

SELECTMEN'S WORKSHOP
Minutes of 05/31/06
5:00 p.m.

Selectmen:

Peter Miller, Chairman
Peter Brothers
(Absent with Notice) Miller Lovett
Frank Michel
Colette Worsman

Town Manager:
Recording Clerk:

Carol Granfield
Karin Landry

Roll Call at 5:10 p.m. Open Workshop by Peter Miller, Chairman

Invited Guests: James Commerford, Assessing; Bob Hill, Water & Sewer; John Edgar and Bill Edney, Planning & Zoning

W 06-22 Minutes Approval

Peter Brothers motioned to accept the minutes of the 05/15/06 Selectmen's meeting as presented.

Chair Miller seconded the motion with a change to the wording of the first sentence on page 6 from ". . . cost being borne by the taxpayer" to ". . . cost being borne by the ratepayer". 4-0-0. Motion passed.

W 06-23 Health/Dental

A Health and Dental Insurance Committee Charge was placed on the Agenda by Chair Miller. Upon clarification by Carol Granfield that a motion is not required in order to open discussion on an Agenda item, dialogue ensued. Frank Michel stated that he does not recall dialogue as to whether the Committee should be formed. Chair Miller explained that he placed the item on the Agenda with the intent of moving forward in an attempt to find options that will preserve staff benefits at an acceptable level without significant increases in cost. Discussion ensued as to the proposed composition of the Committee and how its findings will collaborate with the budgetary year. Peter Brothers suggested utilizing the Town Manager and Staff to explore options as opposed to a Committee. Chair Miller supported the Committee saying that its formation is an acknowledgment of the challenge of affordable health insurance and the nuances of financing it. Discussion ensued regarding the composition of the Committee. It was agreed that it should be composed of seven members to include the Town Manager, Director of Administrative Services, a department head, two employees that are not department heads and two Selectmen. Selectmen Brothers and Worsman volunteered to serve on the Committee.

Chair Miller motioned to create a Committee in order to research dental and health insurance for the Town of Meredith employees. Seconded by Colette Worsman. 4-0-0. Motion passed.

Chair Miller presented the Committee Charge. Peter Brothers suggested a change in the wording of the last paragraph from “. . . proposals which preserve critical staff benefits for significantly less cost than the current plans.” to “. . . proposals which preserve critical staff benefits with emphasis on cost control measures.”

Chair Miller motioned to adopt the Health and Dental Insurance Committee Charge as follows:

To research the full range of group health and dental insurance plans available in New Hampshire, and their comparative costs.

To research the many creative and flexible ways NH public, private non-profit, and private-for-profit employers try to control health and dental insurance cost increases.

On or before September 26th, 2006, to present to the Board of Selectmen several health and dental insurance proposals which preserve critical staff benefits with emphasis on cost control measures.

Seconded by Colette Worsman. 4-0-0. Motion passed

W 06-24 Village Pathway Committee Composition

Chair Miller stated that the Board is not prepared to move forward with the Village Pathway Committee composition at this time.

On motion by Chair Miller, seconded by Frank Michel, the composition of the Village Pathway Committee was tabled. 4-0-0. Motion passed.

W 06-25 Review of Departmental Goals and Project Master List

ASSESSING

Assessor Jim Commerford presented an overview of the goals of the Assessing Department:

- See the first full Revaluation since 1987 through to a successful completion.
- Maintain assessment equity in the years following the Revaluation by updating assessments where and when needed.
- Maintain the integrity of the physical data by implementing a rolling re-inspection program. This is a program to annually re-inspect 20% of the improved properties so that all properties are visited during a 5-year cycle.
- To successfully meet Department of Revenue Administration certification requirements for 2008.

- And most importantly, to provide a high level of service to the property owners of Meredith.

Jim Commerford noted that the revaluation took precedence over the rolling re-inspection. The re-inspection will determine data changes only, it will not be based on market values. The properties will be chosen randomly for re-inspection within a specified area. He added that the annual adjustments will prevent the necessity of a costly revaluation. In response to an inquiry by Frank Michel, Assessor Commerford stated that he is comfortable with what the Department has accomplished and feels well positioned to meet the challenges of the ensuing year. He went on to present additional departmental goals as follows:

- Review of all properties receiving charitable, religious and educational exemptions.
- Complete all current and unfinished work for first billing of 2007.
- Remove all social security numbers and serial numbers from exemption documents (process started).
- Board meeting with GIS technician on mapping needs.
- Fill out 2006 equalization survey online.
- Continue organization of file area (thanked Public Works for their assistance in this project).
- Provide data and assessing information to department heads.
- Provide high level of service to taxpayers of Meredith.
- Include the current use update that was just completed on the Project List.

Chair Miller requested that the additional goals be translated to the Project List.

WATER & SEWER

Superintendent Bob Hill presented 2006 project updates and an overview of the goals of the Water and Sewer Department that include:

- Waukewan Avenue, High Street, Stevens Avenue, Red Gate Lane Water Main Replacement and Road Reconstruction
- Water System Treatment and Storage Expansion
- Water Ordinance and New Rate Charges
- Calcium Hypo-Chlorite for Disinfection
- Additional Required Tasks of Staff
- Cygnet Shores Wastewater Pumping Station
- Wastewater Evaluation Study

Bob Hill discussed the future staffing needs of the department. He indicated he would be requesting the addition of 2 full time employees in the 2007 budget in order to accomplish the goals of the department.

Superintendent Hill presented the package that will be distributed by the Waukewan Watershed Advisory Committee for the Septic Disposal System Sanitary Survey. It will be utilized in

identifying the types of individual septic disposal systems around Lake Waukegan. The survey will assist in assessing current infrastructure and planning for community needs and future expansion.

(See Addendum I for details of Water & Sewer Department projects and goals)

PLANNING & ZONING

Town Planner John Edgar began with a history of the Planning Department highlighting the milestones in the development of the Board including the creation of the position of Town Planner in 1988 when the Planner replaced the Town Engineer. He set forth the current staffing of the Department and commented on the high level of experience in critical positions. He went on to outline the major department functions and a review of the growth and development in the Town.

John Edgar presented the departmental goals and ongoing projects.

2006-2007 Departmental Goals:

- Look for ways to improve or adjust the Planning Board development review process in light of existing staffing, existing workload and customer service objectives.
- Provide continued staff support to many ongoing, volunteer initiatives including PB, ZBA, CIP, WAC, PAC, etc.
- Present a significant portion or portions of the zoning re-write for voter consideration in March '07.
- Bring GIS user-capability into the Planning and Zoning Department
- Begin development of a build-out analytical tool (GIS)
- Develop road and driveway standards collaboratively with the Fire Department, Department of Public Works, the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen
- Review/adjust Site Plan and Subdivision Application Fees
- Evaluate existing staffing levels and organizational structure in the context of overall community goals, with recommendations for 2007 budget cycle as appropriate

2006 Major On-going Projects:

- a. Natural Resource Inventory Phase II (Conservation Commission)
- b. Parade Road/Rt. 3 Roundabout (Executive)
- c. Route 3/25 Transportation Planning Study (Executive)
- d. Route 104 Corridor Study (Executive)
- e. Waukegan Watershed Approach Pilot Grant
- f. Zoning Ordinance Re-write
- g. Winnepesaukee Watershed Study

Bill Edney presented a comparison of the revenue generated by building permits for the first quarter of 2005 to the first quarter of 2006. The new building permit schedule went into effect in January of 2006 and generated \$52,094. This is a 214% increase over the first four months of

2005. He pointed out that the fees have generated a significant amount of revenue that can assist in bringing on additional staff in the future. John Edgar went on to outline the demands on the staff of the Department including the challenge of addressing long-term planning issues at the current staffing level.

Chair Miller requested that John update the Project Master List so that it serves as a useful tool.

Chair Miller motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m. Seconded by Frank Michel. 4-0-0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted:

Carol M. Granfield, Town Manager

Peter N. Miller, Chairman

Karin Landry, Recording Clerk

Peter F. Brothers

Miller C. Lovett (*Absent with Notice*)

Frank S. Michel

Colette Worsman

Addendum I - Water & Sewer Department:

TOWN OF MEREDITH
MEREDITH WATER AND SEWER DEPARTMENTS
41 MAIN STREET
MEREDITH, NH 03253
TEL. 279-3046 FAX 279-5356
merwater@metrocast.net

**CYGNET SHORES WASTEWATER PUMPING STATION**

The Cygnet Shores wastewater pumping station is on schedule and reconstruction is to start in September of 2006. A 90 %completed set of project plans is currently at New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services for a final review. A July 14 date has been set for signing of contracts with a perspective bidder. This date allows the chosen contractor to start purchasing pumps and control for the renovation, which may have a 6 – 8 week, lead-time.

Over the last four years \$50,000.00 was set-aside in an ETF for this project. The anticipated cost for the renovation is between \$200,000.00 and \$230,000.00. This project is eligible for State aid and therefore should come in at or near expected cost estimates.

The renovation addresses safety issues to staff by eliminating a confined space and climbing down a shaft to access the pumps and gauges. The project also addresses a new building and the capacity of the pumping station to accommodate future wastewater flows from development and expansion.

WASTEWATER EVALUATION STUDY

We have signed a contract with KV Partners to evaluate the condition of the municipal waste water system in Meredith. This two-year project will look at ground infiltration into the sewer system, the collection main failures, sewer manhole conditions, GPS location of sewer manholes, the pump stations relative to conditions and meeting the demands of future growth.

We are also sending out a questionnaire to property owners in Meredith on the West side and East side of Lake Waukevan regarding their septic disposal systems and their comments on connecting to a municipal wastewater collection system if it was available. Along with the questionnaire is an educational page with do's and don't regarding septic systems. This educational insert is in partnership with the Waukevan Watershed Advisory Committee to protect and keep Lake Waukevan as pristine as possible.

WATER SYSTEM TREATMENT AND STORAGE EXPANSION

The SEA report has addressed the requirements and locations available for the water treatment plant expansion and possible locations for the additional water storage tank.

It is estimated, as you saw in the presentation May 15 that the time when average demand meets or exceeds treatment plant output capability may be between the years 2010 – 2014.

The property behind the existing water treatment facility is still being discussed as the site necessary for the water treatment expansion.

Several properties have been discussed as the ideal locations for an additional water storage tank location. The size of the tank has not yet been determined. As we move forward and take a closer look at the need we can determine the actual size and dimensions.

WATER ORDINANCE AND NEW RATE CHARGES

The new water ordinance and water rate charges were adopted in February 2006 and an informational presentation was given on May 15, 2006. We are optimistic that the new rate charges will bring in the needed revenue for the water system and assist in the conservation of water by the public.

CALCIUM HYPO-CHLORITE FOR DISINFECTION

This type of disinfection replaced the liquid chlorine system that was in place since 1988. The new system which uses tablets is safer to use, safer and easier to store, and does not degrade in strength over several months like liquid chlorine does. We are pleased with the results of the new system and the fact that we are able to reduce sodium into the domestic water supply and thereby reduce sodium intake and introduce calcium that appears to be beneficial for bone density.

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED TASKS OF STAFF

Two employees, Lee Bavis and Chuck Wade, have completed the AWWA course and have received their licenses to inspect and perform backflow device testing on approximately 250 devices connected to the water system via services.

The testing of these devices is required by Local, State, and Federal laws in order to safe guard the municipal water system from backflow contamination that could arise from a water connection. The devices, depending on severity of the potential contamination, are required to be tested annually or semiannually. Outside contractors are presently charging \$50.00 - \$60.00 per test, which would be passed on to the customer through the water billings. It calculates to an additional cost to the Town at about \$15,000.00, which is passed to the customers who have the devices. With staff doing the backflow testing I anticipate revenue of \$10,000.00 coming in as well as protecting of the municipal water system from backflow contamination.

This will however put an additional strain on staff that is already short handed and will be required to do additional tasks this year.

Some additional tasks in the water department operations include:

The meter replacement and upgrade to radio reading program. There are currently 288 meters that have been converted and 693 meters that still need to be replaced and converted. I anticipate that we will be able to install an additional 50 – 70 meters by the end of this year.

Another new task this year is the leak detection program where staff listens to the water mains, gates, and hydrants and attempts to locate any leaks in the system. Should any leaks be detected they are to be excavated and repaired. This will tighten up the water distribution system in regards to leaks and the wasting of treated water, which ultimately saves money because of less pumping running times and filter runs, as well as delaying new expansion construction. SEA Engineering had estimated that 13,500,000 gallons were lost through the blow offs and through leaks. As you are aware the closing and reduction of using the blow offs has dramatically saved water that was previously wasted. Further leak detection will locate any leaks in the system and allow us to further maintain the system as well as locate leaks while they are still in the “small” stages and more easily repaired with out emergency interruption of services to our customer.

I am planning on changing staff duties to require at least one water operator to stay in the water treatment facility to operate, maintain, and optimize the performance of the water filtration system. This is not to be a full time position yet, but will be addressed as such in the future. I expect 15-20 hours a week will need to be devoted to this. Staffing the treatment facility will provide the level of quality that should be given to the system and save on chemical, electrical, and operational costs, as well as being able to better meet the O & M demands of the filtration system that is now eighteen years old.

WAUKEWAN AVENUE, HIGH STREET, STEVENS AVENUE, AND RED GATE LANE WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT

The replacement of the municipal water mains on these streets is scheduled for construction in 2007. This is a bundled project in cooperation with Public Works, with their portion of the project to include drainage, sidewalks and road reconstruction.

It was anticipated that the High Street and Waukewan Avenue project was to be constructed in 2005, however after advertising the project out, only one bid was received and was double the engineering cost estimate. The bid came in at approximately \$1,100,000.00 with the engineering estimating a \$550,000.00 project. The bid was rejected and the Town looked at the project and concluded on why only one bid was submitted and why it was extremely high. The project is a relatively small project with very tight and difficult working conditions. The road is narrow and there is a large amount of ledge in the road with older houses on the two streets that are built directly on the ledge.

The decision of the CIP committee and Board of Selectmen was to bundle the Waukewan / High Street Project with other high priority project of similar nature. This would attract larger contracting firms and allow the Town to complete several projects at a practical price. The other

projects that were combined into this project are the Stevens Avenue and Oak Street Water Main Replacement with road and sidewalk reconstruction, and the Red Gate Lane Water Main Replacement and a section of Water Street from Main Street to Red Gate Lane, again with road, drainage, and sidewalk reconstruction.

The Stevens Avenue area was surveyed in 2005 and the Red Gate Lane survey is nearly completed. An engineering firm shall be chosen within several weeks to do the engineering on these streets. It is scheduled that the projects will go out to bid in 2007 after the Town Meeting with construction starting shortly thereafter.

It is anticipated that there will be State and Federal money available for low interest loans and grants.

Submitted: Robert Hill, Superintendent
May 25, 2006