

1, 2. Convene the meeting/Non Public Session.

Chairman Ingram convened the Board at 6:30PM. It was moved and seconded to adjourn to a non-public sessions under RSA 91-A to discuss a personnel matter.

3, 4. Reconvene regular meeting – 7:04PM.

Chairman Ingram reconvened the Board at 7:04PM in the Nowak Room of the Town Office and introduced other members of the Board. Also present: Robert Eastman, Paul Binette, William Campbell, Joseph Pace and Town Manager Russell Dean. Chairman Ingram acknowledged Julie Lund, AA/Human Resources Director, as this was her first meeting taking minutes.

5. Community Block Grant Public Hearing (Exeter & Hampton Close-out).

Mr. Dean began explaining the history of the Community Block Grant. Mr. Eastman made a motion to open the Public Hearing. Mr. Pace seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Mr. Dean continued, stating that this was a feasibility study at the Exeter Hampton Cooperative Park to recommend water and waste water improvements, and they are now here to report their findings. Mr. Dean introduced Ms. Lynn Booth from the New Hampshire Community Loan Fund, Mr. Ed Duncan, a representative from the Board of Directors, and Mr. Andrew Sharpe, PE, from Provan & Lorber.

Ms. Booth introduced Mr. Sharpe, who provided additional hand-outs to the Board for the presentation of his findings. Mr. Sharpe described the location of the existing facility. Next he explained where the park receives its water. He acknowledged the water pressure issues that the Town is currently addressing, and discussed the booster station that is still used to help boost water pressure. Mr. Sharpe described what the sewer system is currently comprised of, and he explained the dynamics of the drainage system, referring to graphics in the handouts provided to the Board. Mr. Sharpe also discussed the history of the current system's creation, including materials used at that time, to help inform the Board why they are starting to see the systems such as this one fall apart.

Mr. Sharpe then proceeded to talk about recommended improvements, which include replacing the current distribution system with a larger diameter (4") pipeline. Mr. Sharpe understood that there was a warrant on the ballot in March for water distribution improvements. If the Town approves the distribution system improvements, the cooperative will not have to reconstruct the booster system. If no, the cooperative will have to consider replacing the booster system. The sewer system recommended improvements include a complete replacement of the sanitary collection system serving the Park.

Mr. Sharpe then moved on to the cost associated with these recommendations. The water infrastructure improvements total just under \$530,000, which includes the cost if the replacement of the booster system is required. If it is not required, the price would be reduced considerably. The drainage improvements are minor and would cost about \$17,000. Mr. Sharpe also notified us that he is working on identifying sources to help fund this project.

Mr. Sharpe recognizes it is difficult to get this lump sum all at once, and he said that it will be possible to construct in phases.

It is Mr. Sharpe's opinion that the waste water improvements represent the most significant of these improvements. Mr. Sharpe mentioned problems that have already arisen and required emergency repair work to be done. The recommendation report is to do design engineering for the entire system, then break it up into pieces and construct those pieces.

Mr. Sharpe then addressed a page in his handout that he had originally skipped, which has a definition of what constitutes a public water supply system and mentions a section of the report that refers to regulations and pending regulations that may have an impact on the Cooperative. Mr. Sharpe included this because under this definition, they would not be considered either a consecutive water system or a public water system; they would instead be considered a state-regulated distribution system, which still is not clearly defined. The Department of Environmental Services is concerned because the Town of Exeter has responsibility for the master meter at the entrance to the Park, but not for water piping serving the Park. Mr. Sharpe stated that it is not unheard of that accidents could happen within the distribution system that could impact the health and safety of its users, which has happened enough times that the DES' Water Supply Engineering Bureau feels it needs to have a discussion on who is responsible, and to what level of responsibility do we assign, and is it reasonable to expect a cooperative such as theirs to retain the services of a licensed superintendent or water operator.

Mr. Campbell had questions on some information that was missing in the handouts, and Mr. Sharpe provided some clarity. Mr. Campbell also inquired about additional manholes and drainage options, and Mr. Sharpe further explained the draining path. Mr. Campbell had other questions regarding the drainage of storm water, and Mr. Sharpe defined that path as well.

Mr. Eastman then questioned if the Cooperative had given thought to turning the infrastructure over to the Town. Mr. Sharpe referred to Mr. Ed Duncan, a representative from the Board of Directors, to address this concern. In Mr. Duncan's opinion, he felt it was a strong possibility that this would be something that could be approved without much opposition, but the issue would have to be presented to the Board of Directors for final authorization.

Mr. Duncan also added information about recent emergency repairs that cost almost \$5,000. There is still more that needs to be done to provide a better long-term solution, but they had to hold off due to the cost involved. One area in particular has cost over \$20,000 over the past few years. He reiterated that they are limited due to the cost.

Ms. Booth returned to the microphone to add her thanks to Mr. Duncan and the Board of Selectmen for all of their help with this initiative. She also added a personal account, as she lives in a cooperative in Raymond and asked the Public Works Director in Raymond if they would be interested in taking over the lines, and he said he would love to do so. She recommends, if possible, that the Town take it over. Ms. Booth also hopes that they will accept this report and hope they will support a possible emergency grant in the near future for damaged areas and sewage removal. She explained the financial difficulties they face, and she would look to the Board of Selectmen for support for an emergency grant. Ms. Booth agreed to return with a request for this emergency grant.

Mr. Sharpe noted in closing that they have until March 7, 2006 for written comments on this report. Mr. Sharpe will then take those comments, as well as the comments made this evening, and will

incorporate those comments into the final feasibility study and issue the report in its final form. **Mr. Eastman made a motion to close the public hearing; second by Mr. Pace. VOTE: Unanimous.**

6. Minutes: February 6th and February 13th, 2006.

Mr. Pace moved to waive the reading of the minutes of February 6th, 2006 and accept the minutes as presented; second by Mr. Campbell. VOTE: Unanimous.

Mr. Pace also moved to waive the reading of the minutes of February 13th, 2006 and accept the minutes as presented; second by Mr. Campbell. VOTE: 4-0, with Mr. Eastman abstaining.

7. Officer of the Year: Police Department Presentation.

Mr. Dean introduced Chief Richard Kane to present the Officer of the Year award. The award has been given for roughly the past ten years, but this is the first time it has been brought to the Board of Selectmen. Chief Kane explained the nomination process, and noted that this year they had the most nominations from any year, which is a testament to Detective Mike Munck, recipient of this year's Office of the Year award. Chief Kane reviewed some of the highlights from Detective Munck's career with the Town of Exeter, which includes 9 arrests of 'internet predators,' he is a firearms instructor, and he has been instrumental in closing a number of drug cases. Chief Kane described Detective Munck's tenacity and commitment, and how he has made a difference in the quality of life for the people of Exeter. Detective Munck proceeded to shake hands with each Selectman, and they posed for a group photo.

Chief Kane then recognized Victoria Thomas, the newest member of the Police Department. Ms. Thomas is a four year veteran of the Virginia Police Department, a graduate of Paris Island, a former Marine, and walks in as a fully certified police officer. Ms. Thomas shook hands with each Selectman as well.

8. River Pump Station bid opening.

Three vendors supplied bids for the River Pump Station and bids were opened. The first bid from FLOWSERVE, c/o Aqua Solutions, was for \$44,347. The second bid from Hayes Pump, Inc., was for \$48,244. The third bid from Mechanical Solutions, Inc., was for \$23,308. **Mr. Binette moved to refer the bids to the Town Manager and appropriate department and to report back with their recommendations; second by Mr. Campbell. VOTE: Unanimous.**

9. Proclamation: American Red Cross Month (March).

Mr. Binette read a proclamation naming March the American Red Cross Month. He noted the American Red Cross' humanitarian efforts both locally and nationally.

10. Second Reading: Ambulance Rates.

Mr. Dean noted that in December, 2005, there was the first reading on Ambulance Rates. The discussion centered around going back to the drawing board to look at the Ambulance rate schedule and making a recommendation to amend that schedule. The Fire Department has been hard at work

preparing this recommendation, and Chief Brian Comeau was present along with Assistant Chief Eric Wilking and Assistant Chief Ken Berkenbush to present their recommendation.

Chief Comeau explained that the fire department budget is a unique item, and the line on the budget for EMS was always around \$200,000 - \$210,000. Chief Comeau started looking at a way to define an actual cost of EMS to the community of Exeter. They looked at past statistics and forecasted for 2006. They looked at the budget and the revenue produced.

The rate they are recommending is \$418.36. Chief Comeau explained the number of calls they have responded to versus the number of people they actually transport, and noted that they actually transport much less than the calls received. Chief detailed the breakdown of billing between Medicare, HMO, Worker's Compensation, Auto Insurance, MediCaid, and those with no insurance. He explained the amount billed for 2005 as well as the net revenue received. Chief Comeau then explained their forecast for 2006.

Chief Comeau proceeded to outline the current fire budget and how it has been typically calculated. He then showed the changes they've made to offset some of their proposed changes. He summarized the combined budget of \$440,069.50 for Ambulance Services.

Chairman Ingram had a question why there was a difference between the amount billed and the new revenue received. He wondered if that was due to certain people not paying their bills. Chief Comeau explained that Medicare only pays 80% of the total amount billed, and MediCaid only pays a flat rate of \$145 per transport, regardless of the amount billed; thus there is a variance in those numbers.

Mr. Binette inquired about situations when EMS goes out on a medical call and then the person does not want to be transported. Chief Comeau explained that in 2005, there were 1496 calls, and of those calls 1294 were actually transported, so in those situations we received no revenue but still incurred expenses, which are included in their budget.

Mr. Campbell asked for clarification on how salaries were calculated in the budget. Chief Comeau stated that the 2006 budget includes the ambulance, but part of their proposal would be to redo the budget in order to include a separate line for ambulance salaries. Chief Comeau explained the formula used to determine whose salary would be included for budgeting purposes.

Chief Comeau then discussed revenue versus expenses. Based on his calculations, assuming the new rate, they anticipate expenses associated with Ambulance Services will be \$440,069.50, which would leave them with a shortfall of about \$61.00. He also explained that this year would be a bit off from these figures and the fire department would not be fully able to reimburse the funds for this account, due to the timing of passing the increase as well as Medicare's billing pattern. Chairman Ingram noted that we have never been able to fully recover this account, so if we are unable to do it this year, it will not be a huge ordeal. Chief Comeau agreed.

Chief Comeau then outlined the budget forecast and how the EMS budget is going to change. Chairman Ingram asked Mr. Eastman if he had anything to add, and he said he did not, that he was very happy with what they've done; he is pleased.

Mr. Dean added that he rounded up the proposed increase to \$419.00 in an attempt to recover the \$61 difference. He also wanted to thank Assistant Chief Wilking and Assistant Chief Berkenbush who were a major part of this project. Chief Comeau also added his thanks to his staff and also to Mr. Eastman for his help with the project. Mr. Eastman gave the fire department good guidance to help make this work.

Mr. Campbell asked for clarity on the rate, because back in December they recommended two rates, and now one rate is being recommended. Chief Comeau explained the change and confirmed it will now be one rate moving forward.

Mr. Eastman moved to approve increasing the Ambulance Billing Rate to \$419.00, effective March 6, 2006; second by Mr. Pace. VOTE: Unanimous.

11. Second Reading: IRS Mileage Rate Adjustment.

Mr. Dean proposed we adjust our current mileage reimbursement rate to 44.5 cents per mile. Mr. Dean referenced a study by AAA which examines the actual cost per mile to drive.

Mr. Eastman moved to adjust the mileage reimbursement rate to 44.5 cents per mile; second by Mr. Pace. VOTE: Unanimous.

12. Board Discussion: Winterfest Funds.

Mr. Dean explained that Mr. Bob Spoerl made a request to disband the Winterfest Committee and disperse the funds to various human services agencies in Town. Mr. Dean then introduced Mr. Jack Sheehy, Finance Director, to discuss the Town's options.

Mr. Sheehy stated that we have not come to a conclusion yet as to what can be done with these funds, due to the fact that most of the money is from donations, and more investigation needs to be done on what we can do with these funds. Mr. Sheehy mentioned that Mr. Spoerl was concerned that the funds were losing money every month for a maintenance fee at Bank of America. Mr. Sheehy discussed the situation with Citizen's, and now that we will be moving the Town accounts to Citizen's, they have agreed to waive any monthly fees so the funds will no longer be losing money.

Mr. Pace thought we should look into transferring the funds to the Christmas Parade, which is also funded by donations and is a similar fund.

Mr. Sheehy will return to the meeting scheduled on March 20, 2006 with additional information.

Mr. Dean mentioned that the Review of Committees will occur in April and we can make decisions on whether or not we want to continue certain committees at that time.

13. Open Space Committee: Update.

The Open Space Committee Update has been moved to the March 6th Board of Selectmen's meeting.

14. Town Office/Town Hall Project Update

Mr. Dean gave a brief update on the Town Office/Town Hall Project. On February 14, 2006, Mr. Dean and Mr. Eastman met with a technical review group to discuss various options. A few new ideas were mentioned, including potentially building up versus building out. The easement next to the Town Office was also discussed, and a meeting will be scheduled with the Inn at Bandstand owner to work out a site plan.

Another issue discussed was the future of the Chamber of Commerce. Chairman Ingram presented the idea of potentially moving the Chamber into the Courthouse space. Mr. Pace mentioned space on the main level of Town Hall that is currently used as storage space.

It was decided to bring in the architect at some point in the near future.

15. Town Manager's Report:

- Mr. Dean complimented the Public Works Department for a great job plowing. He appreciates their responsiveness during snowstorms.
- He reminded residents that the Town Election will be held on March 14, 2006. Polls will be open from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm.
- He also reminded residents that the Winter Parking Ban is still in effect until March 15, 2006.
- Next Board of Selectmen Meeting will be held on Monday, March 6, 2006.
- His final point to note was regarding Meals on Wheels. Now that there is no longer a taxi program in Town, through the Council on Aging, Meals on Wheels is offering a substitute program. They have offered a 2-3 month trial run at \$1,400 a month. The transportation will be primarily in the afternoon, and Meals on Wheels will have a charge of some sort, possibly \$1 charge each way. Meals on Wheels has really stepped up on this project and Mr. Dean is grateful for their offer. He would like to accept the trial run to see how it goes. Mr. Campbell is very much in favor of getting something out there but would like to see a breakdown of where the \$1,400 goes. Chairman Ingram said they don't have the data yet, and he understands they have problems finding drivers. Chairman Ingram recommends starting the trial and seeing how it goes, then they can work out the details as we go. ***Mr. Campbell made a motion to try the 3-month trial and report back with the breakdown of where the fee is spent; second by Mr. Binette. VOTE: Unanimous.***

16. Permits:

Mr. Dean presented the following for action:

- Peter Bordonaro of Rivers Edge Investments requested to block off a commercial parking space in front of 171 Water Street for a dumpster on March 5th from 7:00 am – 5:00 pm.
- Great Bay Workcamp requested to hang a banner across Water Street from February 27 to March 5 to advertise for Free Home Repair for the elderly, disabled and low-income families.
- Exeter Arts Committee requested to hang a banner across Water Street from April 20 – May 5 and also weekends from May 6 – June 11 from 1-5 pm to advertise for 'Blossoms,' an art show for potters, florists and painters taking place at the Town Hall Gallery.
- Exeter Lions Club requested to hang a banner across Water Street from March 19 – April 1 to advertise for the Exeter Lions Club Auction being held on April 1 at the Annex Gym.

- Exeter Center for Creative Arts requested to use the Town Hall Main Floor with use of the stage for July 17 – July 29 for the ECCA Drama Camp and Performance. They would use the facilities Monday through Friday from 9 am to 3 pm plus Saturday from 9 am to 12 pm.
- New Outlook Teen Center requested to use the Town Hall Main Floor with use of the stage for the Exeter Arts Coalition music for Saturday, April 1st from 6 pm to 10 pm.
- The American Independence Museum requested to block off Water Street from Spring Street to the Bandstand on Saturday, July 22nd from 6 am to 6 pm for the American Independence Festival.
- Exeter Lions Club requested to hold their annual bike tour on June 11th from 7:30 am to 3:30 pm, which has three routes that begin and end at Swasey Parkway.
- The American Cancer Society requested to have a charity walk, ‘Making Strides Against Breast Cancer,’ on Sunday, October 15, from 11 am to 12:30 pm.
- The Exeter Farms requested use of the Nowak Room on April 19 at 7 pm for the annual meeting of the association.
- Exeter Area Chamber of Commerce requested use of the Nowak Room on May 13 from 8 am – 10:30 am for a Workshop for Kitchen Tour.
- NH Connections requested use of the Wheelwright Room on March 17 from 9 am to 11 am for a program ‘Connecting Family, School and Communities for Better Outcomes for Children.’
- RCA Head Start requested use of the Wheelwright Room on March 9 from 9 am – 11 am for a policy council meeting.

Mr. Campbell moved to approve all permits as stated; second by Mr. Pace. VOTE: Unanimous.

17. Selectmen’s Committee Reports.

Mr. Eastman: Mentioned a nice project on Epping Road – the Meeting Place looks like it will be a good project.

Mr. Binette: No committee reports but he did want to mention that after the most recent storm, Mr. Binette watched a private contractor moving snow and completely burying a fire hydrant. Mr. Binette read the Town’s ordinance on snow removal to remind private contractors of their responsibilities. Contractors (or anyone) need to understand that the fire hydrant is for a number of residents in that area and they all need to be kept clean in case of an emergency.

Mr. Campbell: Water/Sewer Advisory will meet the first Wednesday of every month and announced their meetings may soon be televised.

Mr. Pace: None.

Mr. Ingram: River Study met last Wednesday, and they have an interim report that needs further information on how to secure the dam. Chairman Ingram asked residents to pass the warrant article in the election.

Public Comments: None.

Mr. Eastman moved to adjourn; second by Mr. Pace. VOTE: Unanimous. Time: 8:52PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie A Lund
AA/HR Dir.