

Board of Selectmen Meeting
Minutes of May 21, 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 5:35 p.m.

The Chair introduced the Board, Town Manager and Recording Clerk. He made announcements regarding fire exits, listening assisted devices and the use of microphones.

ACCEPTANCE AND/OR CORRECTION OF MINUTES:

07-31 Non-Public Board of Selectmen Minutes of May 7, 2007; Board of Selectmen Workshop Minutes of May 7, 2007; and Regular Board of Selectmen Minutes of May 7, 2007.

Selectman Flanders moved that the Board accept the minutes of the Non-Public Board of Selectmen meeting of May 7, 2007; the Board of Selectmen Workshop Minutes of May 7, 2007; and the Regular Board of Selectmen Minutes of May 7, 2007 as presented.
Seconded by Peter Brothers.

Miller Lovett asked that minutes of the May 7 Workshop minutes be amended to include additional wording on the first page, first paragraph, indicating that he views a Workshop as a “function of the committee of the whole.” He also corrected a spelling error on page 6 of the May 7 Regular Board of Selectmen minutes from “moral” to “morale”.

Bob Flanders moved that the Board amend the motion to exclude the Workshop Minutes until they have had a chance to review them, and to accept the spelling change on the Regular Board of Selectmen minutes. All in favor. 5-0. Motion passed unanimously.

TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT:

- The Board’s next meeting will be on Monday, June 4 at 4 p.m. for a workshop on road standards, followed by a regular meeting at 5:30 p.m.

- The Town received notification from the U.S. Board on Geographical names that they approved the proposal to make official the name of Snow Dragon Mountain for a summit in Meredith at their April 12 meeting. There was another proposal to name the peak Lawrence Peak, but there was not sufficient information to support it.
- The Memorial Day annual parade will leave the American Legion at 9:50 a.m. and arrive at the Library at 10:00 a.m. At 10:15 it will move to Swasey Park for a ceremony, and to the POW MIA location at the Town Docks at 10:15.
- The Town offices will be closed on Monday, May 29 in observance of Memorial Day.
- The Lake Host Program, in conjunction with the New Hampshire Lakes Association, will be checking boats entering Lake Winnepesaukee and Lake Waukegan for milfoil at the Town Docks and Lake Waukegan in an effort to preserve water quality.
- The police station project has been very positive and is nearing completion. Finalization of the landscaping and paving will take place this week. It appears that there will be \$60,000 left in contingency. The Town Manager will report to the Board with the final figures.
- A Bill pertaining to shoreland protection, Act 383, is before the Senate this week. The Shoreland Protection Commission has made their recommendation. They have received comments not to support the bill, particularly from the Building Association. The Town urged Senator Reynolds to support the Bill to protect water quality. The Senator does not know which way she will be voting at this time.
- Retirement Bill 653 will impact costs to the Town by increasing employer costs. Senator Reynolds is in support of the Bill.
- A meeting was held this morning with Town departments and regional entities regarding Bike Week. The signage and reader boards that were used last year to direct and divert traffic worked very well and the Highway Department intends to use them again this year. The Project Manager for the roundabout attended the meeting. The project is way ahead of schedule and will be open for operation during Bike Week. The landscaping will be completed by this fall. The Town has provided information that will welcome people to Meredith and encourages them to enjoy the Town.
- The bundled project is scheduled to begin June 4 at Stevens Avenue. The Water Department sent letters to residents in the area advising them of the construction schedule.

- The Town's IT specialist, Eric Ferland, is working to include the Town Manager's Weekly Message on the website. We will have the ability to automatically send the message to those that request that we do so. This will be done on a trial basis.

VISITOR'S AND RESIDENT'S COMMENTS:

None

SELECTMEN COMMENTS:

Selectman Worsman expressed concerns about consequences if the modified Waukewan bathhouse is not put back out to bid. The Town Manager sent letters to everyone that submitted a proposal indicating that the Town will be working with the low bidder. There is wording on the Request for Proposals that indicates the Town is not obligated to call everyone back or put the project out for proposals if modifications are made. There has been no indication that any of the contractors wish to participate again. Selectman Flanders thinks it would be unethical to work with anyone other than the low bidder who has already spent a lot of time revising the project. Selectman Brothers is comfortable with the decision to work with the low bidder and would like to proceed.

Colette Worsman reported on the Planning Board:

- Meredith Village Savings Bank came before the Planning Board regarding a configuration change to put an attorney's office on Tax Map U07, Lot 109 located on Route 25 in the Central Business District.
- Real Green Lawn Care submitted a proposed site plan to create storage for landscaping material on Tax Map S15, Lot 31.
- Steven Hallett came before the Board with a proposal for a 16-unit multi-family project on Tax Map U03, Lot 44, Westview Dr. off of Mass Ave.
- Land Acquisition LLC proposed a 71-unit multi-family development on Tax Map S17, Lot 2, Upper Ladd Hill, in the Central Business District.
- RADF Realty LLC submitted a proposed site plan amendment to construct a building addition as well as a related site plan, Tax Map S23, Lot 33, Reservoir Rd., in the Business and Industry District. The matter was continued to June 12 and a site walk is scheduled for June 9.

Miller Lovett reported on the Capital Improvements Committee. The Committee is beginning its first series of meetings, with the first meetings scheduled for Wednesday, May 23 and 30, at 7 p.m. They will be held at the Town Hall Annex. The Committee's focus is to look at major capital expenditures and schedule them in order to avoid peaks in the tax rate. The meetings will continue through the summer and are open to the public.

Peter Brothers reported on the Fire Station Building Advisory Committee. As a result of the recent public charette, the architects came up with a couple of design concepts. The Committee took a look at them earlier this month and the architects are polishing the

designs to present to the Committee. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 22 at 6 p.m. at the Town Hall Annex.

Frank Michel reported on the DOT/Rte. 3/25 Project. They are in the process of analyzing information in an attempt to come up with alternatives. He attended a meeting last week and will present a more detailed report once he has had a chance to review the material from the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

07-32 Abatements

Carol Granfield requested that 49 administrative abatements for 2006 be approved by the Board. Each request for abatement was thoroughly investigated by Assessor Commerford and he made a recommendation for their approval. 127 abatements in the approximate amount of \$77,000 have been approved thus far. There were approximately 200 requests for abatement in 2006.

Peter Brothers moved to approve 48 abatements presented for 2006 in the total amount of \$46,895.14. He also moved to approve a single abatement for 2006 in the total amount of \$966.60. Seconded by Colette Worsman. All in favor. 5-0. Motion passed unanimously.

07-33 Special Town Meeting on Proposed Sign Amendments

As a result of increased electronic signs, the Planning Board requested that the Selectmen allow them to take the steps necessary to call a Special Town Meeting in order to amend the sign ordinance. Public hearings will be held on the matter, and the meeting must be held 120 days from the posting of the first hearing. Once a public hearing is posted, it shuts off all applications for signs. It is not necessary to have an emergency to request a Special Town Meeting. The estimated fiscal impact is from \$0 to \$1,000. Dialogue ensued regarding costs associated with holding the meeting, including hand counting the votes as opposed to using automated machines. Chair Michel pointed out that in addition to the out-of-pocket costs, the time and energy of the staff should be considered.

Bob Flanders moved that the Board call a Special Town Meeting, as requested by the Planning Board, for the purpose of voting on certain zoning amendments that the Planning Board expects to ask the voters to approve after one or more public hearings. Further, that the date of the Special Town Meeting be Tuesday, July 31, 2007, and that the balloting take place between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center. Seconded by Colette Worsman.

The Town Manager told the Board that calling the meeting complies with all rules, regulations and statutes.

Selectman Flanders is in support of calling a Special Town Meeting. He pointed out that the Town has been proactive in protecting the Village character. There could be a proliferation of electronic signs between now and the next Town meeting that would have an impact on the character and nature of the community. The City of Concord allowed the practice of displaying time and temperature on electronic signs and the Courts ruled that if they are allowed, all electronic signs must be allowed.

Chair Michel believes the Board needs to determine whether the issue rises to the critical level of warranting a Special Town Meeting.

Selectman Brothers agrees that the Town needs to maintain the direction it is going in, but has difficulty with supporting a Special Town Meeting. He is concerned with the costs involved and setting precedents, and prefers to see the matter brought forth at the March annual meeting.

Selectman Worsman shares concerns about rising to the level of calling a Special Town Meeting, but believes the Board needs to act upon this particular case if they are going to protect the Town. She is in favor of calling the Meeting and would like the Board to support the Town Planners.

Although Selectman Lovett was not sure where he stood on the matter, he believes a Town Meeting should only be called in the most critical of circumstances. He wondered why the matter was not previously dealt with, but believes there might be a proliferation of signs if they wait until the annual meeting to deal with it.

Chair Michel questions whether the matter rises to the level of calling a Special Town Meeting. He was assured by The Town Manager, Town Planner and Town Counsel that calling the meeting is the only way the ordinance can be amended at this time. He pointed out that there hasn't been anything that rose to the level of calling a Special Town Meeting in the years that John Edgar served as Town Planner. This matter can have a profound effect on the future, values, and what they are trying to preserve.

Members of the public spoke in favor of calling the meeting. They expressed a desire to move forward in a timely manner due to advancements in technology and recent court rulings. They expressed concerns with the impact on the image of the Town. Lou Kahn, as a resident and member of the Planning Board, pointed out that the RSA's allow you to call a Special Town Meeting when you think it is appropriate to do so and that it does not have to rise to the level of an emergency. Herb Vadney expressed concerns with the difficulty in limiting the amount of glow emanating from the signs. Resident Peter Miller finds it difficult to accept the issue as rising to the occasion of requiring a Special Town Meeting. He expressed concerns with a modest voter turnout and wonders why the matter did not come before the voters for action at previous Town Meetings. He believes the issue revolves around what a Special Town Meeting is and when it should be called. Resident Jim Hughes hopes that the Board will listen carefully to the recommendations of their Town Planner.

4-1. *(Selectman Brothers opposed). Motioned passed.*

The first public hearing will be held on May 29th. A second hearing will be scheduled if needed. Chair Michel directed the Town Manager to report to the Board with her recommendation as to using a voting machine or hand counting the votes. Any funds expended will come out of contingency.

07-34 Employee Benefit Committee Appointments

The Board met in a non-public session to select four employees to be appointed to the Employee Benefit Committee. They are Jamie Brunt, Carol Granfield, Paul Ristaino and Brenda Vittner. As a result of requesting interested members of the public, the following members of the public were appointed to the Committee: Robert Ambrose, Dean Eastman, James Hughes and Chuck Lowth. A Charge has been adopted and the Committee will assemble to appoint a Chairman and go forth with business pursuant to the Charge.

07-35 Zoning Board Appointment

The Town Manager solicited volunteers to serve as an alternate on the Zoning Board. Warren Clark, who has attended Zoning Board meetings, submitted an application for consideration. The Chair of the Zoning Board and the Town Manager recommend his appointment as an alternate.

Colette Worsman motioned that the Board appoint Warren Clark as an alternate to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Seconded by Miller Lovett. All in favor. 5-0. Motion passed unanimously.

Barbara Smyth of Arbutus Hill Rd. expressed concerns with the impact of investigating wage and employee benefits on the morale of employees. She spoke favorably about various town employees and believes the investigation looks bad for the Town.

Bob Flanders moved that the Board adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m. Seconded by Colette Worsman. All in favor. 5-0. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol M. Granfield, Town Manager

Frank S. Michel, Chairman

Karin Landry, Administrative Assistant

Peter F. Brothers, Vice-Chairman

Bob Flanders

Miller C. Lovett

Colette Worsman