

**Enfield Board of Selectmen
Whitney Hall
Enfield, New Hampshire**

MINUTES of October 3, 2011

Board of Selectmen: Fred Cummings, Chairman; Donald J. Crate, Sr.

Excused: John W. Kluge

Administrative Staff: Steven Schneider, Town Manager; Alisa D. Bonnette, Executive Assistant; Jim Taylor, Director of Public Works; Richard A. Crate, Jr., Chief of Police

Others: Dan Kiley

BUSINESS MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Cummings called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The approval of the minutes of September 19, 2011 was tabled until the next meeting.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

Tax Collector's Report – September 2011:

Collections have been slow and steady.

We are nearing the time to set the tax rate. The MS-5 needs to be signed. The Rooms & Meals total is to be set by the State, which sets the school rate. We're looking at a tax rate setting in early November with expectation for taxes to be due before the end of the year.

Town Clerk's Report – September 2011:

The revenues are trending up with approximately \$8,500 more than this time last year. \$725,000 is the budgeted amount for revenues and we should reach that goal.

IV. BOARD REPORTS

Enfield Village Association:

The Enfield Village Association sponsored a "town green-up" on Saturday morning. Despite heavy and constant rain, volunteers did show up, several of whom made the "scarecrows" now decorating Main Street. 30 Dartmouth students also came to volunteer for EVA.

Crews were sent through the down town, to Enfield Center, and down the rail trail. A great deal was accomplished despite the weather.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Committee:

The CIP Committee met last Monday night. They are looking for a firmer understanding of the size of Public Works equipment needs in the future. Is the F550 or a different vehicle better suited for the work we do?

Mr. Taylor explained that International is offering a new line in the 25,000 GVW category with straight frames and tilt hoods. The Department is currently running F550's and a few F350's. Discussion ensued regarding truck suspensions, capabilities and features.

Mr. Cummings asked if Mr. Taylor had a list of roads that the Town is maintaining that we're not supposed to.

Mr. Crate pointed out that at least one of the roads, Arnold Drive, has been plowed for 50 years.

Mr. Taylor responded that there is no evidence that it's a Town road except that we're plowing it. The last place is for sale and this is the opportunity to change that. No one can provide proof that it's a Town road.

Other roads on the list include Hackett Road, Bryant Lane off Jones Hill Road, Riverside Drive, Abear Road, Hardy Road and Ledge Road off Oak Hill Road.

Mr. Crate said these roads have always been plowed. They started plowing when Harry Nichols lived there.

Mr. Taylor will look for a small book that Mr. Crate said listed all of the roads, their width, etc.

Mr. Schneider said it doesn't look like these roads are going to drive the size of our equipment. Mr. Cummings agreed.

Chief Crate asked these roads are maintained or just plowed.

Mr. Taylor said we're not putting maintenance into Bryant Lane or Arnold Drive. The only evidence we have is that a game warden and postmaster lived there.

Mr. Taylor added that no one is living in the dwelling on Hardy Road.

The CIP Committee also requested from Jim Taylor a list of priorities pertaining to road maintenance as well as more substantial repairs and reconstruction. Reconstruction is really a capital project. Mr. Taylor will work with Nate Miller, a transportation planner.

The Fire Department will be asked to meet with the CIP Committee as soon as possible to discuss their equipment needs. Aside from Public Works, Fire Department equipment is the biggest investment we make.

The CIP Committee wants to come in to the first Selectmen's meeting in November. The Budget Committee should be there as well so everyone can be on the same page.

V. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

FastRoads:

Mr. Schneider reminded the Board that he'll be leaving on Wednesday for Cleveland for a FastRoads conference.

Moose Crossing Sign:

Mr. Schneider received a request for a moose crossing sign on Bog Road, as well as speed limit signs.

Mr. Crate pointed out that it is breeding season and they won't be there much longer. There are no speed limit signs when you turn onto Bog Road from Bear Road.

The Board approved the installation of "Wildlife Crossing" signs near Bear Road and by the old stump dump or by Chesley's residence.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dan Kiley – WFTZ Bridge Closing Notice:

Mr. Kiley pointed out that WFTZ each morning announces that the Shaker Bridge is closed. They may mean the Shaker Boulevard Bridge.

It was agreed that perhaps this wasn't a bad thing as the Shaker Bridge is closed for construction.

VII. BUSINESS

Bob LaCroix – Land Swap:

Mr. LaCroix contacted Mr. Schneider to find out if the Selectmen would support voluntarily putting an article on the 2012 Town Meeting Warrant for the land swap as proposed at the 2011 Town Meeting.

Mr. Cummings does not care if it goes on the warrant. Mr. Crate does not have a problem with it either, but abstained from the decision last time and will do so again. The issue will therefore be tabled until the next meeting when Mr. Kluge is present.

Ambulance Billing:

Bob Cusick would like the Selectboard to voluntarily put an ambulance billing article on the 2012 Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Kluge sent an email prior to this meeting expressing his support for placing it on the Warrant.

Mr. Crate said he will not support it, nor will he support placing it on the warrant. He suggested the possibility of selling the ambulance and contracting all ambulance service with Lebanon due to the lack of response from Enfield during daytime hours. Even with billing we can't afford a full-time ambulance. Billing could cause a negative effect on people's insurance plans. People pay for these services in their tax bills; they shouldn't be taxed twice and that is what this amounts to.

Mr. Cummings said it looks like Mr. Cusick will have to submit it as a petitioned article. Mr. Cummings does not want to support it the way Mr. Cusick is recommending it. If the revenues from billing are going to support the ambulance then that's fine, but if the revenues are simply going to go into the general fund he won't support it.

The Board discussed the concept of "soft billing" for ambulance services whereby if a bill is not covered by the individual's insurance and the individual is unable to pay it will be written off. The uncollected amount would not be sent to a collection agency.

The cost for contracting with the City of Lebanon for ambulance services is about half of the Ambulance Department's annual budget.

Mr. Cummings noted, in Mr. Cusick's defense he wanted to know, with our aging population, how do we improve response times? Mr. Cummings thinks Mr. Cusick wants to see if we can afford our own ambulance service.

Mr. Cummings pointed out that he is aware that Dan Kiley believes in hard billing. Mr. Kiley responded that it's the people who know you're soft billing that won't pay. People who can't afford it will pay the bill, such as the old folks in Town.

Mr. Crate added that this creates a hardship on them. Employers are also cutting back on benefits and what will happen when insurance is over-used?

With soft-billing unpaid bills are written off. With hard-billing unpaid bills are sent to a collector.

Mr. Kiley is not saying the Town has to send unpaid bills to a collector, but feels if the bill hasn't been paid a second bill should be sent.

Mr. Schneider estimates revenues of \$45,000 to \$50,000 if just Enfield responses were billed and \$120,000 for all calls.

Mr. Cumming said a full-time service would be Monday through Friday with two full-time people with volunteers covering the remaining calls.

Mr. Crate said he would like more information. Mr. Crate would like the same level of response from the Ambulance Dept. that we get from Fire, Public Works, etc.

Mr. Schneider believes the discussion is a worthy one. There are dollars the town is not recovering from the healthy insured. We wouldn't do the billing ourselves, but would contract a 3rd party administrator. There would be an impact on our staff here. Dan Kiley makes a good point. This proposal is for a soft bill; if your insurance pays that's fine, but if they don't pay the individual does not have to pay what's not covered. Taking the next steps needs to have the end product in mind. Mr. Schneider does not think we should bill if we aren't improving our level of service. Having an improved level of service is our goal. How do we accomplish this?

Mr. Schneider asked if the Board would like this to go to Town Meeting or if they would like him to pursue this beforehand.

Mr. Cummings said he would like firm numbers on the anticipated revenues on all calls for Enfield, not just the ones Enfield responds to. Mr. Crate agreed.

Mr. Kiley said it would also be helpful to know what Lebanon has billed and collected.

Mr. Cummings mentioned that we would only need full-time staffing with a basic and intermediate EMT. Only 5% of calls need a paramedic and we can call for intercept.

Mr. Crate would like to see the cost for that as well as the cost for a paramedic.

Mr. Cummings estimates \$50,000 per person for salary & benefits; more for a paramedic.

Chief Crate believes regionalization can cut down costs and improve service.

Mr. Cummings said a certified ambulance service could come to a meeting of the Selectmen and present their program.

Mr. Crate questions the impact on the tax rate if we decide to go this way.

Mr. Schneider replied that it depends on how we approach it. We can go with an enterprise fund with the Ambulance supporting itself or we can bill, deposit revenues into the general fund and hire full-time staff.

Mr. Crate asked what it would cost for a private company.

Mr. Schneider said a private company would bill us and bill the patient so he's unsure you'd save anything if you went this route.

If we were our own provider we would probably have mutual aid. Right now the City of Lebanon covers 6 AM – 6 PM, 5 days a week.

Mr. Schneider will report back to the Board as to when he expects to be able to present solid projections. Bob Cusick will be informed that the Selectmen haven't committed themselves, but are looking into it.

Further discussion took place regarding response time for the Methodist Hill area and the Town overall and the differences, if any, of Enfield service vs. Lebanon service.

2012 Budget:

Revenues are very little different from 2011 and 2012 projections. Mr. Schneider is not comfortable changing the 2012 revenue projections dramatically from 2011 figures.

The Budget Committee met last week for their first meeting of this budget season. The Budget Committee will begin in earnest next month.

David Stewart resigned from the Committee. The Budget Committee appoints a replacement until elections next March. Dan Kiley indicated that he would be willing to fill in this year, but that he won't run in 2012. Doug Pettibone, Budget Committee Chairman, will be informed that Dan Kiley has the support of the Board of Selectmen.

Shaker Boulevard Bridge:

The decking is on. The approaches will be done this week. The non-4A side will not see much change. The 4A side will see a change in grade. The Tatham's had some concerns about the drainage to their driveway but they'll slope the grade the other way and do some ditching to address the drainage.

It is hoped the bridge will be open by the end of this week.

The Tatham driveway will be fixed.

Chief Crate informed the Board that FEMA will pay for a new bridge. They will pay for temporary work or permanent work. This bridge is temporary. We're going to be into the bridge for \$50,000 - \$75,000. For a permanent fix we'd have to pay 25%. We can retain the bridge we have now which will last for our lifetimes. Two years from now it will be too late to get this funding.

Mr. Schneider informed the Board that a new bridge would cost in the neighborhood of \$500,000 and our share would be \$125,000. We still would be out the cost we've incurred for the temporary bridge, which, we're told, would last as long as we can expect a bridge to last. Mr. Schneider is comfortable as it stands right now.

Chief Crate noted the time frame he has to work in. The Board can look at it this week and see how we can dress it up. If we decide we're going to do something we have to decide sooner

rather than later. A contract would be needed for the purchase of a new bridge. We have 6 months to get it all done.

Mr. Schneider has received no complaints about the appearance of the bridge. If it was a more active site we might worry about it more.

TIF Water/Sewer Extension Planning:

Property owners who would be directly affected by the planned water/sewer extension will be invited to attend the next Selectboard meeting, which will be held at the Public Works Facility. The engineers will be there to discuss the location. The cost, time frame, distance required to connect, etc., will be discussed.

Mr. Crate noted that with the initial system installation, unless they had a failed system they didn't have to hook on.

Mr. Cummings and Mr. Schneider said that a possibility would be to waive the hook-up fee if they hook up right away and have them pay the hook-up fee if they wait.

Shaker Bridge/Rail Trail:

Mr. Cummings asked about the status of the Rail Trail.

Chief Crate responded that he would email the Governor in the morning and find out.

Mr. Crate asked about the status of the Shaker Bridge. Is construction on time?

While they were delayed slightly when they had difficulty with the installation of one pier, the target date is August 2012.

Water Main Replacement:

Instead of digging the main there is now the possibility of a directional bore. This saves dewatering costs.

Mr. Crate is supportive of a directional bore. If they do a directional bore they can do it in the spring.

Mr. Schneider has no price update on a directional bore at this time.

Administrative Items:

The Board reviewed and approved the following documents: MS-1 Extension, MS-5 Financial Statement.

VIII. OTHER ITEMS

Emergency Management:

Chief Crate met with Emergency Management to assist a resident with a drainage issue. He assisted with getting a meeting with NH Dept. of Transportation, FEMA and the homeowner.

Lockehaven Guardrails at Crystal Lake:

The guardrails at Crystal Lake were replaced back in June. Mr. Taylor was able to get a good price on them.

Whitney Hall Generator:

The Town is working with Paul Hatch on a grant for the generator. Progress is delayed while Mr. Hatch works with FEMA on Tropical Storm Irene damage. The Town can proceed and do the project without grant funds if we want to move along with the project. Mr. Crate prefers to wait and get the grant funding.

Chief Crate noted that they put in a temporary fix that will help if there's another emergency. The good thing about Tropical Storm Irene is that we're now better prepared.

Mr. Schneider was asked to send a thank you to Langlois Electric for their fast response and assistance. While Steve Langlois has said he does not need to be paid for these services, even if FEMA reimburses for the expense and Langlois Electric is ultimately paid, the Board still wishes to have a thank-you note sent.

Shaker Hill Road:

Mr. Crate pointed out that the Town has to maintain this State road in the winter, but the State didn't do one thing this summer toward maintenance. Mr. Crate asked Mr. Schneider to contact the State and ask them to shim from Lockehaven Road toward the Village to the sheep farm or beyond, perhaps to Pillsbury. He asked Mr. Schneider to tell the Stat that we won't maintain the road in the winter because they didn't maintain it in the summer.

Mr. Cummings asked if Mr. Crate wanted to formalize this with a motion.

Mr. Crate moved to notify the State of NH that if they don't shim we're not maintaining in the winter, this request being made to the main source in Concord, the Commissioner, Mr. Cummings seconded, vote unanimous in favor of the motion.

The Board has no interest in taking over Shaker Hill Road.

Leaf Blower:

Upper Valley Tractor & Equipment won the bid for the leaf blower attachment for the tractor by almost \$1,000 at \$3,950. This is less than the amount budgeted. The Board of Selectmen approved the purchase from Upper Valley Tractor & Equipment.

Veterans Park:

LED Conversions will be here to look at the flagpole lights at the Veterans Park, which are not functioning properly.

Mr. Crate reported that the sprinkler system is still operating. He was informed that the crew is currently taking care of the pavilion building and Huse Park and the Veterans Park winter preparation will be done next.

Sidewalk Tractor:

Mr. Crate asked if the new sidewalk tractor was working out well. Mr. Taylor informed him that it has been and has saved us on mower rentals.

Light Equipment Operator:

Three candidates are scheduled for interviews on Friday, October 14th.

We are working on CDLs for our own crew members that don't have them.

CONFERENCE

I. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Crate moved to adjourn at 7:48 PM, Mr. Cummings seconded, vote unanimous in favor of the motion, meeting adjourned.