

Date: 02/23/04

Minutes of Board of Selectmen's Meeting

Meeting held at Antrim Town Hall -Office @ 7:00 p.m. on 02/23/04

Selectmen Present: Michael Genest-Chairman, Michael Oldershaw

Others in attendance: B. Prokop, B. Pratt, S. Chatfield, L. Henderson, M. Morrow, W. Witherall, R. Edmunds, C. Baker-Salmon, P. Moore, M. Beauchamp, P. Lovering

1. The selectmen opened the Public Hearing on the special warrant article for the construction of sidewalks on West Street, Summer Street, and Main Street North. This hearing is in compliance with RSA 33:8-a. Chairman Genest had W. Prokop give a background on the project and the present plans and anticipated cost. This project was started in 2001 at the request of the downtown residents and concerned school parents. The study in 2001 showed the need for repair and had an estimated cost of \$40,000 to \$85,000 for about 60% of the present project not including drainage and culvert replacement. It is also possible that we maybe able to obtain some DOT grants for parts of the project that are on the state highways. The \$185,000 will only be spent if needed. Questions were asked if the \$185,000 included any state grants, the answer was no and that the grants were only a possibility and would be part of the engineering and design work. A suggestion was made that we consider not having curbing since it only breaks down, or is a problem in the winter with snow plowing. It was explained that Underwood Engineering from Portsmouth and Concord will be engaged as the engineering firm to handle the project if this warrant is passed at Town Meeting on March 11th.
2. The selectmen closed the public hearing and moved into the regular selectmen's meeting. The first item on the agenda was to approve the minutes of the last meeting, which was voted and approved.
3. The selectmen then discussed the petitioned warrant article on the Conval ballot. Chairman Genest explained the concerns of the board and that the present uncertainty in the entire state educational funding methods, the various house and senate bills now under discussion, and the bills passed last year could make substantial changes to our entire funding methods and that there is no clear answers at this time. However, the present article if passed would mean a substantial tax increase to all the taxpayers in Antrim, estimated at about \$3.50 per thousand of assessed value, or the average taxpayer would be paying about \$500.00 more per year in their taxes. This we do not feel is fair. In addition any change in the funding formula, must stay in place for 5 years before it can be changed again. Therefore, it is very important for everyone to vote on March 9th, and to vote NO on Conval article #9 that changes to formula from 50/50 to 75/25.
4. The selectmen than met with Fire Chief M. Beauchamp and Ass't Chief P. Lovering of the Ambulance Squad. The first topic of discussion was new members for the fire department. The selectmen asked what the present manning was and what were the manpower needs of the fire department. M. Beauchamp stated that the charter calls for 25 members at Company 1, and 15 members at Company 2. At the present time they have 24 members in company 1 and 6 members at company 2. M. Beauchamp expressed real concern with getting people for Company 2. The present four (4) new applications were approved by the selectmen. M. Beauchamp will provide the selectmen with an up-dated roster of all members of the department. The next topic was the capital reserves that were cut from the 2004 budget for the fire department and the ambulance. Chairman Genest explained that the selectmen had no idea that the ambulance needed to be replaced since nothing was returned to the selectmen in the way of a CIP (capital improvement plan) from the ambulance squad. P. Lovering stated that she did not know that there was any request and M. Beauchamp stated he did not know about it either. P. Lovering stated

that the ambulance will need to be replaced in the next 3 years and the anticipated cost would be at least \$90,000. She, therefore, felt that the reserve should be restored to the \$18,000. The selectmen told P. Lovering to feel free to stand up at Town Meeting and ask the voters to add the \$6,000 back to the reserve. M. Beauchamp stated that he planned on getting a new fire truck next year and that the reserve for the Fire Department also needed to be increased. The selectmen pointed out that there was no request submitted by him for a truck next year, the only request that he made was for a truck in 2007/2008. M. Beauchamp stated that the 2007 truck is a tanker and that he plans on asking for a new fire truck next year, and he will just go to the people and have them vote it in. It was again pointed out to the fire and ambulance personnel present that we have a Master Plan that is prepared by the Planning Board and that is updated every year and that a Capital Improvement Plan is required by law to become part of the Master Plan. The Planning Board will be reviewing each departments request for equipment or other needs, and will offer their recommendations to the selectmen, who have the final approval. M. Beauchamp mentioned that he had no idea that the Planning Board was involved at all. R. Edmunds wanted to know if the selectmen are following the guidelines that were established in 1995/96 period when it was decided by the Board of Selectmen to replace fire trucks every 24 years, and ambulances every 10 years. M. Oldershaw asked if this was at town meeting and R. Edmunds replied No, that this was at a selectmen's meeting. The present board of selectmen had not ever heard of this plan. M. Genest then raised the point that in the future, if we go to direct billing for ambulance fees the money collected would go towards fire and rescue capital and operating needs, which would reduce the need for large reserves. P. Lovering wanted to know if the Town would still support a reserve or fund the operating expenses. She also felt that the "fee" basis would first be a P.R. program to sell the idea to the townspeople and that it was not decided, when or if we would go to charging fees. Chairman Genest stated that we had agreed to start a committee, right after the 2004 Town Meeting, to look into this and to have a complete program ready to present to Town Meeting, if necessary in 2005. In order to insure the timely delivery of information to M. Beauchamp and P. Lovering it was agreed to send all information to their mail delivery address as well as the mail box that they have in the Town Office.

5. The selectmen approved and signed the contract with Underwood Engineers for the TIF District sidewalk project.
6. The selectmen approved the accounts payable and payroll for the week.
7. The selectmen reviewed various correspondences.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M.G.' or similar initials, located at the bottom right of the page.