

**Board of Selectmen Meeting
Minutes of October 1, 2007**

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*

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 asked that all comments and questions be directed through the Chair. He introduced the Board, Town Manager, and Recording Clerk.

ACCEPTANCE AND/OR CORRECTION OF MINUTES:

07-49 Minutes of August 20, 2007 Non Public Session II; September 10, 2007 Workshop and Regular Meeting; September 17 Workshop and Regular Meeting; and September 24 Non-Public Meeting

Selectman Brothers motioned to accept the minutes of the August 20, 2007 Non-Public Session II; September 10, 2007 Workshop and Regular Meeting; September 17 Workshop and Regular Meeting; and September 24 Non-Public Meeting. Seconded by Selectman Flanders.

Selectman Worsman does not believe the August 20 Non-Public Session II minutes comply with full disclosure under the Right-to-Know law, and do not accurately reflect the discussion and decisions made, and the reasoning behind those decisions. She also requested that two additional attachments to the minutes be inserted. Counsel advised the Chair that the minutes meet or exceed the Right-to-Know law, and the Chair limited discussion on the August 20 minutes.

Selectman Brothers moved to modify his motion to exclude the August 20, 2007 Non-Public Session II Minutes. Seconded by Selectman Flanders.

Selectman Worsman asked that a comment be added to the September 10 Workshop minutes that indicates someone from the public stated Non-Public minutes must be available to the public within 82 hours of the meeting, as opposed to 72 hours. Selectman Brothers pointed out the error at a previous meeting, and the change was made.

Selectman Worsman abstained from the vote on the September 17 Workshop, as she was absent with notice.

5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously. (9/10/07 Workshop and Regular Meeting, 9/24 Non-Public Meeting). 4-0-0. Motion passed. (9/17/07 Workshop and Regular Meeting – Selectman Worsman absent with notice).

Selectman Flanders motioned to limit public discussion on the Non-Public Session II meeting of August 20 and approve the minutes of that meeting as presented. Seconded by Selectman Brothers. Motion passed 3-2, Selectmen Brothers, Flanders, Michel, yes; and Selectmen Lovett and Worsman, no.

Although counsel's guidance regarding the Right-to-Know law was questioned by Board members, Chair Michel limited discussion on the August 20 minutes.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- A Town Planner has been hired from a pool of 35 applicants. Angela LaBrecque from South Lake Tahoe, California will be starting prior to November 15. She will handle site plan reviews and work with the Planning Board. She will work with John Edgar in transitioning into that role.
- Today is the official first day Jim Carrier will be acting as Fire Chief. A special thanks was given to Chief Palm for his assistance in making the transition a smooth one.
- The final figures have come in for the police station project. The project came in on time and under budget. The \$60,000 held in contingency, together with \$10,861.00 in additional funds, will be returned.
- The Conservation Commission, and in particular Dan Heyduk, is commended for the task force he is working on. A presentation and tour was held this weekend for the 186-acre property formerly known as the Folsom property. The group has been working with Forest Planner Tom Kokx, who has done an excellent job. The Commission is interested in public feedback, and anyone who was not able to attend the event is encouraged to contact a member of the Commission.
- There was a meeting at the beginning of the summer among residents, staff, and DOT officials regarding the Meredith Center intersection. The DOT has come up with a safer way to handle the intersection. A meeting with the DOT will be publicized and held within the next couple weeks.
- The final inspection of the roundabout will take place at the end of the week. Modifications were made pertaining to landscaping. The paperwork will be finalized once the project is complete. The Town will be signing an agreement with the State pertaining to responsibilities for future maintenance. The State will be responsible for plowing.
- The Town Manager represents Meredith on a commission reviewing the leasing of docks over railroads. She solicited the Board's comments on rate increases and whether they would like to see the practice continued, grandfathered, or changed.

- The information requested by resident Dave Sticht regarding hauling has been compiled. It shows that it is less costly for the Town to do the hauling than hiring a private contractor. The Town Manager will provide Mr. Sticht with the information.
- The bundled project is moving forth. Utility work on Waukewan Street is complete; sewers are installed on High Street; curbing and a base coat is installed for sidewalks on Stevens Avenue; South Main and Lang Street driveways have been imprinted with loaming and seeding. Property owners on Redgate will be informed of work beginning there this week. The Town will learn this week if they can incorporate the water main replacement on Route 104 into the project.
- Resident Jim Hughes had questions at an earlier meeting regarding water levels and what is required to declare a moratorium. Mr. Hughes and the Board have been provided with that information. Anyone with additional questions should contact the Town Manager. The information he requested comparing production to billing is being compiled.
- The next meeting will be a Workshop on October 15. The Town Manager, Chair, and Vice Chair will address upcoming workshops.

Selectman Flanders does not believe that the figures for town and private hauling reflect reality. The Chair suggested he meet with the Town Manager to review the information for the benefit of the Board, if he wishes to do so.

Selectman Worsman cautioned that leasing of the waterfront would interfere with the trail that will eventually run from Laconia through Tilton.

The Chair asked the Board members to let the Town Manager know their schedule for the balance of October. He would like as many members as possible in attendance for discussions regarding the budget.

VISITOR'S AND RESIDENT'S COMMENTS:

Resident Richard Roman pointed out that it cost \$60,000 to plow the schools last year. In addition, the school district purchased a truck and plow for \$30,000. He inquired if the contract for the upcoming season will be offset or changed. The Chair told Mr. Roman that as an individual taxpayer he believes it should be looked into, but that it is a School Board matter. He applauded Mr. Roman for bringing the matter to the public's attention. He encouraged residents to approach the School Board with concerns regarding the matter.

Resident Pat Mack asked if the Board wrote a letter to the state when the potential came up for leasing docks on Lake Waukewan, and asked why the Town wasn't notified when Meredith Bay was developed. The Town wrote a letter to the state setting forth the position that they do not endorse leasing on Waukewan. They were not notified on the Meredith Bay project. Pat inquired how the Board stood on the matter of leasing on other lakes. The Board was not prepared to be polled on the matter. Chair Michel suggested that the item be included on the agenda for an upcoming meeting that would include input from citizens.

Resident Pat Mack suggested the use of crossing guards during high foot traffic events such as Chowderfest and the Craft Fair. The Town Manager will check to see if crossing guards are considered as part of the review that takes place when a special use permit is applied for.

Resident Pat Mack inquired about public input at Workshops. The Chair told her that he allows comments at the end of the session from those who can offer additional information or wish to express a point of view.

Resident Richard Roman asked about progress into the investigation of the discontinuation of Railroad Avenue. He would like to know if the discontinuation can be used as leverage while negotiating a piece of property for the expansion of the water plant. The documentation is currently being reviewed by counsel.

Resident Jim Hughes asked the Town to take a look at parking at Aubuchon Hardware. Boat trailers are often parked there for up to a week. Once the bundled project is complete, parking should be encouraged at the Thompson lot across from Prescott Park. He would like to see more restrictions on parking at Aubuchon, and monitoring by the police department. The Chair's understanding is that the police department allows and monitors parking at Aubuchon, and suggested that Mr. Hughes discuss the matter with Chief Morrow.

07-50 PUBLIC HEARING

Changes and Amendments to Water Ordinance

The Town Manager introduced the matter. Several workshops have been held to review proposed changes to the Water Ordinance. The public hearing will allow the public to comment on the proposed changes. Once the changes are adopted by the Board, they will go into effect immediately.

Resident Jim Hughes expressed concerns with the time allotted the public for reviewing the Ordinance prior to the hearing. The material was not available to the public until the day of the hearing. Mr. Hughes would like adoption of the Ordinance to be postponed to allow public input.

The Chair believes there was ample opportunity for public input during the review of the Ordinance in the Workshops, and is ready to move forward.

Ray Korber, principal engineer with KV Partners, highlighted the amendments to the Ordinance. There are three principal areas of revision:

1. Revision of the peaking factor for the calculation of Maximum Daily Demand from 3.0 to 2.5. The new recommendation is based on data from the last three years, as opposed to older data that supported the 3.0 peaking factor.
2. A timeline for the approval process to make it more consistent with the Planning Board review process. A deadline of one year has been set to gain final approval from the Planning Board, after which any allocation to a new development would be

- rescinded. There is a provision that allows for an extension by the Board for good cause.
3. Restrictions on the use of water and moratoriums that would prohibit connections and extensions to the water system are defined.

Additional revisions include a requirement for a development agreement for allocations to a new development, as well as infrastructure improvements an applicant takes on in order to facilitate a connection to the water system. The definition of Available Spare Capacity has been revised, and others definitions have been added to better clarify the intent of the water use revisions.

Dialogue ensued regarding postponing the hearing to allow the public additional time to review the document. Although the Board was willing to do so, Mr. Hughes told them that he was ready to move forward with his comments. He requested that documents be made available to the public more than 12 hours in advance in the future. The Board was in general agreement that they wished to proceed.

PUBLIC HEARING OPENED AT 6:25 P.M.

Resident Jim Hughes asked for clarification of “plant flow” in definition #104 – Available Spare Capacity. He asked if it refers to the inflow of water or the outflow of treated water. He also asked about Definition #124, Existing Service Area, which refers to the Meredith water distribution map latest edition. He would like to know who is responsible for approval of that map.

Ray Korber clarified that the highest daily water treatment plant flow is the outflow from the plant, the pumping of finished water that the system demands. The water distribution system map is created by the Water & Sewer Department in conjunction with the GIS coordinator. The Board concluded that definition #104 should be amended to read “...the highest daily water treatment plant flow (finished water pumped) recorded under normal operations for the previous 36 months of record.” The change will not change flow calculations and production data from the past. Definition #124 will be amended to read “Existing Service Area, refers to the Meredith water distribution map latest edition created by the Town of Meredith.”

Mr. Hughes complimented the Board on a job well done.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED AT 6:35 P.M.

Selectmen Worsman and Lovett reminded the Chair that they wish to review commercial rates and rates on multiple units within the next few months. The Chair clarified that rates are not part of this review of the Ordinance, and that they remain open for discussion.

Selectman Flanders moved that the Board adopt the Water Use Ordinance as presented with the amendments to Definition #104 and #124 that were discussed, effective immediately. Seconded by Selectman Worsman.

Dialogue ensued regarding rescinding the Declaration that is currently in place that does not allow for approval of developments under the old Ordinance.

Selectman Flanders moved that the Board rescind the Declaration pursuant to Section 322 of the Meredith Water Use Ordinance dated July 23, 2007. Seconded by Peter Brothers. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

07-51 Village Pathway Committee Appointment

The Town Manager recommends the appointment of Pam Colburn to the Village Pathway Committee. Pam attended several meetings, and her appointment is recommended by the Committee. There are additional vacancies on the Committee. Anyone who is interested in serving on the Committee should contact the Town Manager.

Selectman Lovett moved to appoint Pam Colburn to the Village Pathway Committee. Seconded by Colette Worsman. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

07-52 Employee Benefits Committee Presentation

The Town Manager introduced the matter. In May of 2007 the Board adopted a charge to establish the Employee Benefits Committee. Resident Bob Ambrose was selected as the Chair of the Committee. The consultant hired by the Committee will present his findings.

Bob Ambrose summarized the formation and charge of the Committee. The Committee was formed to review the total compensation paid to Town employees. They surveyed surrounding and similar communities, as well as local businesses, to give a comparison of how total compensation for jobs in Meredith compares to those towns and businesses. They tried to make comparisons to other property-rich towns, with populations that swell during certain times. The survey was not an attempt to reclassify employees. The results of the survey are set forth in a spreadsheet that shows total compensation. A spreadsheet from Local Government Center sets forth Municipal employment data for Towns grouped according to population. The Committee proposes that the spreadsheets be used as a tool for budgeting.

Human resource management consultants Thornton & Associates of Scarborough, Maine, were engaged by the Town for their expertise and professional guidance as the Committee carried out its charge. Principal Gary Thornton reported on their findings. They developed the survey of peer communities and private sector businesses that the Committee as a whole identified as a best match. The highlights of the report are available on the Town website. For the most part, benefits are on average with the peer communities and private sector employers that were surveyed. The report highlights certain areas under the context of the existing classification system where pay may be a little soft. It is strongly recommended that the survey be used by the Board and Town Manager tasked with carrying out the personnel classification system as a tool for budgeting and planning purposes. The recommendations and observations come out of the external market survey and are not privy to the unique circumstances of the Town. Although

public sector compensation is public information, private sector information is confidential and is not shared with the Committee or the Selectboard. Information that will divulge or betray the confidentiality the consultants have with private employers is not included in the spreadsheet. Mr. Thornton thanked Selectman Worsman for her diligence in collecting data from the private sector.

Mr. Thornton highlighted observations pertaining to where other clients are heading in terms of total compensation. The consultants are working with clients and municipalities who are progressive in being fair with their workforce in an attempt to help employees balance the demands of work life. This is resulting in a retention advantage for employers. He commended the Committee for its vision and forethought in including total compensation in the survey.

Mr. Thornton highlighted the report. The pay classification system is on balance with the external market review. The entry rate is defined as having no skill, progressing in steps throughout the pay grade. For many of those jobs the pay grade is fine. He does not recommend updating the whole classification system, which has been done as a cost of living or general wage increase. Certain classifications within the structure should receive consideration for reclassification. The Town is at market average with respect to benefits. The survey indicates that employers generally provide and subsidize to some degree long-term disability for their workforce. The benefit is available to Town employees, with no cost subsidy. Cost sharing for health and medical is within dollars of those entities surveyed.

Reflecting on his background as a retired professor in management who has taught human resources management, Selectman Lovett appreciates the academic and technical framework of the survey. It is an important part of understanding compensation. The consultants did a good job in terms of job analysis and identifying families of jobs. He would like to know how the evaluation system would work for recommended adjustments in pay.

The Chair is comfortable in using the survey as a tool going forward.

Selectman Worsman thanked the employees for trying to understand the work of the Committee. The Committee's goal was to complete an economic study that would indicate where the Town stands, and that could be used as a guide. When reviewing the results, it should be kept in mind that the Town's employees are included in the averages of the organizations listed. Because the information is not public, six businesses from the private sector could not be reported on, but factor into the averages. The goal of any Town to accurately compensate its employees is to stay close to the 50th percentile. She thanked Mr. Thornton, the staff, and Bob Ambrose for helping gather information for the survey.

The Chair personally thanked the Committee for their work. Salaries and benefits are the highest component of any budget, and Mr. Ambrose urged the Town to take a look at them in comparison to other similar-sized towns before the budget process. Selectman Lovett asked the Town Manager to write each member of the Committee to convey the Board's appreciation for their work.

There was no public comment.

Selectman Brothers motioned that the Employee Benefits Committee be discharged as a result of the completion of their work. Seconded by Selectman Lovett.

Selectman Flanders moved that the motion include a sincere thanks to all those who participated in the process. Seconded by Selectman Lovett. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Flanders motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Worsman. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

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