

1. Convene the meeting.

Chairman Ingram convened the Board at 7:00PM in the Nowak Room and introduced those present. Selectmen Robert Eastman, Paul Binette, Joseph Pace, William Campbell, Town Manager George Olson and newly appointed Town Manager Russell Dean.

2. Minutes of Selectmen's meeting of 3/14/05.

Mr. Binette moved to accept the minutes as submitted; second by Mr. Pace. VOTE: Unanimous.

3. Swearing in of Russell Dean as new Town Manager.

Town Clerk Linda Hartson was present and congratulated Mr. Olson on his retirement and wished him well in gardening, travel and relaxing. She called Mr. Dean forward and recited the Oath of Office to him for the position of Town Manager.

Mr. Eastman moved to also appointed Russell Dean as Tax Collector for the Town of Exeter; second by Mr. Binette. VOTE: Unanimous.

Mr. Pace, quoting Alex Pope to Mr. Olson, "thou were guide, philosopher and friend". Mr. Ingram noted the words "let George do it" does not sound the same with "let Russ do it". Mr. Olson stated it was an enjoyable 17 ½ years and thanked the Board and residents. [Applause].

4. Bid award – Ambulance.

Mr. Dean recommended Sugarloaf of Carabasset Valley, Maine for \$145,560 noting the Chief recommends this company due to its maintenance program, response within 24 hours of a call and longer and stronger warranty, even with the bid being \$1500 more. The last ambulance was purchased through Sugarloaf and the department is familiar with their work.

Mr. Campbell asked if the price includes the trade-in or are we selling the other. Chief Comeau stated included. ***Mr. Pace moved to award the bid to the recommended Sugarloaf for \$145,560; second by Mr. Eastman. VOTE: Unanimous.***

5. Request to address the Board – Friends of the Swasey Parkway.

This item is postponed till the April 11th meeting.

6. Action to purchase and sell Town land on Epping Road.

Warrant Article #24 of the 2004 Town Meeting calls for selling a Town parcel on Epping Road for above the appraised value of \$225,000 (Map 55, Lot 67), .."with proceeds from the sale to be applied to the debt incurred to construct the new fire station". Mr. Dean stated DRA has told him the Board is authorized to sell the property and the money from the proceeds must go to the General Fund and not to debt service unless a Fund is voted by the residents earmarked for that purpose. At the '05 Town Meeting, it was approved to raise \$100,000 to purchase property and the Board must also decide if they wish to move forward.

Mr. Binette stated the Town should go forward and sell the Epping Road parcel in order to get it back on the tax rolls. Mr. Eastman favored the sale also but suggested the Board consider a Capital Reserve Fund for 'Capital Facilities' and place the proceeds of this sale after approval at next year's Town Meeting.

Mr. Pace does not wish to wait a year to purchase the new and agrees with the selling of the current parcel as authorized. He suggested the process be sell the parcel, purchase the parcel and sort out the accounting with a follow-up warrant article next year,

Mr. Pace moved to place the Epping Road parcel (Map 55, Lot 67) for sale consistent with the instructional language and legal opinion interpretations; second by Mr. Campbell. VOTE: Unanimous.

Land Purchase: Mr. Binette asked Chief Comeau if the price was held at \$100,000? Yes. Mr. Binette does not want to sit on this noting the voters want to purchase the land, to have Town ownership when needed. ***Mr. Binette moved to start the paperwork with Town Counsel and the seller to proceed with the land transfer purchase; second by Mr. Campbell. VOTE: Unanimous.***

7. Right of first refusal on Baglin property.

Don Clement, Conservation Commission Chairman, was present to explain the situation with the sale. The Town acquired a conservation easement on this property last fall and, included with the easement wording was first option/first refusal for the Town should the Baglins decide to sell outside of family. He received registered mail on March 12th notifying the Town they intend to sell and for the Town to exercise its right of first refusal. Mr. Clement has taken an informal poll of the Commission and, as the Town has secured the conservation easement, they feel it is not necessary to purchase the property, but the final decision is with the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Pace noted the easement continues to remain in place. Yes, this is on-going. Mr. Pace asked if the first refusal is adapted to any new owners. No, the first option is only exercised on the first occasion of sale and will not be in other agreements. It's possible the Open Space and Conservation Commission could discuss with the new owners this option, but it is not now in place during discussion of the sale.

It was reiterated the Town has control of the easements and the terms and conditions remain in effect.

Mr. Eastman stated the first options/first refusals leave the Town with no protection, particularly with no money to purchase the property after Town Meeting. The options should be handled by the Selectmen and be responsible for signing deeds, etc. Currently it is with the Rockingham Land Trust as they manage the property. In response to public access, Mr. Eastman asked if changes could be made to the property concerning posting, etc. Mr. Campbell noted the prospective owners would have to answer these questions as the sale is being considered as being posted.

Mr. Pace suggested an open discussion with the owners of all easements and agreements and the possibility of re-writing the easements to include the issue of first refusal/first option permanently in all subsequent ownership change. Mr. Clement stated the purchase of the easement keeps 23 acres under permanent conservation easement, protecting from development rights. The offer of first refusal was discussed with the Board but it was felt the purchase of the house would mean Town responsibility of real estate. Mr. Pace stated in looking 20-30-40 years to the future, the Town may

need portions of land in direct ownership, for continuing of services. Access was a huge issue and first option gave us the change to acquire the land and post as we wish.

It was noted the first refusal comes at a time the Town has no money to pursue this, as well as no authorization by the Town to purchase the land. Mr. Eastman stated an article should be developed, per RSA 41:14-a, which allows the Board to acquire and sell land.

Mr. Campbell moved to decline the offer of first refusal to purchase the Baglin property; second by Mr. Eastman. VOTE: Unanimous.

8. Exeter District Court discussion.

Mr. Campbell noted the NH Court Accreditation Commission has been discussing the Exeter and Hampton District Courts situations for some time. The State Legislature voted funding several years ago to build one court for both Towns but nothing has happened till recently. Exeter has been moved to Brentwood and recently Chief Kane, George Olson and he attended a meeting in Concord. The Chief is a huge advocate for Exeter having its own court house, due mainly to costs associated with travel, not just for Exeter but our surrounding towns. The Chief has spoken with Peter Goodwin, who negotiated contracts in the past, and stated they are still looking for a permanent location. Hampton Selectmen would like a joint meeting.

Mr. Dean spoke of correspondence with Mr. Barrington, Hampton Town Manager, concerning dates the two boards could meeting, recommended April 18th at Exeter, noting they would like the meeting, whether in a work session or regular meeting, televised. [That led to a side discussion of some meetings not now televised, including ZBA.] Mr. Ingram suggested the State representatives also be invited. Mr. Campbell noted State law currently calls for both Exeter and Hampton to have a District Court – this law may be changing.

Consensus of the board is to invite Hampton Selectmen to a work session on April 18th. Mr. Dean will contact their Manager.

9. Permits:

Mr. Dean presented the following permits for action by the Board:

- Rockingham Community Action to use Wheelwright Room on April 5th;
- Exeter Lion's Club annual bike tour on June 12th;
- American Diabetes Association road race and walk on May 1st from 7A-3P;
- Exeter Rotary geranium sale on May 6th from 8A to 6P by the Bandstand;
- North Shore Medical Center selling Krispy Kreme by the Bandstand on May 21st from 8AM to 12P;
- Granite State Quest bike race on July 9th;
- American Independence Museum requested the closure of Water Street from 7A-6P for Revolutionary Festival Day, and the use of the Town Hall, in case of bad weather, that day from 7A-6P;
- Parks & Recreation submitted a fireworks permit for 7/16 (Rev. Fest) beginning at 8:45PM. (Mr. Ingram asked the Manager to include a note about clean-up after, as we've had problems in the past);
- Kiwanis 10L Charity run on August 27th;

- Reach for the Beach Relay through Exeter on September 17th.

Mr. Dean noted all requiring a certificate of insurance have supplied same and Chief Kane has signed off on all road races. ***Mr. Campbell moved to approve all requests; second by Mr. Pace. VOTE: Unanimous.***

10. Town Manager's items:

- Mr. Dean noted the next meeting will be April 11th;
- Mr. Dean testified at the State House last week concerning federal funds for a State Grant for \$1.2 million, through Maine, for rail improvements. He reiterated the Town has contributed over \$300,000 toward the project and continues with \$50-60,000 per year for upkeep. The vote has been delayed for 90 days. If approved, access to the funds would allow adding a 5th train to the Down Easter.

11. Selectmen's Committee Reports:

- Mr. Pace: none.
- Mr. Campbell: He will not be present on the 18th when meeting with Hampton Selectmen. Water & Sewer Advisory met last week and are still reviewing options, with possible survey to ratepayers, on what the public thinks. The EDC met with the new Town Manager.
- Mr. Eastman: Planning Board approved a project on Continental Drive for a 3,000 sq. ft office building. Planning Board will be sending a memo recommending the Selectmen adopt a CIP Committee to act as a sub-committee to the Planning Board.
- Mr. Binette: None but suggests adding a category to the agendas to include 'old business' to allow follow-up of questions raised from previous meetings. Mr. Eastman agreed. Mr. Campbell suggested the topic would be informative with no action taken that evening without it appearing as an agenda item for public input. Mr. Pace suggested "Town Manager's Report" to include upcoming events as well as responding to past questions, similar to that of "Selectmen's Reports".
- Mr. Ingram: River meeting with the State, with flood control discussed. A meeting is scheduled this week with Rockingham Planning Commission and the State to discuss flood control and FEMA review and a possible 'community rating scheme' with DPW.

Mr. Binette asked if consideration could be made to have ZBA meetings televised, noting there is no reason to be exempt. Mr. Pace suggested adding to agenda items for a broader discussion, to include other committees such as HDC, Parks & Rec. etc. Sam Bruno from the school should be invited for his input on scheduling.

12. Public Comments: None.

Mr. Eastman moved to adjourn; second by Mr. Pace. VOTE: Unanimous. Time: 8:22PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara A. Blenk
AA/HR Dir.