

Board of Selectmen Meeting
Minutes of May 7, 2007

Selectmen:

Frank Michel, Chairman
Peter Brothers, Vice Chairman
Bob Flanders
Miller Lovett
Colette Worsman

Town Manager:
Recording Clerk:

Carol M. Granfield
Karin Landry

Call to Order: Chairman Michel called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

The Chair introduced the Board, Town Manager and Recording Clerk and made announcements regarding the use of microphones.

ACCEPTANCE AND/OR CORRECTION OF MINUTES:

07-20 Regular Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes of 04/09/07; the Non-Public Meeting Minutes of 04/09/07; and the Regular Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes of 04/16/07.

Selectman Flanders moved that the Board accept the minutes of the three meetings as presented. Seconded by Colette Worsman.

Peter Brothers asked that the minutes of the April 9 Non-Public meeting be amended to reflect that he was absent with notice.

3-0-0-0. Motion passed.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

- Senator Reynolds will reschedule her meeting with the public sometime after the Senate is through with its session.
- The Management Team departments are going through shadow training sessions to learn what each department is doing. The team building sessions with Primex are going very well.
- The Town Manager purchased a package for Dale Carnegie team training with a value of \$2,500 at an auction last weekend and will be presenting it to the Team.

- Resident John White, who owns a furniture refinishing business in Massachusetts, donated services to refinish two chairs at the police station.
- Effective July 1, the Town will see a 9.8% reduction in their health insurance rates as a result of participation in programs promoting wellness. The original rates were based on a guaranteed maximum rate last November. The reduction in rates will result in a savings of \$46,000 to the Town.
- The Walk New Hampshire Relay promoting health awareness will be held in May. The walk will include a two-mile segment through Meredith on May 15. The Board and town employees are encouraged to participate.
- The Town received a beautification award from the Arborist Association last Friday. At the ceremony, the Governor praised the 12 communities receiving the award noting that external grounds present positive images of internal positive operation.
- Work on the roundabout is proceeding on schedule. The tourist season, weekends and Motorcycle Week are being taken into consideration when scheduling the work. The target date for completion is this September.
- The Cygnet Shores pump station project is being completed this week.
- A meeting will be held tomorrow to discuss the finalization of the police station project including landscaping and a final coat on the parking lot. Carol will report back to the Board with the final cost.
- The cable company is installing fiber optics on Bear Island. Service is scheduled to be available to all those who wish to have cable by the end of summer. Tucker Mountain is the next area scheduled for installation of cable.

In response to questions from the Board regarding the Community Center bridge, the Town Manager told the Board that the Town is waiting for final review from the engineering firm of McFarland Johnson who initially approved the design of this bridge. Bauen Corporation made an attempt to contact McFarland Johnson and is awaiting their response. Final payment will not be made until everything is finalized and approved. Selectmen Flanders noted that the engineer (not McFarland) contracted to build the bridge erred and his insurance is paying to rectify the error.

VISITOR'S AND RESIDENT'S COMMENTS:

None

SELECTMEN COMMENTS (Reports on Committees 2nd meeting each month)

Selectman Flanders told the Board and public that the CORE group, organized in 2001 to combat drug, tobacco and alcohol abuse in youth, will have a “lock in” at the high school from 7:30 p.m. on Friday until 8:30 a.m. on Saturday. The program will feature Rod Krandall, a recovered addict who has received national acclaim for his Race for Recovery program. Anyone interested in chaperoning the event should contact Interlakes High School at 279-6162, ext. 309.

Selectman Lovett sat in on a meeting of the Trustees of the Trust Fund. They completed their report to the state for the last fiscal year. The Trustees discussed the status of various cemetery trust funds, which is a statewide issue.

NEW BUSINESS:**07-26 Abatements.**

Carol Granfield requested that 23 administrative abatements for 2006 in the total amount of \$7,974.45 be approved by the Board. Each request for abatement was thoroughly investigated by Assessor Commerford and he made a recommendation for their approval.

Peter Brothers moved that the Board approve the 23 abatements as presented for 2006 in the total amount of \$7,974.45 as prepared in the Town Manager's memorandum of 4/26/07. Seconded by Bob Flanders.

Selectman Brothers asked that the record reflect that a significant amount of work went into preparing the memorandum and making determinations, and there is clear rationale for the actions recommended.

5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Assessor Commerford told the Board that a total of 250 abatements have been requested for 2006. He recapped the abatement process and answered questions from the Board and public regarding what data is used in establishing value and current market trends. The Assessor's office made approximately 30 home inspections thus far in the abatement process.

07-27 LRGHealthcare Exemption

The Town has been in discussions with LRGHealthcare regarding the tax status of property located at 238 Daniel Webster Highway. LRGHealthcare proposes to pay regular taxes on the taxable portion (\$335,200), together with an additional \$3,000 as a payment in lieu for the tax-exempt portion (\$543,500). The tax on this portion would have been \$5,837.19. The amount will be subject each year to increase/decrease by a percentage equal to the increase/decrease in the municipal, county and state portion of the real estate tax. Assessor Commerford reviewed the data and they meet the guidelines for

the exemption. The Town Manager and Town Assessor recommend approval of a Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) Agreement for the tax-exempt portion of the property. Chair Michel pointed out that this would be a payment by an otherwise totally exempt organization that feels a civic duty to participate in the tax program at a reduced rate.

Bob Flanders moved that the Board of Selectman adopt the following motion: "To authorize the Town Manager to execute the PILOT Agreement, as presented, with LRGHealthcare." Seconded by Peter Brothers. All in favor. 5-0. Motion passed unanimously.

07-28 Fire Station Construction Management

At the April 9, 2007 Board meeting, the Board directed the Town Manager to have the Agreement with Bauen Corporation as Construction Manager reviewed and brought before the Board for final approval. Town counsel and the insurance carrier made modifications to standard verbiage that is not appropriate for Town government. The changes have been agreed to by Bauen Corporation. Preconstruction services are at a guaranteed maximum of \$9,500. The full Agreement is for 4% of the cost (based on \$2 million). If the project is not approved at Town Meeting, pre-construction is the Town's only obligation. The Town Manager recommended moving forth with a motion to direct the signing of the contract.

Bob Flanders motioned to direct the Town Manager to sign the contract with Bauen Corporation, as presented in written form for pre-construction services with a cost of up to \$9,500 and full construction, when approved, with a fee of 4% of the full cost. Seconded by Peter Brothers. All in favor. 5-0. Motion passed.

07-29 Waukewan Bath House

The Town of Meredith passed a Warrant Article to construct a bath house/service building at Waukewan Beach. The building will provide restrooms, a changing area, drinking fountain, outdoor shower, lifeguard work area and beach equipment storage. Modifications to the project were made when the bids exceeded the \$60,000 appropriated for the project. The project is eligible for 2:1 matching grant funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, administered by the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development, contingent upon the appropriation of \$40,000 to be raised by taxation.

Peter Brothers motioned that the Board of Selectmen authorize this project to proceed as outlined with the contract award to DCS Construction as presented. Seconded by Miller Lovett.

Colette Worsman expressed concerns with the amount of in-kind services that will be performed by the Parks & Recreation Department and the Department of Public Works. She believes that the value of the services exceed the amounts set forth by the respective

Departments and is concerned with the Board stretching the authority granted to them at the Town Meeting. Dialogue ensued regarding deletions from the bid including the replacement of cement fiber board with vinyl siding and the deletion of the foundation waterproofing system. Brenda Vintner told the Board that the value of the in-kind services was included in the application for the grant and that those services are a requirement for some grants. Miller Lovett thinks that the Board has substantially complied with the Warrant Article and that this raises the question of to what degree the Board should exercise their discretion when this sort of problem arises. The people voted for the project and the figures were estimates at the time. Resident Pat Mack is opposed to using Town employees to an additional extent in order to reduce the total project cost. She asked the Board to consider replacing the existing porta-johns with a couple of bathrooms.

3-2. (Colette Worsman and Frank Michel dissented). Motion passed.

07-30 Employee Benefit Charge/Appointments

The Health and Dental Insurance Committee very effectively completed its Charge last year. The Board expressed a desire to form a new committee with expanded focus to review the total compensation benefits package. A Charge was created with a deadline of September 10 for presenting information to the Board for budgetary purposes.

Colette Worsman motioned to adopt the Employee Benefits Committee Charge as set forth by the Town Manager. Seconded by Miller Lovett.

Miller Lovett suggested that additional language should be added to the first sentence of the Charge so that it reads: “To research, the Town’s full range of **salary, wage and** benefit packages available to our employees” Dialogue ensued regarding the aggressive nature of the September 10 timeframe. The Town Manager pointed out that the anticipated use of experts will make the target date more realistic and that it can be extended if need be. The Charge was read for the record:

To research, the Town’s full range of salary, wage and benefit packages available to our employees as approved in the Town’s Personnel Policy, to that of adjacent communities as well as comparable private or corporate organizations. The goal of this committee is to ensure alignment of the Town’s employee total compensation benefits package with employers in the area that will continue to attract and retain competent employees to provide Town Services.

This review should include, but is not limited to ages, longevity pay, merit and COLA increases, insurance (health, dental, life and disability), sick and vacation pay, availability of overtime and retirement plans. Updated classification information will be provided by an experienced professional. All positions held by employees exempt and nonexempt should be included in this review.

The results of the Committee findings should be presented to the Board of Selectmen on or before September 10, 2007, so they may be considered in the next budget process.

Colette Worsman motioned that the Board adopt the Employee Benefits Committee Charge as read. Seconded by Miller Lovett.

The Board discussed the Committee appointments. Miller Lovett expressed concerns with forming the Committee before the public has had an opportunity to be informed. He would like to see a larger Committee in order to have more viewpoints presented. Chair Michel would like to see the Committee move forth with high integrity honoring employees and not deflating morale and that the Committee should be comprised of a cross section of individuals that will earnestly participate on a timely basis. Dialogue ensued regarding the makeup of the Committee.

Bob Flanders moved that the Board establish the Employee Benefits Committee comprised of four staff members, one selectman and four members from the public. Seconded by Peter Brothers. All in favor. 5-0. Motion passed unanimously.

The Chair recommended that the Committee be comprised of three employee volunteers: Carol Granfield, Brenda Vittner, Jamie Brunt, and an additional employee volunteer to be determined; one selectman representative: Colette Worsman; and four members of the public. The Town Manager will solicit applications from the five members of the public who are interested in serving on the Committee. The Town Manager is particularly interested in anyone who has a background in Human Resources. The Town Manager was directed to explore the potential cost of seeking professional guidance from the general field of wage, salary and benefit analysis.

Miller Lovett moved that Colette Worsman be the Selectboard's representative to this Committee. Seconded by Bob Flanders. All in favor. 5-0. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board will make the remaining appointments to the Committee at its May 21st meeting.

Bob Flanders moved that the Board adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m. Seconded by Peter Brothers. All in favor. 5-0. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol M. Granfield, Town Manager

Frank S. Michel, Chairman

Karin Landry, Recording Clerk

Peter F. Brothers, Vice-Chairman

Bob Flanders

Miller C. Lovett

Colette Worsman