

FINAL MINUTES

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

MINUTES

July 20, 2009

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chairman William Campbell convened the meeting at 7:00 pm in the Nowak Room of the Town Office Building and introduced other members of the Board: Mr. Bob Eastman, Ms. Julie Gilman, Mr. Matt Quandt, Mr. Bobby Aldrich and Town Manager, Russ Dean.

2. Public Comment- None.

3. Minutes and Proclamations

a. Regular Session: June 29, 2009

Mr. Aldrich moved to approve the June 29, 2009 minutes as amended; second by Ms. Gilman.
VOTE: Unanimous.

b. Regular Session: June 22, 2009

Mr. Aldrich moved to approve the June 22, 2009 minutes as amended; second by Mr. Eastman.
VOTE: Unanimous.

c. Regular Session: July 6, 2009

Mr. Aldrich moved to approve the July 6, 2009 minutes as presented; second by Ms. Gilman.
VOTE: Unanimous.

4. Appointments- None.

5. Department Reports: Public Works, Fire, Planning

Public Works- Jennifer Perry, Public Works Director, reported that two vacancies have been filled recently: Stanley Ricker is the new HVAC person and Scott Cook has been named the new Heavy Truck Driver which has created an opening for a part time mechanic position. Ms. Perry reports that she and her department have been busy working on Capital Improvement Plans and solid waste changes and the water line replacement has been started on Summer Street. The Epping Road water tank work is almost complete. Gilman and Stadium wells are being tested and treated and the Lary Lane pilot program is ongoing. Water conservation kits are still available at the Public Works building and each home is allowed one free kit. Plans are being finalized for the Industrial Drive culvert project as well as the Water Street sewer line project. Steve Dalton has received his Grade II Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators License and Steve Tucker and Matt Berube received their Grade I Licenses as well. This year's paving work is complete except for Summer Street. Mr. Campbell noted that pipes that are being replaced on Summer Street are from 1877.

Fire Department- Brian Comeau, Fire Chief, reported that on July 10 Jason Greene was promoted to Lieutenant. Chief Comeau said that the 2009 budget is 47% spent as of July, which is excellent news and that the overtime accounts are under budget by about \$20,000 thus far in the year. Chief Comeau reported that the Fire Department has applied for three grants that they are waiting to hear about: 1) \$250,000 to replace air packs, 2) \$900,000 for replacement of the current ladder truck, and 3) \$2.5 million in stimulus funds for construction of Station 2. Chief Comeau also noted that the ladder truck is

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in Massachusetts for inspection for a few days, so Exeter will have coverage from surrounding towns in case a need for the ladder truck arises.

Planning Department- Sylvia von Aulock, Town Planner, reported that her work is ongoing with the Planning Board and the Zoning Ordinance Review Committee is reviewing chapters regarding natural resources and open space. There will be a multi-board and committee meeting on August 13 to discuss capital projects for 2010-2011 including vehicle and equipment plans and there will also be a televised Power Point presentation regarding capital projects. Ms. Von Aulock continues to work with groups at UNH and Rockingham Planning Commission, as well as a cooperative group with the office of energy and planning which is creating a web based training program for plan reading and analysis. Ms. Von Aulock is also a contributor to the Transportation Committee, the Train Committee and the COAST Bus Board of Directors and the Seacoast Metropolitan Planning Organization technical advisory committee. The Planning Department has a number of ongoing projects such as Exeter Commons, Forest Ridge, the Boulders, Linden Commons, a tennis club on Continental Drive, a project on Ashbrook and the refurbishing of the old Kentucky Fried Chicken.

6. Public Hearing

a. Blue Bag, Recycling fees

Mr. Campbell opened the public hearing and Phyllis Duffy of the Public Works Department presented the proposal to increase the retail prices of the blue bags to \$1 for small bags and \$2 for large bags. Mr. Eastman reviewed some costs from prior years for trash and recycling and asked why recycling cost is figured in with tonnage for garbage. Ms. Duffy stated that the “pay as you throw” program tries to cover as much of the solid waste contract as possible. Ms. Perry stated that 83% of the cost of the solid waste contract will be paid by blue bag sales with the new prices. Mr. Dean pointed out that the cost of the blue bags has increased since the last time the bag prices were adjusted. Gerry Hamel, Little Pine Lane, came forward to say that he was not opposed to the increase in bag prices and he feels that they are still a good deal. Alan Bailey, Green Street, asked if there was income to the town from the recyclables. Ms. Duffy said that the town had never sold the recyclables, it was the haulers that would do that. Our current hauler was able to give a low bid for solid waste disposal because of the money he could make from selling the recyclables, but the market for such recyclables has diminished so even he is not able to sell the recyclables currently. Mr. Bailey inquired about the contract length for the current trash hauler and the cost of distributing blue bags around town. Jay Perkins, Highway Superintendant, said that it takes 2 hours per week to distribute bags and it is done by DPW employees and that as a resident he supports the increased bag prices. Mr. Campbell advised Mr. Bailey that the current contract is for 5 years and we are in the second year. Ms. Duffy also presented the new recycling bin to the Board and reminded them that the new bins would be offered in 65 gallon size as well as 32 gallon and they would also continue to offer blue bins. Mr. Campbell closed the public hearing. Mr. Eastman stated that 2 readings are needed for this item.

b. Property Values Update

Mr. Campbell opened the public hearing for property value updates under RSA 75-8(b). Mr. Dean advised the Board that there is a 15 day waiting period as well as a 60 day wait period once the Board has reached a decision. Mr. Eastman would like assessments to remain the same and would like to see the town’s properties revalued every 5 years. Mr. Campbell closed the public hearing.

7. Discussion/Action Items

a. Review Authorization for Public Health Grant

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Ken Berkenbush, Assistant Fire Chief, advised the Board that there needs to be an amendment made to a prior vote because of a change in the amount as well as a change in the wording of the original motion to accept the funds.

Mr. Eastman moved to rescind the vote taken at the May 11, 2009 meeting of the Board of Selectmen to accept a grant in the amount of \$69,999.60, from the State Department of Health and Human Services to employ a regional public health coordinator to work on health issues in multiple communities. Mr. Quandt seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

Mr. Eastman moved to accept New Hampshire Public Health Services grants funds in the amount of \$70,000.00 and to enter into contract with the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health Services. The Board further authorized the Chairman, Board of Selectmen to execute any documents which may be necessary to effectuate this contract. Mr. Aldrich seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

Mr. Berkenbush also noted that Linda Hartson, Town Clerk, was instrumental in sorting out this problem, even when she was out of the office on sick leave. He would like the Board to know that she was a tremendous help to him.

b. Accept Grange Donation for Curtain at Senior Center

Mr. Dean acknowledged the donation of curtains for the Senior Center.

Mr. Quandt moved to accept the donation of curtains from the grange. Mr. Eastman seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

c. Blue Sign Request: Around the Corner Bed and Breakfast

Rita Russell, 72 High Street, is requesting two blue signs to direct guests to her establishment.

Mr. Aldrich moved to authorize blue signs at the intersection of Portsmouth Ave and High Street as well as a blue sign at the intersection of Hampton Road and Holland Way with additional details to be worked out with Jay Perkins, Highway Superintendent. Mr. Eastman seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

d. Part-time Employee Compensation

Mr. Eastman asked for pay ranges for part time or seasonal employees and would like to have all “regular” part time employees receive a step increase effective July 1, 2009. Mr. Aldrich noted that part time compensation was not overlooked, but there is a lot of work to be done still to determine that they are being fairly compensated. He agrees that they should receive a step but these positions should be reviewed further.

Ms von Aulock addressed the Board to say that half of the Building and Planning Departments are part time and they were not notified that they would not be receiving the anticipated July 1 step increase until June 25. She encouraged the Board to make part time increases retroactive to July 1.

Mr. Aldrich moved to approve step increases for part time employees as outlined in the personnel plan retroactive to July 1, 2009. Mr. Eastman seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

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Mr. Aldrich noted that the Board will continue to to work on the pay plan and views this action for part time employees as an interim solution until the entire pay plan has been reviewed. He notes also that the Board is trying to find a resolution to the entire pay plan by January 1, 2010.

e. Pay Plan

Mr. Campbell stated that the Board has reached an agreement that they wish to proceed with a 14 step pay plan which would be updated for cost of living increases each year and the employees would step through the plan every 2 years with the exception of steps 1, 2 and 3 which are consecutive years. He also noted that the salary ranges were determined with input from Don Tyler. Mr. Aldrich noted that the maximum in the salary ranges were set and then the steps were backed out at a rate of 2.23% per step to the minimum step and that all current compensation is being considered when the employee is being placed on the grid. Mr. Eastman reviewed the cost of implementing the new pay plan as \$66,000 but there is \$75,000 in the budget for this purpose.

Sylvia von Aulock, Town Planner, advised the Board that there are a lot of differences in the Planning and Building Departments as compared to other towns which has led to many issues with compensation. She said that she has been through a few pay plans with the town and she has been categorized as overpaid as well as underpaid depending upon the comparison that is used for her title. She noted that some employees have been upset that newer employees have been hired at steps very much higher than long time employees had been, leading to large gaps in pay for department heads. She would like to keep longevity as it is. Mr. Eastman said that he had done extensive research on the positions in Building and Planning Departments and he is confident with the placements that have been determined.

Don Tyler, a consultant on the pay plan since 2001 appeared and noted that when making comparisons from town to town, there are no mirror images to the Town of Exeter in other towns. Mr. Tyler noted that the new pay plan is market based, which is a different direction than the prior pay plans. He thinks this is a good way to correct salary inequities within the town. Mr. Aldrich does not think that there should be a motion to accept this plan, but all Board members are in agreement.

8. Regular Business

a. A/P and Payroll Manifests

Mr. Aldrich moved to approve the July 8, 2009 payroll warrant in the amount of \$146,668.64. Ms. Gilman seconds. Vote: Unanimous.

Mr. Aldrich moved to disburse Accounts Payable in the amount of \$68,412.32. Mr. Eastman seconds. Vote: Unanimous.

Mr. Aldrich moved to disburse Accounts Payable in the amount of \$150,156.11. Mr. Eastman seconds. Vote: Unanimous.

Mr. Eastman questioned the timeliness of the warrants being put in the Selectman's office and when Munismart would be installed in the Selectmen's office. Mr. Dean noted that the reports that are being provided to the Board are extremely detailed and the warrants are produced as quickly as possible. Mr. Aldrich believed that timeliness would be more important than the amount of detail. Doreen Ravell, Finance Director, reported to the Board that she was out of the office last Friday so she believes that held up the distribution of the warrant. She also noted that she has a limited number of licenses available for the Town. She purchased the licenses based on department heads that were to receive it,

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which has not happened yet. She also said that she is willing to run any report that is requested by the Board as she has done in the past.

b. Tax Abatements and Exemptions

Mr. Aldrich moved to approve the abatement request for Map 75 Lot 17 Unit 21 in the amount of \$1,166.07. Mr. Quandt seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

Mr. Aldrich moved to approve the abatement request for Map 72 Lot 195 in the amount of \$9,596.16. Mr. Quandt seconded. Vote: Unanimous.

c. Water/Sewer Abatements- None.

d. Permits

Exeter Area Chamber of Commerce applied to use the Town Hall on October 24, 2009 for the Fall Festival from 8AM to 4PM

Exeter Public Library applied to use the Town Hall on August 12, 2009 from 11AM to 4PM for the Children's Program.

Womenade of Greater Squamscott applied to use the Town Hall on October 22, 2009 from 3PM to 8PM for a craft fair.

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

e. Town Manager's Report

Mr. Dean thanked the American Independence Museum for putting on the festival last weekend as well as the Parks and Recreation Department and Public Works Department for their help. Mr. Dean thanked the Healy family for allowing his participation in the dedications of the Healy Bridge as well as the renaming of the town pool. The Gilman Park easement water issue is coming to a close as the final details have been worked out and the easement for the lower field at the former high school is also progressing. The Finance Department is working on a survey of department structures in surrounding towns. Work is ongoing for a video for Channel 22 regarding CIP projects and the appointment of Forest Griffin to the RPC has been resolved. The details of the Water Street sewer line project are going well and the Housing Authority is also getting a new roof also. 2010 Budget planning is beginning. One of the capital items is a proposal for HVAC for the Town Office. There will be a joint Board meeting regarding CIP projects on August 13. We have received proposals for the Fleet Study. The Town Office will not be open until 10:15AM tomorrow morning to allow for staff training.

f. Selectmen's Committee Reports

Mr. Aldrich- Conservation Commission met this week to draft a trail plan. There were two site walks, one at the Town Forest regarding a well for Public Works and one Raynes Farm regarding discarded railroad ties. The Conservation Commission signed a memorandum of understanding agreement for land on the Kensington line. There are a few financial issues to work on but they are making progress. The Arts Committee had a presentation by a member that is an author and they are moving ahead with repairs with the help of Kevin Smart from Public Works.

Mr. Quandt- The Cable TV Committee met last week and has delivered the contract proposal to Comcast.

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Mr. Eastman reported that the CIP process is moving along very well.

Ms. Gilman reported that the Heritage Commission met to review the idea of a town wide survey and would like to keep up with changes to older homes and they saw a demonstration of software that could be used to maintain records for properties in the town. The HDC met Thursday. Ms. Gilman attended a seminar at Sandy Point regarding dam removal and she is seeking candidates for nomination for the Local Government Center's volunteer awards.

Mr. Aldrich asked about the audit and the search for Town Counsel. Mr. Dean said that the auditors are coming on August 17 and will try to get an estimate for a date of completion and he is working on the Town Counsel RFP. Mr. Aldrich also asked what percent of July 1 taxes are still outstanding and Mr. Dean will try to get an accurate number for the next meeting.

g. Correspondence

1. Letter from Dept. of Revenue Admin. Re: Use of Form PA-28
2. Letter from Tracey Chasses re: Steven Lee, 7 Alder St. Exeter tax relief request.
3. Letter to Doug Eastman from NH Building Officials re: Conference Scholarship
4. Letter to Bill Campbell from Judith Santin of Folsom Family Association re: Folsom Family Reunion.
5. LGC Municipal volunteers Awards nomination mailing.
6. Thank you letter from LGC re: Municipal Law Lecture Series.
7. Letter of interest from Sykas Law Office to serve as Town Counsel.
8. Letter from Bob Hall of the Train Committee re: dog ban at train station.
9. Memo from Jay Perkins re: Simpson property cleanup.
10. Letter from Mike Favreau re: offer from Grange #1 to buy curtains for Senior Center.
11. Letter from NHRS re: revised contribution rates.
12. Letter from RPC re: Exeter Technical Advisory Committee member.
13. Letter from RPC re: Forest Griffin's status.
14. Copy of letter to Thomas Burack of the NH DES re: water quality.
15. Letter from NH DES re: complaint at 190 Court St.
16. Letter from NH DES to Phillips Exeter Academy re: reaffirmed decision of permit #208-00233
17. Letter to Robert Talon and Doug Deporter of the NH DES from Guy Kayton and Margaret Anne Duncan re: driveway permit on Brentwood Road.
18. Copy of letter to Jeffrey Gallant from NH DES re: 50 Brentwood Road Wetlands Compliance.
19. Letter from NH Association of Counties, LGC and NHSBA re: State retirement contributions.
20. Letter from David Richardson, 44 Hayes Park, re: Fireworks and cannon noise.
21. Thank you note from Tom Estes.
22. Letter from David Flagg re: Pete Datillo.
23. Letter from NH DES re: Don Clement appointment.
24. Letter from NH Housing Authority re: Federal housing tax credits for Meeting Place III.
25. Letter to Alan Bailey from Jennifer Perry re: water pressure questions from Mr. Bailey.

9. Public Comment

Alan Bailey, Green Street, commended Jay Perkins for his help with paving concerns. He inquired about the cost of the Summer Street project and Mr. Dean advised him that the cost is under \$25,000 in materials. He is also concerned about water pressure issues and asked if there is a strategy to alleviate increased water pressure. Public Works Director Jennifer Perry reiterated the information that pressure fluctuations will happen in all systems and that residents must ensure that the relief valves in their

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homes are in good working condition to ensure that the pressure changes do not have adverse effects in their homes. The new water tower increased pressure by 13 pounds per inch, which is not excessive.

10. Non Public Session

Mr. Aldrich motioned to move the Board into the Non Public Session under RSA 91: a (3) (2a) employee compensation at; Ms. Gilman seconded. Mr. Aldrich called the roll.

Ms. Gilman – aye, Mr. Eastman- aye, Mr. Campbell – aye, Mr. Quandt – aye, and Mr. Aldrich – aye.

11. Adjournment

The Board emerged from non public session and Mr. Eastman motioned to adjourn at 11:35pm; Mr. Quandt seconded. VOTE: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Geis
Recording Secretary