

Board of Selectmen Meeting
Minutes of September 17, 2007

Selectmen:

Frank S. Michel, Chairman
Peter F. Brothers, Vice Chairman
Robert C. Flanders
Miller C. Lovett
Colette Worsman

(Absent with Notice)

Town Manager:
Recording Clerk:

Carol M. Granfield
Karin Landry

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

The Chair made announcements regarding fire exits, listening assisted devices, and the use of microphones. He introduced the Board, Town Manager, and Recording Clerk. He asked that questions and comments be directed through the Chair.

ACCEPTANCE AND/OR CORRECTION OF MINUTES:

07-64 Minutes of September 10, 2007 Non-Public Session

Selectman Flanders moved to approve the minutes of the September 10, 2007 Non-Public Session. Seconded by Selectman Brothers. 4-0-0. Motion passed.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

- The Town has hired a new Fire Chief. From the 25 applications that were submitted, 5 applicants were interviewed by a panel that included fire chiefs, fire personnel, the Town Manager, and a Selectman representative. The panel selected Meredith resident Jim Carrier from two finalists. Mr. Carrier has 25 years of service with the Londonderry Fire Department, and is currently a Captain on that Department. He will be working for the Town just under 40 hours a week as of October 1, and will move to a full-time position after Town Meeting. The Town Manager introduced Mr. Carrier to the Board and public. He made brief remarks about his interest in the Department. He is thankful for the opportunity and will do his best.
- A workshop is scheduled on September 24. Agenda items include Community Center facility fees (carried forth from a previous workshop), an update from the Greater Meredith Program on its activities, and a proposal between the First Congregational Church and the Town of Meredith to expand parking.
- A proposal was solicited from Emery & Garrett Groundwater to seek input regarding the use of groundwater in the event it is needed. A study took place a number of

years ago, but there have been many advances in technology since that time. The first phase of the proposal is being evaluated to determine if using groundwater is an option.

- The Water Ordinance Amendment was finalized at today's workshop and will move forth to public hearing on October 1.

VISITOR'S AND RESIDENT'S COMMENTS

Resident Richard Juve requested that a summary budget be made available to the public at the Board meetings on a regular basis. He did not find one on the table at tonight's meeting.

SELECTMEN COMMENTS

Selectman Lovett reported on the Capital Improvement Committee. The Committee is half-way through their fall deliberations, and will meet next Wednesday at the Town Hall Annex, conference room, at 7 p.m. The public is invited to attend.

NEW BUSINESS

07-65 Village Pathway Committee Appointment

The Village Pathway Committee currently has a position they desire to fill. Mark Donohoe has been attending meetings and wishes to serve on the Committee. His appointment is agreeable to the Chair of the Committee. The Town Manager recommends his appointment.

Selectman Brothers motioned to appoint Mark Donohoe to the Village Pathway Committee as recommended. Seconded by Miller Lovett. 4-0-0. Motion passed.

07-66 Waukewan Watershed Advisory Committee Appointment

The Waukewan Watershed Advisory Committee has a position they desire to fill. Bill Corr attended several meetings and wishes to serve on the Committee. The appointment is agreeable to the Committee Chair. The Town Manager recommends his appointment.

Selectman Flanders moved that Bill Corr be appointed to the Waukewan Watershed Advisory Committee as recommended. Seconded by Miller Lovett.

Chair Michel commented that Mr. Corr is a resident of New Hampton, one of the Towns surrounding Lake Waukewan, and that his appointment will bring diversity of thought to the Committee.

4-0-0. Motion passed.

07-67 Health Officer Nomination

The Town Manager was notified by the State that the term of the current Health Officer, Bill Edney, is expiring. Mr. Edney wishes to continue in that capacity. He serves in the dual role of Code Enforcement and Health Officer. The 3-year term expires at the end of September, and the Town Manager recommends his re-appointment so the necessary paperwork can be processed with the State.

Selectman Flanders moved that the Board appoint Bill Edney as Health Officer. Seconded by Peter Brothers. 4-0-0. Motion passed.

07-68 Disposition of Old Police Station

The Board held workshops on October 30, 2006 and August 13 & 27, 2007 on the disposition of the old police station. The Board must determine whether the Town sells the building or utilizes it for public works administration, buildings and grounds, and the sign shop, in an interim capacity. The Town Manager provided information regarding the costs associated with leasing the Ambrose building, and developed a "net present value" as requested by Selectman Lovett. The painting and cleaning associated with moving into the old police station will cost approximately \$1,000. The loss of revenue by occupying the station on an annual basis is \$4,700. The size of the building is approximately the same as the Ambrose building. The building cannot be expanded beyond its present footprint, which will have an effect on the sale of the building.

Director of Public Works Mike Faller spoke in favor of utilizing the building for the Public Works office staff, Buildings & Grounds, and the sign shop. The space needs committee acknowledged that changes should be made to the highway facility. The sign shop was lost when the new police station was built, and a Buildings & Grounds storage building was lost when Parks & Recreation took over some of the fields.

Resident Keith Forrester found the presentation by the Town Manager to be thorough. The numbers speak for themselves, and the logical decision is to move forward and utilize the old police station.

Resident Peter Miller expressed concerns with the amount of public input during the decision-making process. The workshop format allows for communication among the Board, but does not allow the same opportunity for the public to communicate. He is concerned with opinions of the Board becoming solidified with the minimal public input at a workshop. He does not believe the old police station needs to be retained for the long term. Assuming a public works building and fire station are approved, six departments (library, water, police, fire, public works, and parks & recreation) will have stand alone facilities. The Town Hall and Annex can be revitalized to meet future needs, and he does not anticipate the need for additional space at those locations. He spoke in favor of continuing to lease property for interim needs. The Ambrose offer is very fair,

and if the old police station is sold relatively soon at a reasonable price, the money can be applied to the payment of principal on the new police station debt, saving approximately \$10,000 per year. He would like to know if the generator in the old police station could be moved to the Ambrose building. The taxpayers and voters have been exceptionally generous to the Town, approving every major bond issue in recent years. Selling the old police station is a way to thank the taxpayers and voters for their generosity. He would like to see the commercial market tested, and that information considered when making the decision.

Resident Andrew Faller does not think it makes sense to pay rent when the Town has a building that is not being used. There is nothing to stop the Town from selling the building later down the road. He would like to see the building utilized by the highway department.

Dialogue ensued regarding the sale or lease of the Annex. The Board previously looked at that option and quickly decided that there is no economic benefit to leasing the Annex, or the police station.

Selectman Brothers made his conclusion after looking at the numbers. There is about a \$10,000 net cost per year to continue leasing the Ambrose building. The real estate market might affect the sale of the building. Improvements made to the building are well-suited to the public works department, and he thinks it is in the Town's best interest to retain the old police station and move forward with moving the Department of Public Works into the building on an interim basis, reserving the right, once other space needs are met, to look at the option of selling that building or others. He is not in favor of selling or leasing the Town Hall Annex.

Selectman Lovett believes that there has been ample opportunity for public input at the workshops and this Board meeting. Selling the land and building adjacent to the Town Hall would be a major strategic error as it can be used for the expansion of the Town Hall in the future. Applying a net present value to the old police station, which determines how much money would have to be set aside today to pay expenses related to maintaining the old police station or leasing the Ambrose building, the Town realizes a savings of approximately \$60,000 over the next 10 years by utilizing the old police station. He is in favor of utilizing the old police station for the Public Works Department.

Selectman Flanders is in agreement with utilizing the old police station. Selling it at this time makes absolutely no sense.

The Chair believes the property gives the Town options. The building can be sold when the need arises, but now is not the time to do so.

Dialogue ensued regarding taking a vote in the absence of Selectman Worsman. A decision at this meeting allows the Town to notify the owner of the leased property, and gives the Public Works Department the opportunity to prepare for the move as it relates

to their budget. The Board was in general agreement that they are ready to move forward with a vote.

Selectman Flanders moved that the Town retain the old police station for the present and move the highway department to that building. Seconded by Miller Lovett.

Selectman Brothers suggested a motion similar to that recommended in the staff report:

To direct the Town Manager to retain the old police station building to house the Public Works operation, and to provide Ambrose Brothers with proper notification of ending the current lease. Amendment to motion agreed to by Selectmen Flanders and Lovett.

The Town Manager clarified that the Town is not giving up any rights to sell the property, if an acceptable offer is made.

4-0-0. Motion passed.

07-48 Water Capacity Update

The Town Manager set forth the actions taken by the Town to address water system needs since 2003:

- An SEA report was done in 2005 that identified various deficiencies in infrastructure, followed with a water system management plan in 2006, which serves our implementation plan today.
- Set benchmarks for levels of service for the water system.
- Developed management strategy that seeks first to maximize current investment made; and second, to make cost-effective investments to meet the desired level of service when required.
- Aligned capital improvement plan to address identified deficiencies.
- Bundled together \$2M comprehensive infrastructure improvement project currently under construction, which addresses not only deficiencies identified in system evaluation report, but also addresses wastewater, roadway, and sidewalk needs as well. The project will enhance water quality, improve fire protection, vehicle safety, and enhance the downtown area.
- Secured federal and state grant funding of \$1M to secure that effort.
- Completed water rate study and adopted fair and equitable rate structure that is continuing to be evaluated on system.
- Revised Water Ordinance, coming forth to public hearing, to more effectively address the water system capacity issues.
- Developed action plans to manage short-term water shortages.
- Completed water metering replacement program to more accurately account for revenue and reduce operational costs.
- Completing leak detection program.
- Held public education and outreach to further educate community.
- Improve operational performance by reshifting staff in water department.

- Develop water treatment compliance strategy to address upcoming regulatory requirements.
- Actively preparing for future by looking at cost-effective solutions to meet needs.
- Operationally have reduced maximum daily demand by 30% from a high of 934,000 gallons per day in 2001, to 647,000 gallons per day in 2006.
- Accommodated 14% increase in number of water accounts from 2000-2006.
- Effectively dealt with recent water transmission breakdown on Rte. 104. The Town has an aggressive plan to replace the main. It is hoped that the work will be completed by Thanksgiving.

Water & Sewer Department Superintendent, Bob Hill, updated the Board on the water treatment plant operations assessment. An on-site evaluation of the plant by Operations Specialist Dave Langsfeld took place from September 11 to 13. A complete report on his findings and recommendations will be issued by September 19. His key findings included:

- Sequencing of backwash cycles and excessive initiation, rate, and duration of backwash operations were a primary cause in the drops in net water production. Backwash and flush cycles were affected by malfunctioning equipment and initiation setpoints. The equipment has been recalibrated, setpoints adjusted, and replacement equipment ordered. Equipment will be installed within approximately 14 days. Backwash and flush operations are operating more efficiently. On-going monitoring of operations will continue over the next several weeks to further optimize the process.
- The flow to each treatment unit was adjusted to better balance the loading on the respective units and to optimize total water production from the plant. Flow control meters should be placed on each unit to more accurately control flow through the plant. A testing procedure was developed and will be periodically completed to ensure influent flow setpoints are maintained.
- More staff resources should be dedicated to the operation of the water treatment plant on a daily basis.
- The operator interface should be upgraded to make it easier to adjust setpoints and monitor and control the facility.
- Purchase of lab equipment to better monitor process performance.

Based on these recommendations, Mr. Langsfeld is confident that the plant can operate at full capacity.

The recommendations for plant upgrades are: Installation of treatment unit flow control meters, \$40,000; upgrade operator interface, \$10,000; purchase lab equipment, \$8,000.

Additional recommendations may be forthcoming based on a review of the final report from Mr. Langsfeld.

Mr. Hill recommends lifting the water ban on outdoor watering. The plant is meeting current demand operating at 40% capacity. If adjustments are made and the plant is running optimally, it can produce approximately 900,000 gallons per day. Ray Korber of KV Partners recommends that the Declaration issued on June 23, 2007 be kept in place until the proposed amendments to the Water Use Ordinance are in place. Dialogue ensued regarding the Declaration as it applies to proposed developments. Requests for connecting to the system are determined on a case-by-case basis.

Resident Peter Miller requested data regarding the gallons of raw water pumped out of the lake and the number of finished gallons during the last couple weeks of August and the first week of September. He asked if the plant is capable of maintaining optimal output over the next 3-5 years. Ray Korber told Mr. Miller that the Town has done a fantastic job of managing the situation to this point. If they continue to be proactive on demand strategies, particularly with leak detection and the meter replacement program, there is a good chance that from a capacity standpoint the plant will not have to be upgraded for 3 years. Selectman Lovett pointed out that the Town is not going to be able to produce the capacity needed beyond the next 3 years quickly, and should begin planning for the future now. The Town is taking steps to acquire land for the expansion of the plant to meet capacity issues and upcoming regulatory requirements.

Chair Michel directed Bob Hill to meet with Carol Granfield to review questions posed by resident Jim Hughes regarding tanks levels and how much water is usable and not usable.

Resident Herb Vadney believes the water emergency was due to mismanagement on the part of the Town Manager, Selectmen, and Water Department. There was a lack of good operation, decent maintenance, and an understanding of the system and the Town's water needs. He suggests putting money towards a study that will evaluate where the Town needs to be in 10 years as opposed to upgrading the current facility.

Selectman Flanders moved that the Board accept the recommendation on the water Declaration that we retain it as currently constituted until an update to the Water Ordinance is finished; and that the water restriction that is in place be lifted, effective immediately. Seconded by Selectman Lovett.

Selectman Lovett suggested that the motion include:

The public hearing on the update for the Water Ordinance is scheduled for October 1. Seconded by Miller Lovett. 4-0-0. Motion passed.

Resident Richard Roman asked about progress on the investigation of Railroad Ave. The Town Manager told him that the information is still being reviewed. He once again asked the Board to take a serious look at the dam at Mill Falls. Dialogue ensued regarding

monitoring of the dam by the New Hampshire DES, and possible effects on water supply if there were to be a break in the dam. The Chair told Mr. Roman that he presumes his concerns will be passed along to the Water Department by the Town Manager.

Selectman Flanders motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Brothers. 4-0-0. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol M. Granfield, Town Manager

Frank S. Michel, Chairman

Karin Landry, Recording Clerk

Peter F. Brothers, Vice Chairman

Robert C. Flanders

Miller C. Lovett