

**Town of Brookfield
267 Wentworth Road
Brookfield, NH 03872**

**SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES
December 14, 2010**

Attendance: Ernie Brown, Clifton Camp and Craig Evans
Staff: Treasurer Marilou MacLean, Road Agent Ed Nason, Tax Collector Diana Peckham and Administrative Assistant Jennifer Sonricker
Guests: Gary Nichols, State DRA Representative and Gary Roberge, Avitar and Associates Representative
Reporter: Heather Terragni
Public in attendance: 11

Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM by Ernie. Clifton led us in the pledge of allegiance.

Board of Selectmen Reorganization: Ernie read December 1, 2010 from Craig regarding the chairmanship, Craig is resigning as chairman effective, his letter request these duties be passed to Ernie. **Craig moved to nominate Ernie Brown to fill out chairmanship position till March election.** *Ernie spoke to the motion, due to commitments with GWRSD expansion/renovation project he does not have time to commit at this time, he declined the nomination. No second, motion fails.*

Ernie moved to nominate Clifton Camp as Chairman, seconded by Craig. A vote was taken, all in favor. Motion carries.

Ernie thanked Craig for his work as Chairman, commending his outstanding job.

Public Comments: Dick Peckham questioned if Avitar discussions will deal with Lyford Road, if so he will postpone comments till that portion of the meeting. Lyford Road is the topic of discussion so Dick's comments postponed at this time.

Martha Pike thanked Craig for Chairmanship, expressing the loss to the town in his stepping down.

Avitar Discussions:

Gary Roberge from Avitar and Associates (Avitar) was present to discuss how/why several properties on Lyford Road came to be devalued; other issues/concerns can also be addressed at this time. Ernie questioned why several properties currently on the market have "sale price" and "asking price" listed on the tax card; this is a moving target. Relevance questioned. Gary explained that due to a lack of information for the revaluation all information available was used, current information is used for the revaluation, even though this data can change. They try to clean this information up before it hits the tax card, it must have been missed on several properties. Avitar will search for this information and remove it from final cards.

Depreciation of 8 properties on Lyford Road because of location to Happy's Firewood – Dick Peckham addressed his concerns; he is concerned about the note on the card indicating the property value decreased because of "IND" location. He reads this as an industrial location and is concerned how we can label something as industrial in a residential/agricultural zone.. He also is concerned because this decrease negatively affects everyone else's taxes because they are increased to make up the difference. Gary explained that the abbreviation "IND" is for industrial but is not sure how it got on the cards because this is not an industrial zone. Gary explained how and why these properties were devalued. The issue came to his attention after the revaluation public hearings resulting in him investigating the complaint; this action is customary. The % decrease was determined after parking and listening to the noise; the depreciation value was increased or decreased depending on the level of noise at the different locations. There are no sales to confirm these numbers so data and statistics from other operations in the state were used in making the determinations. He explained that noise in rural communities does have an impact. Several members of the public questioned if other properties in town should be devalued that are located next to noisy operations. Gary explained that it the constant nature of the Happy's Firewood operation that has lead to the assessed property value decrease. Geary Ciccarone, owner of Happy's Firewood questioned how long the noise was

evaluated for; with Gary Roberge explaining the evaluation lasted about an hour and a half with ~10 minutes spent at each location. Gary explained he keeps a log for the machine and on average the wood processor runs 1.32 hours/day, ~3 days/week. He is concerned why he was never contacted to explain hours of operation and feels a lot of assumptions were made in making this determination. Discussions continued. Scale of operation and noise in residential area are concerns of several property owners near Happy's Firewood. When questioned why the property containing the site was not devalued Gary explained that property owner has control to stop the operation. It was questioned whether this could be re-evaluated and changed (if necessary) at this time. It is too late to change anything for this tax billing cycle but the issue can be revisited in April 2011. No direction given at this time on.

Gary provided the Board with a copy of the State Ratio Study (Equalization); reporting things are in good shape. He requested the Selectmen review the report and when satisfied sign the Equalization form and send to DRA. Gary should be notified when the form is sent to DRA so he can forward supporting documents to the state.

Nate Fogg – Perambulation Report: Nate was not in attendance, report postponed. Ernie will contact him to reschedule.

Public Officials:

Board of Selectmen

Selectmen reported on pending budget process. Municipal service contract from Wakefield arrived with good news; the 2011 estimates are ~\$15,000 less than 2010. Estimates are as follows:

- Public Safety - \$168,965 (2010 - \$175,002)
- Solid Waste - \$61,888 (2010 - \$71,180)

Two major road projects are planned in 2011; portion of Stoneham Road and Tibbett's Hill. This year saw increases in many requests. The Selectmen tried to keep the budget as level to 2010 as possible in anticipation of school increases that are expected next year. One additional meeting will be scheduled to wrap things up and then public hearings will be scheduled.

Treasurer

Marilou presented checks for signature and invoices for approval. The County has been paid leaving a \$40,000 balance which is slightly under the bills presented this evening. The Tax Collector has just made a substantial deposit which will cover the difference. In addressing open issues Marilou addressed the RSA which requires the Treasurer and Selectmen give permission to the Tax Collector, Town Clerk and their respective Deputies permission to do deposits on their behalf. Marilou presented the Selectmen with two forms to be signed granting this permission, the Selectmen signed the forms. We have been notified by the IRS that coupon books can no longer be used to pay quarterly taxes; this is not an issue as Marilou has been making quarterly tax payments electronically for quite some time.

CEO/Road Agent

Two intent to cuts presented for signature; map 15, lot5 (Fluckinger) and map 21, lot 2 (Gallagher), both signed by Selectmen. Ed reported on road projects. Walker Road is complete, 5 loads of gravel were added, one culvert was replaced and the other one extended, PSNH has moved the poles. End of Tibbett's Hill is complete and the hill at the end of Moose Mountain Road has been finished. Loam will be added to the banks in the spring and seeded. The Selectmen were encouraged to look at the finished projects. Ed reported on recent road washout on Tumbledown Dick Road, both culverts on the steep hill washed out during the recent rains. He has fixed them temporarily but suggests they be redesigned as this is an ongoing issue. Ed will begin the DES permit process required to have the culverts replace. Ed suggests bottomless concrete culverts be used, the size be increased and alignment of culvert be changed. These changes should resolve the issue. A majority of the sand pile behind the Town Office Building has been sifted and moved to the salt barn, as sand is used from the barn he will move the remaining sand. The recent weather has resulted in sand and salt being applied 3 times; plowing has not yet been required.

Open wetlands complaint addressed, Ed has been in contact with the state and will be meeting with necessary parties.

Tax Collector

Things look good; payments are coming in ahead of schedule.

Heritage Commission

Marilou addressed December 8, 2010 letter submitted to the Selectmen. The letter requests a long range plan be established and structural review be performed on the Town House and School House. The committee requests until a plan is formulated only emergency repairs be made. The committee recommends a warrant article be written requesting \$5,000 to be raised by taxes and \$5,000 be requested from the Town Building and Expendable Trust account to cover the cost of necessary review/plan. Grant applications to appropriate funding sources will be submitted in hopes of funding all or a portion of this expense. Marilou expressed the importance of having the suggested plan/review performed by a preservationist. Ernie presented a report from Universal Building Systems (performed by Geary Ciccarone, dated December 5, 2010) addressing issues discovered during a recent review of the property, the report details the problem and provides recommended solutions for all issues. Marilou requested the Heritage Commission receive a copy of the report. No action taken at this time, the Selectmen will review the report and discuss in more detail at the next meeting.

Agricultural Commission

The Commission is requesting a 6 months schedule of upcoming town coffees with a designation of who is hosting the coffee. The board suggests all committees rotate hosting Saturday coffees. The Ag Commission is sponsoring a dinner on January 15th (snow date January 22nd). Geary will be cooking; price of the dinner TBD, tickets will be sold in advance. To purchase tickets contact Geary Ciccarone or Clifton Camp.

Old Business:

Assessing Contract

Two assessing bids were submitted as a result of recent RFP. The contracts were opened at November 23rd Selectmen's meeting. Ernie did a spreadsheet comparing both bids; the major differences were reviewed with the board and discussed. Both candidates are strongly qualified but the full staff provided by Avitar is felt to be a strong advantage. CNHA bid includes Assessor Clerk duties, support expressed for having a buffer between the Assessor and the Selectmen; an independent Assessor Clerk provides this buffer. **MOTION: Craig moved to hire and sign contract as presented from Avitar and Associates, Inc. for period 2011-2015, seconded by Ernie. A vote was taken, all in favor. Motion carries.**

The Avitar contract does not include an Assessor Clerk so the Board will need to advertise for this position. Assessor Clerk job description will be worked on during the next budget workshop and details/deadline for advertisement will be determined.

Review of Minutes

Review postponed till budget workshop.

Public computer for Assessment information

Details of how public access computer for assessing information will be installed discussed. Marilou will talk to Lance regarding technology connection. A quote from Geary Ciccarone was requested for installation. A wireless keyboard and mouse should be purchased.

New Business:

Equalization Municipal Assessment Data Sheet (Sales 2009-2010)

Ernie was requested to review equalization report provided by Avitar and report back to the rest of the board.

December 28th Selectmen meeting

It was suggested and discussed whether the December 28th Selectmen's meeting should be cancelled. No opposition expressed and it was decided to cancel the meeting, notice will be posted on both bulletin boards and the website. In order for invoices to still be paid Marilou will put all invoice and checks in the locked cabinet in the Selectmen's office. The Selectmen will be notified when items are available for approval/signature.

Budget Workshop

Budget workshop scheduled for December 16th at 7:00 PM. In addition to the workshop the Selectmen will also work on several open issues including: equalization data sheet, Assessor Clerk position, review of minutes and perambulation report.

Other

Selectmen reviewed letter dated December 9, 2010 received from former owners of 41 Pike Brook Road. The letter requests working with the Selectmen regarding their current property issues. The Selectmen will contact Legal Council to discuss how to proceed.

Mail:

Mail reviewed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Sonricker
Administrative Assistant