

BOARD OF SELECTMEN REGULAR MEETING
Minutes of 09-19-11
5:30 p.m.

Selectmen:

Colette Worsman, Chairman
Peter F. Brothers, Vice Chairman
Miller C. Lovett
Nathan J. Torr
Herbert R. Vadney

Town Manager:

Phillip L. Warren

Recording Clerk:

Karin Landry

Call to Order: Chair Worsman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. She introduced the Board, Town Manager, and the Recording Clerk, and made announcements pertaining to fire exits, listening assisted devices, the use of microphones, and cell phones. She announced that new microphones are being used to improve the audio quality of Board meetings and requested feedback from the viewing audience.

ACCEPTANCE AND/OR CORRECTION OF MINUTES:

11 -47 Minutes of the August 1, 2011 Regular Meeting and the August 15, 2011 Workshop, Regular Meeting and Non-Public Meeting.

Selectman Torr moved to accept the minutes of the August 1, 2011 Regular Meeting and the August 15, 2011 Workshop, Regular Meeting and Non-Public Meeting as presented. Seconded by Selectman Lovett. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

The Chair announced that the Agenda will be amended to accommodate for a misunderstanding in scheduling.

NEW BUSINESS:

11-48 Non-Numbered State Roads

At the request of the Board, The Town Manager arranged for representatives of the Department of Transportation (DOT) to make a presentation regarding the state aid highway fund and how it can be used to make improvements to Meredith Neck Rd. In addition, DOT Municipal Highways Engineer Nancy Mayville provided a detailed explanation of the program via email. Under the program, the state provides 2/3 of the cost of a project and municipalities provide 1/3. An application is made by a municipality to have projects included in the program. If a project is accepted, monies for funding are accumulated over a period of years. The town has accumulated a total of \$461,000 for the project to make improvements to Meredith Neck Rd. at this time. Once a project on an unnumbered state route is completed, the road is reclassified to a local road, and the town takes over the responsibility of maintaining the road. Once a road is designated a local road there is a slight increase in block grant money, which is based on road mileage and population. During 2006 - 2008, there was much discussion regarding applying the funds accumulated in the program for Meredith Neck Road improvements to Meredith Center Road, but a decision was never made on how to proceed.

Selectman Brothers recognizes that the funds accumulating for Meredith Neck Road are not adequate to properly complete the road and inquired if the project can be done in stages, and who is responsible for the road during the interim period. Ms. Mayville explained that the project could be done in phases, or money could be tagged for future years of the program with a corresponding increase in the town's contribution. The road would not be designated a town road until the project is completed. At that time, the town would be asked to enter into a municipal agreement with the DOT setting forth the understanding that the road will be maintained by the town. When a project is ready to move forward, a consultant is hired using a qualification based selection, an engineering study looks at alternatives, a preliminary plan phase takes chosen alternatives and begins to fill in details, and the final contract goes out to bid.

Selectman Vadney inquired who is responsible for resolving right of way issues and whether there are minimum standards for construction. Ms. Mayville explained that the projects are municipally managed, and the state would look to the municipality to go through the process of obtaining any necessary right of ways. There is a range of design options to choose from, and a design exception can be requested. If an exception is granted, the town must accept liability for it.

Dialogue ensued regarding road maintenance. Residents have expressed concerns regarding a lack of maintenance in the summer months, which is the state's responsibility. The town is responsible for winter maintenance including plowing, sanding, and salting. There is considerable road maintenance that needs to be done in the spring months, which are included in summer maintenance. District III Maintenance Engineer Mark Morrill explained that the only program that exists for non-numbered state routes that are deteriorating is the state aid highway program, and the DOT relies on what is appropriated by the legislature for maintenance that is not included in that program. There have been cuts to the funding of the state aid highway program, and there is a lot of competition for the funding that remains.

Director of Public Works Mike Faller informed that town equipment was damaged while performing maintenance on Meredith Neck Road last winter. The road has not been resurfaced since 1999 or 2000, drainage is in dire need of upgrades, pipes need replacing, and the ditching needs to be cleaned out regularly. The lack of ditch maintenance has resulted in water getting into the road and causing heaving. Mr. Faller believes that the road will deteriorate significantly over the next couple years. Mr. Morrill informed that at this time, the road is not slated for a shim or overlay.

Dialogue ensued regarding the dates for winter maintenance. Mr. Faller explained that winter maintenance is typically from November 1st to April 1st, however, if there is a storm outside that time period that requires salting, sanding, or plowing, the town would do so. In addition, Public Works repairs minor potholes during the winter season.

Project Manager C.R. Willeke of the Office of Planning and Community Assistance determined that the road is approximately four miles long to the intersection of Barnard Ridge Rd., and five miles long if Barnard Ridge Rd. is included. The approximate cost of repairing drainage is \$1 million per mile, and he suggested that phasing the project might make sense. The \$650,000 that has accumulated at this time in the state aid highway fund would complete approximately half of the project. Heavy maintenance is roughly \$1 million a mile and full box construction is roughly \$4 million per mile. The road would not be built to the federal standards required in full box reconstruction, partly because there are historic stone structures that should be retained.

Selectman Lovett pointed out that the issues on Meredith Neck Rd. and Meredith Center Rd. are two different problems and does not want the two projects in contention with each other. He strongly supports the need to calm the traffic speeds on Meredith Center Rd. The residents of Meredith Center

must decide how they wish to proceed. Because there is not enough money for either project, they will probably be further postponed.

Selectman Torr supports making improvements in drainage before resurfacing the road. Most of the funds that have accumulated in the state aid highway fund would be needed to improve the drainage over the course of the road. He does not support repairing a section of the road at a time because drainage from the sections that have not been repaired could damage the sections that have been repaired. In addition, he is concerned with ownership issues if the project moves forward in that manner. Mr. Morrill explained that the state can work on the ditching under its summer maintenance program, but he will have to work out an exact date with the maintenance supervisor. Mr. Morrill indicated that a DOT representative will contact the Town Manager to review the 12-month maintenance plan for Meredith Neck Rd.

Dialogue ensued regarding allocating additional funds for the Town's 1/3 match in order that a section of the road can be completed. Those funds would have to be appropriated at Town Meeting. Ms. Mayville explained that in order to go forward with the project in stages, a consultant would have to be hired to do a conceptual overview of the entire project including what needs to be done, the costs, and options and priorities. It is too late in the season to have a conceptual plan in place before the coming of winter, but it is possible that one could be in place by Town Meeting 2012. Mr. Faller suggested working on a conceptual plan for the entire project and asking the state to do an overlay and ditch maintenance as a short term fix. Mr. Morrill will explore the matter with the DOT's maintenance engineer.

Resident Jim Hughes told the Board that an agreement was made in the 1990s to use a precast culvert on Meredith Neck Road between Lincoln and Prescott Farm, but the project never went forward. A precast culvert has been used successfully in another part of town.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

- The Town Manager received a letter from the State dated August 25 informing that it is disposing of a 2.5 acre parcel of land off Boynton Rd. that was acquired in 1951 for maintenance purposes. The Town has a right of first refusal and must respond to the state within 30 days. The parcel is land locked and has a minimum bid price of \$14,300, which is the assessed value. Community Development Director John Edgar indicated that the benefit of taking the parcel for conservation purposes is extremely minimal. In the event the parcel was gifted, the town would consider accepting the gift pending an environmental site assessment. Selectman Brothers suggested that a volunteer view the property before a final decision is made on the matter. The Town Manager will verify whether the parcel abuts a town owned piece of land on the morning of September 27 and notify the Board of his findings by email. The town has 30 days to respond to the state's offer before the parcel will go to a real estate broker and be put on the open market.

Selectman Vadney moved to accept the conditional approval to reject the purchase of the property pending additional information that might be received regarding abutting properties that will be communicated to the Board via email by the Town Manager. Seconded by Selectman Lovett.5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously

- The Town Manager received a request from a Bear Island resident regarding an island resident parking proposal and requested the Board's guidance before devoting staff time to the matter. Selectman Vadney pointed out that the matter has been struggled with several times over the last 15 years, and does not recommend considering the matter at this time because doing so creates an extreme policing problem with no effective solution. The Town Manager believes the issue creates a disparity between non-island owners and residents. Selectman Brothers does not think a public solution is the answer to the problem,

and prefers not to address the matter any further at this point. Selectman Lovett would like to find a solution to the problem if people on the island are having trouble finding parking. There was an agreement among the Board that while it appreciates that it is a critical issue for those who live on the island, it is not something that the public should be responsible for funding. Selectman Vadney thinks it would be bad to take action that moves towards establishing a policy that the town owes parking to people on the island because there is no limit. Selectman Lovett agrees, and thinks a policy should be officially stated. The town manager will follow through on the matter.

- The funding for the Rte. 3 and 25 project has been moved forward to 2017 - 2018. In 2007, the projected construction funding was at \$12.5 million. The current projection is \$5.78 million.

- The Governor's advisory committee on intermodal transportation will host a hearing on September 26 at the Laconia City Council chambers at 8 a.m. Community Development Director John Edgar will attend the meeting on the town's behalf. The Rte. 3 and 25 project and the Lakes Region Scenic Byway will be discussed at the meeting.

- The town manager was informed that the state may alter the way it handles winter road maintenance. The town will not alter how it handles maintenance on state roads at this time; however, residents might take action if they are aggrieved by the changes in policy.

- The Meredith Lion's Club will host a 1.75 mile dog walk on Saturday, October 15. Water will be provided at several points along the way for the dogs and walkers. It is assumed that doggy waste bags will also be made available.

- The Charge of the cable TV advisory committee calls for five members. There are three at large positions open at this time and no applications have been received to date. One of the goals of the committee is to complete the ascertainment process by December, so it is time sensitive for the committee to begin its work. A key piece of the ascertainment process is establishing the needs and wants of a community as it relates to the cable TV system. Any person interested in serving on the committee should contact the town manager's office. Selectman Vadney suggested amending the Charge to call for fewer members.

- It has been determined that the way LGC organizes health and worker's compensation trusts is not consistent with New Hampshire law. In response to the findings, LGC reactivated two trusts from the past that are of a similar nature. The Town Manager will monitor the issue of the subsidy amount instead of taking action on it at this time.

VISITOR'S AND RESIDENT'S COMMENTS:

Resident Jim Hughes was the Chairman of the Board of Selectman at the time of the town's bicentennial celebration, and the event was well planned for. There is a question as to who is the owner of the gold coins buried in the Library lawn as part of the celebration. Mr. Hughes distributed a pamphlet associated with plans for the 250th celebration scheduled for 2018, and requested that the Board begin to start making an appropriation for the event in the upcoming budget.

As a resident of Meredith, Selectman Vadney thanked the town for painting the double yellow line on Windsong, Corliss Hill, and a number of other roads because the lines are very effective in slowing down traffic.

Chair Worsman briefly reviewed what took place at the workshop prior to the regular meeting. The budget process has begun, and will culminate with elections on March 13, 2012, and Town Meeting on

March 14, 2012. Fire Chief Ken Jones updated the Board on the successes of the intern program. There is currently a full contingent of 45 volunteer firemen. The town is very proud of its fire department, and the Chair expressed her personal thanks to the volunteers who keep residents safe.

Selectman Lovett reported that the capital improvement committee has met once, and is working on the capital budget for the coming fiscal year. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 21, at 7 p.m. at the Town Hall Annex. Any member of the public that is interested in making a contribution to the planning process is invited to attend.

Selectman Vadney reported that the water committee did not meet in September, however, it is making good progress. It is anticipated that Chairman Dave Thorpe will make a final report in about three months.

11-50 Update on Sewer Force Main Failure

Water and Sewer Superintendent Dan Leonard reported on the sewer force main break in the area of the Town Docks restaurant. There was difficulty in repairing the pipe because the ownership of the pipe was questioned by the state as it was installed as a means to transport Meredith's wastewater flow from the Rte. 3 pump station into the gravity system of the Winnepesaukee River Basin Project (WRBP). The state ultimately agreed to pay for the repair out of the sinking fund. The repairs were difficult to make because the damaged pipe was underneath two 36" culvert pipes that had to be removed. Once the pump was bypassed, the pipes were removed and it was discovered that a pipe had rotted from the exterior to the interior, which is typically caused by pipes being buried in unsuitable ground materials. The 3" x 3" hole is estimated to have been discharging for least three years. The pot marks and pitting along the pipe indicate that it isn't an isolated issue. The situation indicates that the ground materials used by the state in an area spanning from the site to the Rte. 3 pump station (approximately one or two miles) were unsuitable for backfill. Mr. Leonard is consulting with a specialist in order to gain a better understanding of what is in the soil that might be causing the deterioration of the pipe. The area is scheduled for paving in the next week or two. It is Mr. Leonard's opinion that the pipe is owned by the WRBP. Dialogue ensued regarding the details of how the flow was diverted. It is anticipated that the all the pipes will be replaced in conjunction with the road project scheduled for 2017 - 2018. The Chair thanked Mr. Leonard for being readily available to fix the immediate problem.

11-51 Discussion on Water Quality Issues/Status

The Chair requested an open forum on water quality as a means to look at the entire picture rather than specific issues such as a septic ordinance. Three to four of the Board's broad based goals are related to water quality. The town has significantly invested in the eradication of milfoil, and hosted public informational meetings on cyanobacteria. The Board will be looking at continued efforts, all of which involve funding, and will be making decisions that will have lifestyle and financial impacts. It is seeking input from the community on concepts or ways to educate the public and continue with some of its valuable programs.

Selectman Torr has served on the Waukegan Watershed Advisory Committee for approximately five years, and noted that there is a growing concern with the quality of the town's water supply. He thinks the town should be very cognizant that Lake Waukegan is its water supply, and needs to have a backup plan in the event of an emergency such as wells or another water source. Education is a key component of protecting the water supply, especially in view of the fact that the Lake is utilized for recreational purposes. The town should be involved in identifying issues surrounding water quality in the towns of New Hampton and Center Harbor. Owners with septic systems that predate 1955 should be notified there

might be a problem with their system. Given the current situation, he thinks a septic system ordinance should be considered.

The Chair reviewed the steps that have been taken at this time, including designating Water Street as a low salt area, and making an attempt to make milfoil eradication efforts more cost effective by making a joint application with lake owners' organizations. Education is a key component in protecting water quality, and the Board's goal is to bring a wider audience so there is an awareness of how behaviors and increased population will affect water quality.

Selectman Lovett would find it helpful for the Board and public to have a staff report from Community Development setting forth all the concerns within the Waukegan Watershed and efforts to address them. Selectman Lovett belongs to a lakefront association that is playing an important role in addressing milfoil, and he would like to know if others association are doing the same.

Selectman Vadney would like to become familiar with the recent changes to the Shoreline Protection Act and how they will affect water quality. He suggested that the Board, through the town manager, take investigative actions on septic systems that are known not to meet existing requirements. In addition, he would like an analysis made on toxins coming from the town vs. what is coming from the Snake River. Physical issues such as milfoil are a nuisance to a clean lake but not a threat to water quality, and need to be separated from the toxic issues. Toxic issues such as cyanobacteria and PH must be addressed.

Selectman Brothers supports partnerships to treat issues surrounding water quality, such as the partnership that was formed among the town of Meredith and other entities to treat milfoil on the north end of Lake Winnisquam. Although funding to address milfoil is limited, an effort can still be made to educate the public on the issues. The Department of Tourism has as big a stake in water quality as anyone. Selectman Brothers does not favor applying one set of ordinances to one water body or group and pointed out that there are problems with enforcing the laws that are already in effect. Funding sources such as due-on-sale and building permits need to be explored. In addition, programs need to be considered to fund hardship cases. It is important to get citizens involved and make it more economically feasible for them to invest in water quality.

Selectman Torr informed that water testing has been completed in the Waukegan Watershed and it is time to establish existing conditions and determine how to move forward.

Chair Worsman explained that the goal of the discussion is to spur brainstorming. It makes sense to compile the successes and shortfalls of past efforts. She does not support the expansion of ordinances, but the Board must explore what can be done from an educational point of view.

Dialogue ensued regarding the steps that can be taken to work on water quality in the Town of Meredith and beyond. Selectman Lovett would find a master plan for moving forward beneficial. In addition, it would be helpful to have a meeting that captures some of the Waukegan Watershed Committee's opinions and suggestions for moving forward. The Committee has a baseline that can be used to explore potential problems and share what has been discovered. The Chair does not think it is wise to devote staff time to the matter at this time.

Selectman Vadney suggested exploring the steps that have been taken in other towns that rely on a lake or pond as their water source.

The Board will be entrenched in budget deliberations in the immediate future, and hopes for the assistance of the Waukegan Watershed Committee and other committees in moving forward. Selectman Brothers pointed out that the charette that was held in conjunction with designing the fire station was

successful and suggested doing something similar for water quality. There was an agreement among the Board that it would be ideal to schedule something for late spring so summer residents can attend.

11-51 Energy Committee Appointment

The appointment of Deborah Crosby to the Energy Committee is supported by the Committee's chair and members. Deborah was a valuable volunteer at the Energy Fair, attended the July and August meetings, and has an interest in the work of the Committee. Selectman Brothers is the selectman's representative to the Committee, and supports the appointment.

Selectman Brothers moved to appoint Deborah Crosby to the Energy Committee. Seconded by Selectman Vadney. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

NONE

ADJOURNMENT:

Selectman Vadney moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Lovett. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Phillip L. Warren, Town Manager

Colette Worsman, Chairman

Peter F. Brothers, Vice Chairman

Miller C. Lovett

Nathan J. Torr

Herbert R. Vadney