

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN WORKSHOP**  
**Minutes of 09-19-11**  
**4:15 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 4:15 p.m. She introduced the Board, Town Manager, and the Recording Clerk, and made announcements pertaining to emergency exits and the use of cell phones.

**W 11-24      2012 Budget Calendar**

Town Manager Phillip Warren explained that the calendar to Town Meeting 2012 has been slightly accelerated so it doesn't conflict with the holidays. The budget documents have been distributed to department heads at this time. The Board will deliberate with the Town Manager on the proposed municipal budget on November 28, 29, and 30. The process will culminate with Town Elections on March 13, 2012 and Town Meeting on March 14, 2012. Chair Worsman urged residents to mark their calendars accordingly.

The Chair announced that a new microphone system has been implemented with the intention of improving sound quality at Board meetings.

**W 11-25      Annual Update on Fire Department Intern Program**

Fire Chief Ken Jones updated the Board on the intern program that was implemented in the spring of 2009 when the newly opened downtown fire station made it possible to provide housing for interns. Two interns were brought in at that time. In addition to supporting response efforts at the station, the interns were responsible for keeping the building clean during the final stages of construction. The program has proved to be an overall asset, especially during the summer months when call volume is high. In the fall of 2009, the Board granted permission to increase the number of interns to three, and in January of 2010, the Board granted permission to increase the number of interns to four. There have been a total of eight interns in the program, and four have graduated. There are three students in the program at this time, and all three hold a Level 1 certification, which is a huge benefit to the department. In addition to responding to calls, the interns conduct daily station maintenance, assist the Chief with inspections, perform miscellaneous administrative duties such as answering telephones, and conduct routine equipment maintenance. The interns are currently on site from Monday through Thursday, and are only paid when they respond to calls. The program has been monitored along the way, and minor adjustments have been made where necessary. Chief Jones believes the program is a huge benefit and wishes to increase the number of interns to five. Although there is a full roster of 45 firefighters serving the department at this time, it struggles with some responses during daytime hours, especially during the summer months, when

many volunteers are at their full time jobs. The Chief would like to train an intern as a driver/operator so they can respond with apparatus during the summer months.

Selectman Torr inquired about the use of the personal watercraft this summer. While the department could have utilized the watercraft to respond to a water emergency this summer, it did not get out of the station. The Chief was out of town at the time and did not respond to the call. The watercraft was launched to respond to a call during Hurricane Irene, but Marine Patrol and the Laconia Fire Department reached the scene first. The watercraft adds extra security to the department's ability to respond to water emergencies, and is a major benefit in keeping boats outside the required perimeter at the July 4 fireworks display. The cost of insurance is less than \$25 a year and there is no fee for municipalities to register a trailer. Training takes place during the regularly scheduled monthly training sessions.

Selectman Lovett inquired if the station can accommodate females. Although there have been no applications submitted by females at this time, the facility can accommodate a female intern. There is no policy that addresses the situation specifically, but it could be addressed through supervision.

Selectman Brothers noted that when the program was first implemented, concerns were expressed regarding interns and volunteers jointly responding to calls. The Chief reported that the arrangement has been mutually beneficial, and that the interns are often relied upon to respond to non emergency service calls during the night hours. Dialogue ensued regarding the cost of training interns and volunteers as drivers, and developing expectations for those in the program. The Chief will investigate the total cost of the training that is required to become a driver, but he believes it is more important to train individuals on the operation of a piece of apparatus as opposed to holding a certificate as a driver/operator. There is no policy in place regarding the number of hours needed on a piece of apparatus in order to act as a driver/operator. The Town Manager explained that the curriculum at Lakes Region Community College is intertwined with the fire Chiefs, and that expectations for the program are monitored in that way. Students are required to complete certain courses and those skills are put into play and analyzed by fire house staff. The staff provides feedback to the school, and it is necessary that certain benchmarks are met in order to complete a class. The Chief's goal is to have a mix of first and second year students so there is a certain level of on the job experience at any given time.

Selectman Vadney is concerned with young drivers not being familiar with local roads driving a large piece of apparatus. The Chief pointed out that even experienced drivers make mistakes and that while you cannot replace hours driving, experienced drivers are more comfortable and can sometimes become more relaxed and therefore less cautious. The Chief reiterated that the interns are extremely valuable during the summer months. The only incidental costs associated with the program is an increase in utilities.

Chair Worsman is pleasantly surprised with the success of the program, but does not wish to see the number of interns expand beyond four, in part because the necessity of monitoring a larger number of students of a young age. She wonders if it would be more cost effective to train volunteers than training new students every year, and is concerned with the expense of young drivers being covered on the insurance policy. The Town Manager explained that there is no surcharge for young drivers. The Chief would not be doing his job if he led the Board to believe there are a sufficient number of volunteers to respond to calls, and reiterated that the interns are extremely valuable in responding to calls, especially during the summer months. Chair Worsman had the opportunity to meet with the coordinator of the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid to tour the facility and review procedures, and found that the relationship is very beneficial in situations where additional response is needed. The Chief sits on the Board of Directors of the agency, and updated the Board on staffing changes, training, and grant opportunities. The Chair requested that the Chief share that the town is looking for less than a level funded budget from the agency.

The Chief updated the Board on grant applications that have been submitted for a tanker and extrication equipment. It is not known when the grants will be awarded.

*Selectman Brothers motioned to adjourn the Workshop at 5:10 p.m. Seconded by Selectman Torr. 5-0. All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Phillip L. Warren, Town Manager

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Colette Worsman, Chairman

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Peter F. Brothers, Vice Chairman

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Miller C. Lovett

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Nathan J. Torr

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Herbert R. Vadney