

**SELECTMEN'S WORKSHOP**  
**Minutes of 9/24/07**  
**4:00 p.m.**

*Selectmen:*

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

*Town Manager:*  
*Recording Clerk:*

*Carol M. Granfield*  
*Karin Landry*

The Workshop was opened by Chair Frank Michel at 4:00 p.m. The Chair introduced the Selectmen and Town Manager Carol Granfield. The workshop format allows for discussion among the selectmen, followed by public input at the discretion of the Chair.

**W 07-19      Community Center Facility Fees**

The Town Manager introduced the agenda item. The Board is ready to adopt the recommendations of the Town Manager and Parks & Recreation Director for increased fees and set up charges for groups other than non-profits. The Board requested a final review of fees for non-profit groups prior to going before the public at a Board meeting. The Town Manager recommends that a fee for Meredith non-profits be implemented, as it is another revenue source that will assist with upcoming budget costs.

Parks & Recreation Director Vint Choiniere does not recommend charging Meredith non-profits for use of the facility. He spoke with many non-profits and most, if not all, are willing to help out with basic set up for their group. The set up of electronics, video, and the microphone system will continue to be performed by the staff. Although Vint prefers that no fee is charged to the Meredith non-profits, an alternative would be to accept voluntary donations for the use of the site. If a true fee were to be adopted, his recommendation, for discussion purposes, is \$5 to \$15 per hour. A blanket fee for non-profits would minimize paperwork, and avoid having to make the difficult decision of which groups should be charged.

Selectman Flanders is in support of Vint's recommendation not to charge Meredith non-profits. He does not believe that the citizens intended fees to be charged for non-profits when they voted to support the Community Center and participated in fundraising efforts.

Selectman Lovett is concerned that the use of the facility by non-profits affects availability for paying groups. Groups prefer to meet at the community center as opposed to churches or schools because it is a beautiful facility, and he does not recommend that Meredith non-profit groups be charged. He is in favor of alternative sources of revenue such as voluntary contributions and annual fundraising efforts.

Selectman Brothers is concerned with over-utilization of the facility and the costs of maintenance and replacement schedules. The community should be made aware that there is a cost associated with the use of the facility and should be encouraged to consider other facilities in addition to the Community Center. He is in favor of voluntary contributions for Meredith non-profits in order to reduce costs to the community and taxpayers. The donations should be monitored for effectiveness. Non-profits from outside Meredith are welcome, but are currently charged a fee for the use of the facility.

Selectman Worsman has seen increased use by groups that formerly utilized the schools, and pointed out that the taxpayers paid for all of the buildings in town. She recommends a \$15 an hour charge for Meredith non-profits, with the exception of the Senior Center. She suggests sending a letter to non-profits setting forth the operating cost of \$48 per hour for the facility, and requesting volunteers to assist with some of the work currently being performed by employees.

Vint Choiniere does not support the use of volunteers to replace the duties of staff members. Some of the meetings that take place at the Community Center can be held at other facilities. Dialogue ensued regarding the number of hours the facility is used by non-profits.

The Board was in general agreement with a suggestion by Selectman Lovett that a short statement should be sent to Meredith non-profits to let them know that voluntary contributions are welcome.

The Chair directed the Town Manager to post a notice that the Board will take suggestions on updated fees for the Community Center at a meeting that will be scheduled as soon as reasonably possible. Voluntary contributions will be solicited from Meredith non-profits to offset the cost of operating the facility. The Board will review the policy as time goes along.

### **07-20 Greater Meredith Program**

The Greater Meredith Program came before the Board to update them and solicit their input. President Rusty McLear gave an overview of the Program. The group met with various Town entities earlier this summer and talked about how they can support some of the projects that will improve the Town.

Chris Kelley, Chairman of the Greater Meredith Program Economic Development Committee, reported on a new program entitled the "Greater Meredith Career Partnership Program". The Program will create an internship between the high school community and business community. A Speakers Bureau comprised of local business leaders will be available to teachers in grades 7-12 to help prepare students for the business world. Job shadowing will give students the opportunity to visit local businesses for a day on a one-on-one basis. An internship program will allow students to become more specific in a field they might be interested in. A community service program will attempt to match students with their interests and will help them build their resumes. One of the goals of the Program is to build a job bank where employers and entrepreneurs can register when they are looking for people to fill certain needs. This will give them the opportunity to utilize the local student community. Chris asked for the support of the Selectmen at the upcoming kickoff event at The Chase House. The New Hampshire Electric Coop Foundation is in support of the

Program and provided a grant for brochures. It expressed a strong interest in supporting a part-time position once the project takes off. Funds from fundraising will be used to supply food at the event, 50% of which will be donated by the Common Man. The school also offered funding.

The Selectmen were in agreement that the Program is a great opportunity and will be very successful.

Chris Williams reported on the Design Committee. Work at the Town Docks was put off because of undermining at the docks and issues related to Rte. 3 & 25. The Committee is soliciting volunteers to come up with design and landscape ideas for the Community Center. Chris reviewed rough ideas for improvements to Main Street that will improve the flow of traffic without compromising parking spaces, introduce landscaping, and add pedestrian crosswalks. The Design Committee will review a rough sketch tomorrow, and would like to meet with Director of Public Works Mike Faller and Water & Sewer Superintendent Bob Hill for feedback. Jeanie Forrester told the Board that she met with Carol Granfield, Mike Faller, and Bob Hill to review the Main Street charette, and identify how improvements can be made within the constraints of the budget. Dialogue ensued regarding funding the project. It is estimated that a complete engineering survey of all of Main Street will be \$75,000. Portions of the work can be included in the budget process as opposed to a lump sum in the Capital Improvement Program. The Greater Meredith Program would like to be a resource as plans for Main Street move forward. Dialogue ensued regarding priorities of the Town and getting the most out of improvements that have to be made to Main Street in the next 2-10 years.

The Selectmen generally embraced the concept and agreed that the purpose of this type of meeting is to share ideas in the spirit of cooperation. They agreed that it is in the Town's best interest to complete a survey of Main Street that will identify where the water and sewer lines lie.

#### **W 07-21 Parking Proposal from First Congregational Church**

Several meetings have been held with the Church and Town staff to discuss a preliminary proposal to expand parking downtown. If the Town is interested in proceeding, steps will be taken to answer questions and generate a warrant article.

Wayne Bredvik, a representative of the Church, told the Board that there is an opportunity to increase the number of parking spaces by 38, triple the number that is currently behind the Church. He set forth the details for expansion of the lot, including excavating the property behind the existing lot and depositing the excavated material on the far portion of property owned by Rusty McLear. Mr. McLear's only stipulation is that a designated number of spaces be made available for his use, if needed. The location is not visible to tourists and is great for employee parking.

The Town has \$460,000 in an expendable trust for parking. A rough estimate for developing the lot is \$147,822, which includes contracting for paving, curbing, and some electrical, not including the cost of labor. If the project were to go out to bid, it is estimated that it would be contracted out at around \$271,776. Paving of an access road through the adjacent apartment complex is not included in this estimate.

The temperament of the Board is that the project makes sense. The funds are available in the Trust Fund, and opportunities for increasing parking in the downtown area are limited. Dialogue ensued regarding the history of the parking expendable trust fund and whether the title is still appropriate. The Board expressed concerns with regulations pertaining to the use of the lot. The Church proposes designating 6-8 spaces behind the building for Church use. The Board was in general agreement that they embrace the concept with a usage agreement that specifies who is allowed to use the lot under what circumstances. The Town will explore having the property conveyed to the Town, in order to get funding and bonding, and leased back to the Church. The lease needs to be reviewed by the Town counsel. The consensus of the Board is to embrace the concept and move forward to define the issues raised.

*Selectman Flanders motioned to move to a non-public meeting under 91A:3 II (c) and (d) at 6:12 p.m. Seconded by Peter Brothers. 4-0-0. Motion passed by poll of Selectmen.*

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

---

Colette Worsman