

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

**MINUTES of February 3, 2009**

**Board of Selectmen:** Rebecca S. Stewart, Chairman; Donald J. Crate, Sr.; John W. Kluge

**Administrative Staff:** Steven Schneider, Town Manager; Alisa D. Bonnette, Executive Assistant; Ken Daniels, Director of Public Works

**Others:** David Stewart, Dan Kiley, Steve Stancek

**BUSINESS MEETING**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mrs. Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Kluge moved to accept the minutes of January 20, 2009 as printed; Mr. Crate seconded, vote unanimous.

**III. COMMUNICATIONS**

**November 2008 Election Summary Report:**

Eligible Voters: 3067, Voted: 2450, % Voted 79.8826, Democrats: 891, Republicans: 670, Undeclared 889. A couple of hundred voters registered the day of the polls.

**Fred Paradis Letter of Resignation from Conservation Commission:**

The Board received a letter of resignation from the Conservation Commission from Fred Paradis, effective March 1, 2009. Alan Strickland will try to convince Mr. Paradis to remain on the Commission. The Selectmen asked that a letter be send to Mr. Paradis thanking him.

**Tax Collector's Trial Balance ~ January 2009:**

The Board took note of the \$30,000 in arrearages in the Water & Sewer Departments.

Mr. Kluge asked if people own large amounts in property taxes. Mr. Schneider replied that the figure is a bit higher than usual.

Mrs. Stewart noted that Dorchester is seeing a significant amount of foreclosures; something they hadn't seen before.

**Tax Collector's MS-61 Report ~ Year End 2008****Town Clerk's Report ~ January 2009:**

Compared to 2006, January revenues are down, but compared to 2007 and 2008, January revenues are up slightly. Mr. Schneider anticipates reduced revenues overall. 2009 estimated revenues have been budgeted at \$725,000 compared to actual revenues in 2008 of \$777,000.

**IV. BOARD REPORTS****20/20 Forum:**

Mrs. Stewart attended a forum of five towns from both sides of the Connecticut River: Hanover, Lebanon, Norwich, Enfield and Hartford. Those that attended broke into small groups to discuss issues that affect these communities, including transportation, environmental health, global warming, housing and other issues.

The attendees touched base with each other with their perceptions and realities of shared problems, assets, resources and things that they were doing well together.

The attendees included Town Managers, Selectmen and Council members and the forum provided an opportunity for them to network. They discussed opportunities to share resources, such as emergency services. They hope to get together once or twice a year.

Mr. Schneider noted that the area Town Managers get together to talk all the time. Elected officials don't talk to each other all the time; there's a void there that can be filled by this time of forum.

Enfield is very cutting edge, specifically about approving alternative energy tax relief.

Mrs. Stewart noted that Enfield's culture and perspective is important to the region. We're a bedroom community to these larger communities.

**Enfield Village Association (EVA):**

Mrs. Stewart reported that EVA is reaching a crossroads and making changes. They are handing over their operations of the Farmers' Market to the Shaker Museum. The location will be moved from Huse Park to the Museum.

Mrs. Stewart is not sure where things stand with the potential ownership of 78 Main Street. Mr. Kluge noted that the Planning board signed off on it, but no money has changed hands. The building needs a lot of work.

**Energy Committee:**

The Energy Committee is continuing to review the Town's streetlight inventory with the goal of coming up with recommendations for which to keep, change or remove. They plan to get input from the Police and Public Works Departments and at some later time will make a presentation to the Selectmen.

The Committee has also discussed the idea for local businesses to sell compact fluorescent light bulbs at cost to Enfield residents, ways to educate the public and their plan for a display at Town Meeting.

The Committee also hopes to take advantage of the Enfield cable access channel to educate the public.

David Stewart met with the Committee to get their support for a proposed petitioned warrant article for a solid waste reduction program.

#### **Capital Improvement Program Committee:**

There was no quorum present at the last CIP Committee meeting. They talked informally about how to set up a plan on how to prepare for upcoming retirement of debt. The Public Works Facility will be paid in 2011, so \$100,000 will come off of debt service. The Committee members present discussed options: reducing the tax rate, using the same amount of money for other programs, or taking on new debt for new problems, such as a salt/sand shed.

There was also discussion of covering the gas pumps at Public Works. Mrs. Stewart thought the Town had the materials for that. Mr. Daniels explained that the Town had some of the materials from the old Huse Park pavilion.

The Fire Department has two engines of the same age. The Committee spoke about preparing and identifying projects to fill that space if that's what the Board of Selectmen wants.

Mrs. Stewart added that the CIP Committee has already prioritized needs and wants of departments. A new form was developed for that purpose.

### **V. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

#### **Stimulus Package:**

Mr. Schneider attended a meeting with Congressman Hodes in Concord to talk about the stimulus package. Most of the money will go through existing State agencies. The package won't create a new bureaucracy to handle this so it will be handled through the State. The rest of the money will be competitive grants through Community Development Block Grants, etc.

Regarding highway money, the DOT Commissioner has identified \$55 million in projects throughout the State, including the Route 4 bridge from Lebanon to White River Jct., VT. The Commissioner was selecting projects off the 2009 projects list. There are also plans for some I-89 paving, including a portion in Enfield. The Shaker Bridge is still on the 2010 project list.

A lot of the money will go to subsidize Medicare. This helps the State, but not municipalities.

Hopefully the funding for 2009 projects will make the 2010 project list a bit more manageable.

#### **NH Local Government Center (LGC) ~ Proposed Legislation:**

Mr. Schneider attended a meeting with a presentation from Representative Bouchard regarding a proposal for a new gas tax increase of 5 cents each year for three years. This would increase the gas tax from 18 cents to 23 cents to 28 cents to 33 cents. Arguments can be made, both pro and

con. The State had some economists come in to discuss it. They think it will have a negligible impact at the pump. It will be a charge at distribution when gas is delivered to the vendor.

Mr. Schneider voted no on the proposed gas tax. It needed a 2/3 majority and passed 30 to 14, that LGC support this.

The 15-cent increase will eliminate the projected deficit in the Highway Fund that gets raided by the Department of Safety and Department of Motor Vehicles thereby reducing what the Department of Transportation can use for roads and bridges. It may also increase aid to communities.

The Governor hasn't said if he'll support it or not. He said he wouldn't support a tax until they pare down their operations; also, some language that caps what other departments can take from the Highway Fund.

The meeting consisted for managers, Selectmen and other municipal representatives. The gas tax vote has passed and now has the support of LGC.

Other discussions at the meeting included the positions to be taken on other potential revenue sources. The other big one was gambling. The LGC staff is to come up with better numbers on this issue.

**Enfield 8 (Cable Access Channel):**

Curtis Payne has informed Mr. Schneider that the equipment has arrived. He's almost ready to film. They are just looking for the timeframe from Comcast when they'll make the switch for the new channel.

Mr. Schneider told the Board they'd be surprised how many people will watch. What better way for people to hear what's going on?

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS****Steve Stancek ~ Proposed Route 4/Route 4A Rotary, Lebanon:**

Mr. Stancek asked if there were going to be any more public hearings regarding this project. There's an anti-rotary campaign and the Town of Enfield has a significant interest in that project. Maybe the Town Manager or Selectmen can talk to the Department of Transportation (DOT) and encourage another public hearing.

Mr. Daniels explained that they're in the preliminary design stages of the project. The rotary is not part of the bridge project. DOT is pretty fixed on a rotary. There was discussion of a "fly over lane, which would definitely be expensive, as well as the problems with rotaries, especially small ones.

Mr. Schneider replied that the Town would reach out to the State.

**Dan Kiley ~ Selectmen's Meeting Location:**

Mr. Kiley asked if the Selectmen have considered moving their meetings to the Public Works Facility so the meetings could be aired live and be held in a larger area. If there are 10-15 people and cameras the Whitney Hall conference room could be tight.

Mr. Kluge suggested waiting to see how it goes. Sound carries well in the Whitney Hall conference room.

Mrs. Stewart feels the Public Works Facility has good acoustics.

Mr. Stancek asked if there would be video streaming on the Internet as well. It would provide an alternative for those that don't get cable.

Mr. Schneider said it would depend on the size of the file. Perhaps broken up into sections. He's seen it done with entire meetings.

DVD's of recorded programming may also be available in the Library.

Mrs. Stewart closed the meeting to public comments at 6:48 PM.

## **VII. OLD BUSINESS**

### **Budget:**

The Selectmen were provided with copies of the budget as it would be presented at the public budget hearing on February 9.

The final tax rate, based on the proposed budget and estimated revenues, is \$6.81/thousand. This would result in town taxes of \$1,362 a \$200,000 home. The initial budget, before reductions, would have resulted in town taxes of \$1,628 on a \$200,000 home.

The new budget includes a new cruiser and truck for Public Works.

Mrs. Stewart has considered the plan to take money from existing capital reserve funds (CRF), including the Land Acquisition CRF, which has a balance of around \$112,000, and putting that into the Public Works Vehicles & Equipment CRF. Mrs. Stewart asked that consideration be given to using some of the Land Acquisition CRF money, combined with Tax Increment Finance (TIF) funds to complete the site work project at the Community Building.

Mr. Kluge did not think he could support spending the funds on the Community Building project. Mr. Crate agreed, that the Community Building project should not be completed right now.

Mr. Crate asked about the closure of the old entrance to Huse Park off of US Route 4. Why would it be closed?

Mr. Schneider said the parking lot design that was done now used that area for parking. The plan was to pave most of the area that's now dirt and gravel.

Mr. Daniels said that closing that entrance was one of the conditions from DOT when the Town obtained a driveway permit for the paved lot.

Mr. Crate pointed out that those were two different pieces of property, at least at one time. He doesn't feel people should have to drive through the paved parking lot full of cars to get to the gravel portion. The distance between the two entrances is far enough that they both should be able to stay there. He's received a lot of complaints about that being clogged with snow. It also has a sign that says "entrance only."

Discussion ensued regarding various past plans for the parking in this location, as well as the need for an increased number of spaces to accommodate the capacity of the Community Building.

Mr. Crate asked about the lack of funding for library books, fire department or other items discussed at the past Selectboard meeting.

Mr. Schneider replied that the Library book budget is \$27,000 vs. the \$32,000 requested. Mr. Schneider's memo presented at the last meeting included suggested changes. Discussion of the Board at the last meeting left him with the understanding that the Police cruiser and Public Works pick-up would be funded and the remaining \$50,000 would be added to Public Works to be used as contingency funding. It would not necessarily be spent on Public Works expenses.

Mr. Kluge understood it would be put in as a contingency fund.

After further discussion it was agreed by the Board that the \$50,000 would be put into an account, perhaps a Special Projects account within the Executive Department for use by other departments as needed.

**Town Report:**

The Board reviewed and approved the Selectmen's narrative for the Town Report as written by Mrs. Stewart.

The Board discussed the Town Meeting Warrant.

Petitioned warrant articles were received and accepted for amendment of the TIF boundaries, conducting a study on the withdrawal of Enfield from the Mascoma Valley School District, and a solid waste reduction program.

\* Mascoma Valley School District – Regarding the school petition, this question has to come before Town Meeting. The first step in the process is for the school to create a committee for a study. It does not require the Town to leave the district, but simply directs the school to do the study.

Discussion ensued regarding the Town's obligations upon separation from the school district, should it occur, including compensation for assets less the Town's responsibility for a share of existing debts.

Plainfield & Grantham have their own school districts to a point. Each of these communities pay tuition to other schools for high school students.

David Stewart asked if other communities in the district could contest this. Mr. Schneider does not think so. It does need State Department of Education approval.

\* Solid Waste Reduction Program – The Selectmen were provided with a spreadsheet of Pay-As-You-Throw (PAYT) programs in other communities, provided by the Northeast Resource Recovery Association. This spreadsheet provides information on how other communities are handling their PAYT programs.

Mr. Stewart explained that this came about from a Budget Committee standpoint. Each Budget Committee member was asked to come up with ways to increase revenues. He has been thinking about this for some time. While people have no choice whether they need to use the ambulance or not, they do have a choice about how much they throw out. About \$400,000 was spent on sanitation last year. The Budget Committee doesn't like to reduce services. This plan allows everyone 104 bags, or the equivalent of 2 bags per week.

With the proposed program, recycling would be encouraged. While Mr. Stewart doesn't believe the town should force people through fees, people should be aware of the realities of the lack of landfill space, etc. The life of the Lebanon Landfill is uncertain. Other options include Hartford, but we don't know what the costs would be. Another option is burning. This is not a perfect plan, but he feels it has a chance of passing. It's pretty fair and should get people to start recycling and should produce some revenue.

Mr. Stancek, chairman of the former Solid Waste Committee, told the Board that the Committee explored a lot of concepts. The Committee was very supportive of a PAYT concept, but based on the results of a survey conducted by the Committee they felt it better to leave the existing programs alone. He's not sure about increased revenues from such a program, but perhaps it might be revenue neutral. It may result in increased use of the transfer station, which could result in additional costs for staffing, expansion, etc.

Mr. Stancek feels the concept is a good one. If we're ever going to get people to recycle this is the way to do it. If you recycle you can get by with 2 bags/week. Those people that choose not to recycle and contribute more to the waste stream will pay for it. Mr. Stancek feels this program will be a good transition.

Discussion ensued regarding landfill options to the Town. It is unknown when the Town would have to address the option of sending trash to Hartford. The Lebanon Landfill could last 7 to 15 years.

Mr. Daniels reported that area Public Works Departments talk about solid waste. There's one common denominator: Northeast Waste contracts are all expiring within 2 years. The departments have discussed the possibility of a regional solid waste district to work together to handle this. Berlin & Rochester are options if Hartford closes the door. Mr. Daniels mentioned tipping fee penalties due to lack of recycling.

Mr. Stancek noted that recyclable materials are a commodity and as such are prone to market fluctuations. The whole recycling highway has come to a stop. He wouldn't let that dissuade the Town from programs that make long-term sense. The public is skittish about getting on board with new concepts. This program is a gentle way to ease into it.

Mr. Stewart pointed out that those that don't use their quota of bags on a weekly basis can use them for spring cleaning.

Mr. Crate expects such a program to increase roadside dumping.

Mrs. Stewart disagrees and Mr. Stewart pointed out that the spreadsheet shows that most towns have no dumping problem or only rarely have a dumping problem.

The reason for using orange bags is to make the program more easily enforceable.

Mr. Kluge stated that on a personal level he likes this a lot, but he wanted to talk to people that recycle. He received no support from individuals that recycle. On a personal level he might vote for this article, but as a member of the Board of Selectmen he won't support it. People don't want to pay for it. Some have lost their jobs. For a family of 6 this program could cost serious money. Others won't support it because of the cost.

Mr. Stancek understand Mr. Kluge's logic, but he feels a recommendation by the Board of Selectmen would go a long way.

Mr. Crate agreed with Mr. Kluge. He doesn't think it will fly and as Selectman won't support it.

The cost of rubbish disposal was discussed, as well as the equity of the existing and proposed programs.

Mrs. Stewart feels discussion needs to happen to get people thinking about what they throw away. She thinks the revenue from recycling will become a better commodity in the future. She supports the petitioned article.

Mr. Kluge asked if figures could be provided on reduction in the waste stream when a PAYT program is implemented. Mr. Daniels will check with the Dept. of Environmental Services.

Mr. Stewart asked for the Selectmen's support of the petitioned article.

Mr. Crate moved to take a vote on this article; Mr. Kluge seconded, vote unanimous.

Mrs. Stewart moved to recommend the article for the Solid Waste Reduction Program; Mr. Kluge seconded. Mrs. Stewart in favor, Mr. Crate and Mr. Kluge opposed, motion failed.

The Board discussed the order the articles will appear on the warrant and reviewed the warrant narrative that will be included in the 2008 Annual Report.

The narrative for the WCNH inter-municipal agreement will include the text of the agreement in the narrative. A memo was provided to the Board that explains if this article is approved at



Town Meeting, a vote will then be needed by the Board of Selectmen after Town Meeting. This article has no impact on the tax rate.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

**Administrative Items:**

The Board reviewed and approved the following documents: Current Use Applications that were not fully filed and Veterans' Tax Credits.

**IX. OTHER ITEMS**

Next Meeting ~ Tuesday, February 17, 2009, Public Works Facility

**CONFERENCE**

**I. NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

Mr. Kluge moved to enter non-public session at 8:29 PM, RSA 91-A:3 II (e); Mrs. Stewart seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Kluge – aye, Mrs. Stewart – aye, Mr. Crate – aye, motion carried.

Mrs. Stewart moved to come out of non-public session at 8:42 PM; Mr. Kluge seconded, vote unanimous.

**II. ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Stewart moved to come out of non-public session at 8:42 PM; Mr. Kluge seconded, vote unanimous.