

Board of Selectmen's Meeting

Minutes of June 5, 2006

Selectmen:

Peter N. Miller, Chairman
Peter F. Brothers
(Absent with Notice) Miller C. Lovett
Frank S. Michel
Colette Worsman

Town Manager:

Carol M. Granfield

Recording Clerk:

Karin Landry

Call to Order: Chairman Miller called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- **Tax Bills.** The tax bills were mailed on May 31 and are due July 1. The bill does not represent the results of the 2006 revaluation. They will be reflected in the fall tax bill. There will be an informational meeting on June 19 regarding the results of the revaluation. Letters pertaining to the revaluation will be mailed to taxpayers in early July.
- **Community Center.** A dedication ceremony was held for the Community Center and Jack's Place playground on June 3. Carol Granfield expressed appreciation to Vint Choinere, the Community Center Committee, and Parks and Recreation staff for making this a positive event.
- **Economic Development.** Carol Granfield reported on the a number of new businesses that have opened in Meredith over the past couple months including Pizza Factory, Whole Lotta Candy & Nuts, Butterflies & Bullfrogs, Abondantes' Grotto, Personal Days Skin Care, Bella Beads, Whole Heart Healing Arts, American Home Mortgage, Lavender Blue, Accurate Title and Acme Choppers. Additionally, there are ongoing home and subdivision developments at various stages.
- **Police Station.** Construction on the new station began today. The regular meetings of the Committee have begun and the Board and departments will be kept informed of the progress. Discussions regarding a new location for the snow dump are taking place and the results will be presented to the Board at an upcoming meeting. The official groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled for Monday, June 12 at 3:30 p.m.
- **Health/Dental Insurance Committee.** Have solicited employees and department heads for volunteers to serve on the committee. A list will be compiled and presented to the selectmen for action at the June 12 workshop meeting.

- **Other Items.**

- Motorcycle Week. Held meeting to discuss concerns regarding motorcycle week including traffic and pedestrian flow and noise levels. The state will hold an informative meeting on June 12 regarding the use of decibel meters. The Police Department will automatically issue tickets to those without bafflers. The Town will use reader signs at Parade Road and 104 and Pease to help alleviate traffic congestion. Traffic flow will be evaluated to determine future use of the signs.
- Cable Show. We are planning to film a tour of the Historical Society this week, followed by a tour of the library. Suggestions for other services or providers that would like to be highlighted and welcome.
- Carol updated the Board on the status of monitoring crosswalks at Dover and Lake Street. The funds are available in the police department budget and are hiring individuals to monitor the crosswalks at peak times.

Town Manager Granfield responded to a question regarding how soon a vendor can raise a tent prior to motorcycle week. The timeframe is covered under the special use permit and she will review it for limits.

In response to questions regarding the new assessed values, Carol explained that the Town will hold an informational meeting on June 19 that will include an overview of the revaluation. The meeting will aid in informing the public so they will have a better understanding of the revaluation process prior to receiving their property values. Once the letters are sent out, the information will be available on line and hearings will be scheduled for any property owners with concerns regarding their assessed value.

VISITOR'S AND RESIDENT'S COMMENTS:

- Dave Sticht expressed a concern about the orange steeple at the church on Route 3 currently being used by the Department of Public Works. Carol Granfield noted that she has received both positive and negative comments regarding the steeple.
- Pat Mack asked about the funding of the postcards that were mailed regarding the proposed dog park. She is not in support of the park and does not want to see any Town funds spent on it. After discussion, it was decided that if Town funds were used for any costs associated with the mailing of the postcards, it should be reimbursed from donations for the park.
- George Serrano expressed his desire to have a Board liaison to the Financial Advisory Committee of the School Board. Ex-Selectman Flanders attended past meetings as a matter of personal interest. Mr. Serrano urged the Board to establish the practice of having a Board member in attendance during discussions prior to a plan being adopted and brought before the taxpayers.

SELECMEN COMMENTS:

The Selectmen recently toured various Town departments. The tours served as an orientation for new members as well as a useful tool when processing the business that comes before the Board. Chair Miller would like to conduct an on-site tour of the Town's recreational trails this fall. If feasible, it will be filmed for airing on the cable show.

Colette Worsman informed that she has been selected as the Meredith representative to the Ahern State Park Advisory Committee. They will look at various issues facing the Park.

The Selectmen commented that they have received both positive and negative comments about the bridge to the community center and clarified that no funds should be expended without coming before the Board and the public.

OLD BUSINESS:**06-16 Fire Station Charge**

Chair Miller opened with a brief overview of the development of a committee and a committee charge, stating that there is \$204,379 allocated in the budget to cover costs associated with preliminary work including engineering and architectural fees. He then read the Charge:

**Fire Station Building Advisory Committee
Charge**

The Board of Selectmen hereby adopts the following Charge:

1. Select a Chair and Vice Chair to guide the committee; staff assistance will be available for the keeping of minutes due to the fact that these are public meetings.
2. Review the concept plans as developed by the Fire Department Internal Committee so as to get an appreciation of both the existing and future/anticipated needs of the Fire Department. Such concept plans have projected future needs for a 25-year time horizon.
3. Interview and recommend an Architectural Firm, whose function will be to work with the Committee in designing a Downtown Fire Station, including ideas incorporated in the aforementioned conceptual plans, if applicable, to the point where engineering plans can be developed for costing purposes.
4. Meet as a committee with the selected architectural firm for the purpose of receiving input as to suggestions for the proposed station, including refining the Department's conceptual plans; where applicable.
5. Visit other fire stations to assist with decisions necessary for inclusion in the final architectural/engineer plans.

6. Prepare and present to the Board of Selectmen a recommendation report, including supporting documents.
7. Develop a program for informing the public as to the ultimate decision of the Board of Selectmen and how the proposed Fire Station is anticipated to meet the future needs of the Department and will be in the best interest to the residents of Meredith.
8. The responsibilities of the committee shall conclude with their presentation of the applicable warrant article(s) at the 2008 Town Meeting.

Chief Palm presented the Board and public with a history of the Department culminating in its current and projected needs. Meredith has experienced a significant increase in commercial and residential development and the Department had a 30% increase in call volume over the past two years. The growth has created the necessity for expansion of the apparatus fleet and a station that will accommodate it, as well as living space for a full time Department when the need arises. An internal committee has looked at potential new sites for the station as well as renovating the existing site. The Chief talked about the advantages of renovations at the current site, including insurance ratings and conducting the operations of the Department with minimum interruptions. He detailed plans formulated by the internal committee for renovations to the existing station and the verbal commitment he received from the Department of Transportation to install a working traffic signal in front of the station. In closing, the Chief expressed the importance of planning for the future and complimented the Department on their response times and professionalism.

Chair Miller solicited public comment:

At the request of Bob Flanders, Chair Miller read Selectmen Lovett's letter regarding the Fire Station Charge for the record. **(See Addendum hereto)**



Miller Lovett Letter

Mr. Flanders complimented the Chief on his presentation and the Department on their professionalism. He questioned where the Department would find the space required to build a new station, commenting that they must stay very close to the present location to retain insurance ratings. He encouraged the Board to move forward in establishing the Committee.

Dave Sticht commented on the procedural issue of forming a committee before establishing a charge.

Selectmen Brothers also complimented the Chief on his presentation and believes it is time to move forward and create a committee.

Dave Sticht expressed concerns with the wording of the Charge (# 8) as the Committee might not be prepared to present a warrant article at the 2008 Town meeting.

Chair Miller polled the Board on where they stand on the formation of a committee and dialogue ensued regarding the formation of the committee and the Charge. Peter Brothers suggested wording to include a timeframe on the process and the expenditure of funds. Colette Worsman expressed concerns with the committee spending money on architectural and engineering fees and suggested deleting #3 from the Charge. At the suggestion of Chair Miller, Carol Granfield presented an option to #4 to the Charge that reads: "Meet as a committee with the selected architectural firm for the purpose of receiving input as to suggestions for the proposed station, including refining the Department's conceptual plans; site location, if deemed necessary; and building amenities to enhance the volunteer firefighter needs. Frank Michel clarified that committees do not have authorization to expend funds without first bringing the expenditure before the Board. He also noted that the voters have allowed the Board to approve and expend funds for the fire station on several occasions. Peter Brothers would like the wording of #8 to be changed to direct the committee to present their recommendations to the Board by October of 2007. It was the general agreement of the Board that a committee should be formed and a charge set forth.

Frank Michel motioned that the Board sanction a fire station building advisory committee with the charge that was presented incorporating paragraphs #1 through #3, #4 being substituted with Carol Granfield's #4 in her memo to the Board, previously read into record, #5 through #7 as presented and #8 modified to read: "The responsibilities of the committee shall conclude with the presentation of their recommendations to the Board of Selectmen by October of 2007." Seconded by Peter Brothers. 3-1-0. Motion passed.

04 – 41 Department of Transportation (DOT) Information Session on "Roundabout" at Parade Road

Nancy Mayville, DOT Engineer and Project Manager, began the information session with a description of the project to improve the safety and operation of the US 3/106 intersection. The purpose of the information session is to give an update on the status and scheduling of the project and get feedback on the landscaping. She pointed out that the project is not intended to solve the greater traffic problems of the US 3 corridor. Construction is scheduled to begin as early as October of 2006 with the majority of the construction being done in 2007. The final landscaping and pavement will be completed in spring of 2008. At the request of the Town, the Department designed an appropriate landscaping plan.

Toby Reynolds, Team Leader, presented an engineering plan detailing the existing intersection together with the proposed changes. He highlighted the major improvements along the corridor including right and left hand turn lanes, pedestrian crossings and the roundabout in lieu of traffic signals. He explained that the roundabout is designed to slow down the traffic and at the same time keep it moving. The project will include utility relocations and additional lighting at the roundabout. Mr. Reynolds presented a proposed landscaping design that includes a variety of daylilies in the center of the roundabout, white pines for screening, rhododendrons and beds that will include lilacs, witch hazel, forsythia, black hog, viburnum, and Japanese lilac trees. A large area between 3 Mile Point and Upper Ladd Hill will include many of the same plants together with sugar maples and cranberry trees. He explained that the varieties were chosen for

low maintenance and salt tolerance. Traffic patterns will be analyzed throughout the project and the State will work to find a balance between getting the work done and not impacting the flow of traffic.

The construction will take place in three phases:

1. Spring 2007. (52 working days) Contractor will widen US 3 on the east side of existing roadway. Traffic will be maintained on the existing section of US 3. Much of the work outside US 3 in the area of the roundabout will be constructed. The Parade Road approach will be constructed while traffic is maintained on existing Parade Rd. There will be access to all commercial and residential properties during this phase of construction.
2. Approximate date: end of June – end of October. Traffic will utilize newly widened section of US 3 and the existing US 3 will be reconstructed. The roundabout will not be sufficiently constructed to support the circulating traffic so there will be alternating one way traffic on the Parade Road approach. The access road to the roundabout will be constructed where the old 106 is. The contractor will maintain two-way traffic as much as possible. Alternating one-way traffic will be necessary for short lengths of time on a short term basis.
3. Completion of landscaping and final pavement.

Mr. Reynolds concluded his presentation with restrictions that will be placed on construction hours and alternating one way traffic on weekends, major holidays and motorcycle week. There will be no work after 2 p.m. on Fridays during May, June, September and October and no work in the roadway on Fridays during July and August.

The Board expressed concerns with the monitoring of traffic and condition of the roads during construction. Mr. Reynolds informed them that there will be a construction manager on site at all times who will monitor the traffic flow. There will be limitations on the use of gravel surfaces and repaving will take place quickly. The commercial and residential property owners expressed concerns with the visibility of their properties as well as access during and upon completion of the construction. It is the shared desire of the Town and property owners to make an attractive entrance to the Town keeping commercial visibility in mind. The State indicated that it is willing to work with the Town to make changes to the current landscaping plans. Concerns were expressed regarding the upkeep of the landscaping and maintenance of the roads once the construction is completed. Town Manager Carol Granfield brought the informational session to a close, indicating that the Town will follow through on the comments of the property owners in an attempt to reach a positive resolution for everyone involved.

Chair Miller motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Seconded by Frank Michel. 4-0-0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol M. Granfield, Town Manager

Karin Landry, Recording Clerk

Peter N. Miller, Chairman

Peter F. Brothers

(Absent with Notice)

Miller C. Lovett

Frank S. Michel

Colette Worsman