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**TOWN OF ANTRIM
BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES
October 18, 1999**

6:00 p.m. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER – Chairman Seeger called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman Tim Seeger, Selectmen Denise Dargie and Eric Tenney and Town Administrator, Kelley Collins

6:00 p.m. MEET WITH FIRE CHIEF BEAUCHAMP AND AMBULANCE CAPTAIN LOVERING

Fire Chief Mike Beauchamp and Ambulance Captain Patty Lovering informed the Board that it had been the general consensus that the Antrim Ambulance Squad was originally organized under the Antrim Fire Department. Captain Lovering has documentation in their first set of by-laws showing that the Ambulance was Company 3 of the Antrim Fire Department. The first ambulance was purchased by the squad and donated to the Town of Antrim. The second ambulance is currently registered and owned by the Antrim Ambulance Squad. Even our original ambulance license was under the fire department. However, when that ID number was misplaced and a new one applied for it was re-applied for as an (IRS) 501-C3 corporation and became the Antrim Ambulance Squad. It was noted here that a Town (and any department of a Town) cannot be a 501-C3 corporation under the IRS rules. Fire Chief Beauchamp asked the Selectmen to accept the ambulance service now as a department of the Town under the jurisdiction of the fire department until Town Meeting in March 2000. At the March 2000 Town Meeting the Fire Department and Ambulance Service will present a warrant article asking the Town to accept them as a department of the Town under the Fire Department.

There was some general discussion regarding how the budgeting aspect will work. Captain Lovering noted that the average operating budget is between \$14,000 and \$18,000 a year. Antrim and Stoddard pay \$4,500/year and Bennington pays \$3,500. In addition, the Squad does fund raising. The Ambulance Squad will keep the 501C3 corporation to do the fund raising part of this but will keep detailed, separate financial records for these activities. There will be a budget prepared for 2000 and the Stoddard and Bennington fees will go to the Town. Chief Beauchamp and Captain Lovering would like to make sure that any surplus from the ambulance's operating budget get placed in the ambulance replacement capital reserve fund rather than in the general fund surplus. The Town Administrator noted that we can take care of that with a warrant article each year. The Town Administrator also strongly recommended preparing a written contract between Antrim's ambulance and the Towns of Bennington and Stoddard. After considerable discussion, Selectman Tenney made a motion to accept the Antrim Ambulance Squad as a department of the Town under the general supervision of the Fire Department until the March 2000 Town Meeting, at which time, a warrant article will be presented by the Ambulance Captain and Fire Chief. Chairman Seeger seconded.

VOTE: 3-0.

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6:40 – 7:20 p.m. MEET WITH MEMBERS OF THE MILLENNIUM COMMITTEE

The Chairman of the Millennium Committee, Sarah Edwards, presented the Selectmen with an outline of her committee's current status. This memo includes a tentative schedule of events as well as a synopsis of items they are still reviewing. Mrs. Edwards ran through the memo and the tentative schedule. Chairman Seeger is concerned with regard to the bon fire. There was some discussion regarding whether a bon fire could damage Shea Field and it was noted that if there isn't significant snow cover the bon fire may not be an option. The Committee is waiting to hear back from the Fire Chief regarding the bon fire.

The Millennium Committee also asked permission to set up a display in one of the windows in Town Hall, to help market some of their fund raising items. These items would include aprons, T-shirts, coffee mugs, goblets, etc. The only concern is that there are other groups in Town that have historically made use of the window during different seasons. The Millennium Committee agreed to work with other groups to share the window. In addition, the Millennium Committee would like to have the Town Hall open for a Saturday in November, and one in December, to show & sell their fundraising items.

7:30 p.m. MEET WITH FORMER ANTRIM POLICE SERGEANT, MARK CAVIC

Mr. Cavic was a no-show.

8:00 – 9:00 p.m. MEET WITH RESIDENT, BARBARA REYNOLDS, REGARDING TRAFFIC PATTERNS AND SAFETY ON SUMMER STREET

Barbara and Mark Reynolds, Andy Paul, Tod Bryer, Brian Beihl, Ruth Benedict and several other residents of the Summer Street area came in to address several traffic concerns with the Selectmen. The Selectmen had also requested that the Police Chief, Brian Brown sit in on this meeting, for his expertise. The Selectmen took a couple of minutes to review the written concerns presented by Mrs. Reynolds.

1) Excessive speed from traffic on Summer Street descending from the school areas throughout the day and evenings. Is this a School Zone? Should it be Posted?

Police Chief Brian Brown noted that currently this area is a 30 mph zone and to the best of his knowledge it does not qualify as a school zone because it does not run past the school. The Selectmen do have the authority to reduce speeds on any residential road from 30 to 25 but the Chief cautions that they must have good cause. The Chief also noted that there is a general rule of thumb that you don't solve speeding problems with traffic devices (signs or lights) you curb speeding with enforcement. In addition, statistics seem to show that lowering a speed limit doesn't necessarily drop speed, it usually just increases the size of the fines. The Chief noted that his department ran radar on Summer Street three days and he shared the following statistics:

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	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Total Vehicles	151	146	65
Fastest vehicle (mph)	38	37	33
between 35 – 38 mph	11	7	not available
between 31 – 34 mph	10	13	not available
between 25 – 30 mph	42	40	not available
under 25 mph	88	86	not available

The Chief does feel that enforcement at the beginning of the school year is the answer for the speed on Summer Street. The Chief did agree that perhaps an additional sign stating "Not a Thru Way" with a sign to the School down by Jameson Avenue might be helpful.

2) Low visibility at the top of Summer Street (corner of Summer and School Streets). Traffic descending is cutting the corner off, endangering children and cars from Taub's and Bryer's driveways.

Chief Brown agreed that this is a problem and thought that they could measure the roadway and paint a yellow centerline, in an effort to keep the traffic more to the right. In addition, Tod Bryer would be willing to change his fence a little to improve visibility. There was a question about whether a barrier could be installed in the lane going into the school since this is supposed to be one-way. The Chief noted that that would not be safe, it is prohibited in the same way that speed bumps are prohibited on public ways.

3) Snow removal for sidewalks on West Street, Highland Avenue and Main Street. Children walking to school are forced to walk in the streets on Highland and West Street. Pedestrians are unable to use the sidewalks on the Post Office side of Main Street.

Chief Brown noted that the Town uses regular pick up trucks or the front-end loader for plowing. On Highland Avenue there are telephone poles on the street side of the sidewalks and mailboxes in between phone poles. This prohibits plowing of Highland Avenue with a truck. The Post Office side of Main Street has never been plowed by the Town. We cannot reach it with the trucks and it is not safe to put a loader on an elevated sidewalk because it could tip over. In the past the businesses on that side of Main Street have, on occasion, kept those sidewalks clear but the Town doesn't currently have equipment to do that. The Town does attempt to keep the sidewalks on West Street clear. The problem is that the sidewalks are uneven so plowing is difficult. In addition, there isn't much room to put the snow. The Town Administrator also noted that the Highway Department lost an employee four or five years ago, who has never been replaced. From a manpower standpoint sidewalks just aren't the priority during a storm. The Highway Department's priority is plowing the bus routes and then the other streets in Town and then the sidewalks. There was discussion about using a snow blower on the sidewalks or hiring a subcontractor to do sidewalks or perhaps some kind of a tractor and hiring another employee to take care of this. The Selectmen agreed to have the Town Administrator look into costs on some of these choices.

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3) Unclear visibility on the corner of Summer Street and Main Street when areas are parked up to the corners on either side of Summer Street on Main Street.

Ruth Benedict noted that when you are waiting at the stop sign on Summer Street, trying to make a left hand turn onto Main Street, it is very difficult to see beyond the parked cars. Since this is the outlet for all the school traffic this is a safety issue. The Town Administrator certainly sympathizes because the Town employees often have trouble seeing to get out of the Town Hall parking lot. However, since parking is at such a premium in the downtown area and because "no parking" zones could significantly impact downtown business owners she stresses caution in creating "no parking" zones. Chief Brown agrees that this could have a very negative impact on businesses and suggests that he look to see what the absolute minimum amount of "no parking" space is required for safe left hand turns out of Summer Street. Chief Brown will get back to the Selectmen with this information.

GENERAL BUSINESS

• **Review and discuss tax rate and court decision on this process.**

The Town Administrator made the Board aware that she received a call from Joan Girard from the NH Department of Revenue Administration and there was a miscalculation in the Business Profits Tax number used when she calculated our tentative tax rate. Ms. Girard is out of the office until Wednesday so we can't correct the rate until at least then. In addition, according to the Technical Bulletin faxed to us today, due to the Supreme Court decision Friday, finding the phase-in of the education tax unconstitutional, DRA is recommending that we hold our tax bills.

• **Review and discuss status of Zoning Board of Adjustment**

The Town Administrator made the Selectmen aware that she is concerned regarding the status of the Landuse Secretary, Sherry Miller, on the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The Town Administrator reminded the Selectmen that at the time Barbara Elia retired last August there was considerable discussion about whether, or not, to appoint Sherry Miller as an Alternate to either of the Landuse Boards (planning and zoning board of adjustment). The Board unanimously agreed, at that time, that since Mrs. Miller would be working closely with applicants in her role as a staff person, they would avoid even the slightest chance that someone would perceive a conflict of interest, by not having Mrs. Miller serve as an alternate on either board. In the meantime, the number of meetings, public hearings and general workload has just about doubled for the Planning Board and tripled for the ZBA. A couple of weeks ago, the Chairman of the Zoning Board did not have a quorum for a meeting and decided to make Mrs. Miller an Alternate. The Chairman took this action and then introduced Mrs. Miller as an Alternate on that night's case. I am concerned for a couple of reasons: 1) If the ZBA is having trouble producing a quorum for meetings, this must be addressed 2) the ZBA, as a Board, has no authority to appoint its own members or alternate members and the Chair, alone, certainly can't. I believe that the Board of Selectmen need to address these issues with the Chairman of the Zoning Board. The Selectmen agreed to send the Chairman of the

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Zoning Board of Adjustment a letter. They are certainly willing to meet with him if he deems that necessary.

- **Review and discuss permission for Antrim Players to mount signs on "Welcome To Antrim" signs**

Considerable discussion took place regarding the request from the "Players" to mount signs to the Antrim Welcome Signs. The Board agreed unanimously that they cannot allow that because then every group in Town will want to use that space. In addition, the Antrim Celtic Celebration Committee will be notified that they are no longer allowed to use this space either.

- **Review and discuss Millennium Committee's request to use one window of Town Hall to market fund raising items for sale (6 mos – 1 year)**

This item was discussed with the Millennium Committee – see above

- **Review and discuss tax deeds**

The Town Administrator ran through the seven pieces of property that still owe 1996 property taxes. Two of these properties have written payment agreements with the Selectmen that are being adhered to. One has a verbal agreement, that is being adhered to and one is in the process of making a written agreement. One property owner stated on the phone that she wants the Town to take the property. There is one property owner who has not picked up his certified mail notices and does not have a phone. The Town Administrator suggested sending a letter regular mail and if we get no response in a week asking the police department to hand deliver a letter. This property has a house on it and if the Town takes it, we may have to evict the resident. The final property, Selectman Tenney will discuss with Mr. Tom Davis. Chairman Seeger made a motion to authorize the Tax Collector to prepare and execute a tax deed on the property owned by Priscilla Chandler on 79 Gregg Lake Road (Map 2A, Lot 108). Denise Dargie seconded. VOTE: 3-0.

- **Discuss status of revisions on materials and fees for A.R.T.S.**

The Town Administrator reminded Selectman Tenney that he was going to review the written list of materials that are approved for disposal at the Antrim Recycling and Transfer Station (A.R.T.S.) Mr. Tenney had been waiting for some information that Selectman Dargie was going to check on with Hillsborough. Selectman Dargie reports that Hillsborough has a pretty informal policy with a disposal cost of \$5 for almost everything.

- **Review, discuss and approve Planning Board's recommendation as Spencer Garrett to serve on Traffic Advisory Committee**

The Selectmen reviewed the letter from the Chairman of the Planning Board recommending Planning Board member Spencer Garrett to serve on the NH Traffic Advisory Committee. Chairman Seeger made the motion to appoint Spencer Garrett to this committee; Selectman Tenney seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

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- **Review and approve minutes of the October 4, 1999 meeting.**

Chairman Tim Seeger made a motion to accept the minutes of the October 4, 1999 meeting, as printed. Selectman Dargie seconded. VOTE: 3-0.

- **Set up 2000 Budget Worksessions.**

The Town Administrator made the Board aware that she is still waiting for budgets from the Fire Department, Library, Water & Sewer Department, Conservation Commission and Planning Board

The Board of Selectmen signed the following items:

- (1) Intent to Excavate – Harriman, Letter to Firefighter's Auxiliary regarding their status, Letter to resident regarding delinquent taxes, Signature card for Celtic Committee's bank account, (1) Intent to Cut Wood or Timber – Dionne


Taxation of the Stone Church on Route 31

The Town Administrator noted that she received an anonymous phone call asking if the Stone Church, owned by Jim Rymes, is taxable and if not, why not? Upon researching this question the Town Administrator noted that the assessment card states the property is "not exempt" but there is a note on the card stating it is tax exempt by vote of the Selectmen on 5/23/93. Further research shows that the Congregational Church transferred ownership to Mr. Rymes in 1992. The conditions of this conveyance included Mr. Rymes completing some repairs and restoration within five years (new heating system, new septic system, roof, stained glass windows, etc.) Then in May 1993 the Selectmen (Paul Boule, Tom Davis and Phil Dwight) voted unanimously to "...retain tax exempt status for The Stone Church..." The Town Administrator spoke briefly to former Selectman Phil Dwight and his recollection is that the 1993 Board made that determination based on the fact that Mr. Rymes had a 501C3 corporation. The property transferred from Mr. Rymes personally to the Stone Church Foundation in October of 1993. There is no documentation on record showing the purpose of this foundation and Mr. Rymes' foundation has not filed the appropriate paperwork, annually, regarding tax exempt properties. The Town Administrator recommended that the Selectmen write to Mr. Rymes and request copies of the documentation required to treat this property as "exempt from property taxes". Selectman Tenney is very uncomfortable with this whole thing because it was suggested anonymously. If a person doesn't have the courage to leave their name, he doesn't believe the complaint or question should even be addressed. Selectman Dargie would like some time to research this matter further. The Board unanimously agreed to table this matter until the next meeting on October 25, 1999.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, this meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Submitted by:


Kelley A. Collins
Town Administrator