Selectman Clement and seconded by Selectwoman Surman that the Board support the withdrawal of \$10,700 from the snow/ice deficit capital reserve fund to assist in offsetting the FY14 snow/ice deficit. Motion carried – all in favor.

b. Old Business

None.

7. Regular Business

a. Tax, Water/Sewer Abatements & Exemptions

There were two Intents to Cut, but Selectman Clement requested holding back on them until they get more information. Chairwoman Gilman agreed, saying she would like to know more about it.

A Motion was made by Selectwoman Surman and seconded by Selectman Clement to accept abatement for map 111, lot 5, unit 8 in the amount of \$166.78. Motion granted – all in favor.

b. Permits & Approvals

None.

c. Town Manager's Report

Mr. Dean reported the following:

- A town facilities plan meeting today, with 5 firms showing up
- The town is aware of the recycling issues and is talking about how to resolve
- Reminder: tax bills are due December 12
- Scheduling leaf pickup for December 8
- Speaking to Great Bay Charter School on Thursday

- Had a request from the Town Office employees to close the day after Christmas, which is a Friday. Everyone will use their leave time to do so, so it is contingent on everybody agreeing. The consensus is to shut down.

- COAST meeting met in Newmarket. It was an hour and a half meeting. They are getting the information uploaded soon. They talked about 7 alternative routes. They talked about the bus being a commuter on certain days along Route 7. No final decisions were made and there will be a follow-up meeting.

d. Selectmen's Committee Reports

Selectwoman Belanger talked about her notes from the November 24 Gas Emergency Response meeting.

Vice Chair Chartrand reported an Economic Development Committee meeting tomorrow.

Chairwoman Gilman reported Section 106 meeting, a Historic District Committee meeting, and a Heritage Commission meeting.

Selectwoman Surman had nothing to report.

Selectman Clement reported a Planning Board meeting. He said he also attended a Town Safety Committee meeting and a Section 106 preservation meeting.

e. Correspondence

The following correspondence were included in the packet:

- Letter from State Conservation Committee congratulating Exeter on being selected for a \$15,000 grant for the Great Dam removal
- Letter from NHDOT regarding the sale of state owned land
- Letter from NH Division of Forests and Land regarding sale of timber
- Letter from Comcast
- State of NH Public Utilities Commission Request for Proposals
- Top 10 taxpayers of Exeter
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8. Review Board Calendar

The next meeting will be December 15 and will include further budget discussion and a conversation about the road acceptances.

10. Adjournment

A Motion was made by Vice Chair Chartrand and seconded by Selectwoman Surman to adjourn the meeting at 9:10pm. Motion carried – all in favor.

Respectively submitted,

Nicole Piper
Recording Secretary