

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

**MINUTES of December 1, 2008**

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

**Administrative Staff:** Steven Schneider, Town Manager; Alisa D. Bonnette, Recording Secretary; Richard A. Crate, Jr., Chief of Police; Dr. David Beaufait, Moderator

**Others:** Leonard Johnston; Scott Johnston; Attorney Kate Miller, Donahue Tucker & Ciandella, PLLC; Katina Caraganis, Connecticut Valley Spectator; Dan Kiley; Debra Truman; Bruce Hettleman

**BUSINESS MEETING**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mrs. Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm.

**II. PRESENTATION OF THE BOSTON POST CANE**

Mrs. Stewart read a brief history of the Boston Post Cane. In the 1900's Edwin Atkins Grozier of *The Boston Post* captivated his readers with contests. His most famous and longest lasting advertising promotion was the give-away of the *Boston Post* canes. The "Boston Post Cane" is passed from hand to hand down the years to the oldest resident of the Town.

Mrs. Stewart was honored to present the Boston Post Cane to Leonard Johnston, the oldest living resident of the Town of Enfield.

Mr. Johnston told the Selectmen of his uncle, who lived to the age of 104. Leonard Johnston swore to his uncle that he'd beat his longevity. Mr. Johnston continues to work, helping with chores on his son's farm. He admitted to slowing down a little, but he keeps going.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Kluge moved to approve the minutes of November 3, 2008 and November 17, 2008 as printed, Mr. Crate seconded; vote unanimous.

**IV. COMMUNICATIONS**

Insurance Settlement Agreement

Mascoma Lake Association Newsletter ~ Fall 2008

## V. BOARD REPORTS

### **Planning Board:**

Paul Mirski suggested to the Planning Board that it was inappropriate to have alternates sit at the table with regular voting members when they are not substituting for an absent regular member. The Planning Board feels it's important to keep alternates engaged. Alternates will now sit at a separate table, separated from the head table by a couple of inches and with a sign that says they are non-voting alternates.

### **Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Committee**

The CIP Committee met last week. They went over 2 requests from the Cemetery Trustees, one a road improvement request and the other for a shed. The shed would be shared with Public Works so Ken Daniels, Director of Public Works, will review the costs. The Committee members made no decisions, as there was no quorum present.

Mr. Schneider added that the Board of Cemetery Trustees is still short one member. The Cemetery Trustees have both capital reserve and expendable trust funds that can be used to fund the two proposed projects.

### **Recreation Commission:**

The Recreation Commission discussed primarily about what it would take to do a full day summer program. The current program runs from 8AM until Noon, five days a week for five weeks. A full day program would run from about 8AM until 5 PM. The program would also expand the ages accepted to include middle school children. Currently the program accepts only children entering kindergarten through children entering the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. The budget includes funding for full day camp staff, which adds about \$6,000 to the budget. Discussion took place about altering the fee schedule.

Jeanine King, Recreation Director, met with the Budget Committee to discuss the proposed program changes. The Budget Committee's charge was to make the increase as self-supporting as possible. The program needs to be affordable enough for residents. A program needs to be developed that's dynamic, fun and something people want to go to.

There was also discussion of the possibility of having weeklong camps dedicated to specific activities such as boating, theatre, etc. The fees for these weeklong programs would cover the cost of the program.

### **Budget Committee:**

The Budget Committee has held a couple of meetings since the last Selectboard meeting. The Thursday meeting was dedicated to recreation, cultural and planning budgets. The Saturday meeting was dedicated to public works, fire and ambulance. There was also discussion of keeping the tax rate level and what that would mean with projected revenues.

The Selectmen received a document entitled "Budget Adjustments Target \$580,000." This document is the Budget Committee chairman's suggestion for areas to cut funding. The

document also proposes transferring funds from several capital reserve accounts to the public works vehicle capital reserves.

It was suggested that the chairman of the Budget Committee be invited to meet with the Board of Selectmen to discuss his thought process. Lee Carrier, Budget Committee Chairman, will be invited to the December 15<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting. Mrs. Stewart would then like all three Selectmen to attend a Budget Committee meeting together.

Mrs. Stewart asked if there appeared to be an agreement among the Budget Committee members on the chairman's proposal. Mr. Schneider replied, no, but it does show to get a flat tax rate some creative cuts need to be made. Mr. Schneider will be talking to staff members in the coming week.

Mrs. Stewart asked if the proposal includes the Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Advisory Committee request for funds to cover the shortfall of TIF funds for the completion of Community Building site work. Mr. Schneider said, no, it does not.

Mr. Crate asked if department heads would be at the next budget meeting to discuss the proposed changes. Mr. Schneider replied that they would. It is expected that the dollar amount of the reduction will be determined rather than what individual items need to be cut.

Mr. Crate voiced concern over a proposed hiring freeze.

Mr. Kluge stated that the reality is that every institution in the Upper Valley is facing hiring freezes. He does not think hiring is the way to go.

The pros and cons of a hiring freeze were discussed further, including the possibility of maintaining staffing levels, or that it might be better to reduce staff through attrition.

Mr. Schneider said a hiring freeze is a dramatic step and he would not support it if it were the only thing we were doing. Aside from the newest police officers all of the rest were part-time officers before becoming full-time officers. We may want to look at that possibility.

Mr. Kluge stated that the commitment to employees is to try to keep them employed and with benefits.

Mrs. Stewart added that it doesn't have to be all or nothing. Negotiations are about finding middle ground and making it work.

Chief Crate does not want to be in the position to lay someone off, but he also doesn't want to be in a position to cut services when someone needs something. He would like to see meetings so everyone is on the same page and to be sure we squeeze every nickel and cut it close. He doesn't want to see "feel good" programs paid for while cutting more critical services. As long as that's done he's sure staff will understand if there have to be cuts. If services are cut the community has to know why and what this will mean to them.

Discussion of cuts and possible reductions in services need to be had before Town Meeting. Dr. Beaufait pointed out that this probably means more than just the one public budget hearing.

Mr. Schneider assured that even if cuts were made the Town would provide services. He told the Budget Committee not to punish our employees for what is happening in the world. The Town's most valuable resource is its personnel. He wants to avoid the mentality of "I'm not getting this so you can't have that."

Dan Kiley said his first question is not what was cut from the proposed 2009 budget, but what's the cut from the 2008 budget.

Mr. Schneider noted that last year the Town had a lot of revenue from capital reserve funds and undesignated funds that artificially inflated revenues and expenses.

The shortfall in 2009 will be reduced revenues.

#### **Election Recap:**

Dr. Beaufait, Moderator, reported almost 2500 voters came through the polls on Election Day. The longest wait was first thing in the morning before the polls opened. The wait time was quickly reduced to about 14 minutes. Everything went smoothly.

At the recount, Dr. Beaufait offered to both parties his Moderator's report. In Enfield, only one of the contests was off by 2 votes – a less than 0.2% error rate.

He thanked the Police Department for their work. There were no major complaints about electioneering. There is one slight thing Dr. Beaufait would do differently. He would ask to use the conference room for new Election Day registrations. About 290 same day registrations were done at the last election. The conference room would only be needed every 2 to 4 years.

Mrs. Stewarts asked if Dr. Beaufait had a breakdown on party of new registrations. She was informed that the Supervisor's of the Checklist or the Town Clerk could say.

#### **Energy Committee:**

The Energy Committee has devoted a considerable amount of time looking at ways to save on outdoor lighting costs. They will be mapping streetlights and doing an informal survey of existing streetlights. Once this is completed they will make a preliminary presentation to the Selectboard.

The Committee is also working on an idling awareness campaign.

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

Mr. Schneider had nothing further to report.

### **VII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

#### **Streetlights:**

Chief Crate noted that a couple of streetlights are out or missing. He will contact Granite State about these. As much as he's all for conservation he is more interested in safety.

**Sailing Club:**

Dr. Beaufait reported that the fort is deconstructed for the winter.

Public comments were called to a close at 7:41 PM

**VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

**Cable Franchise Agreement:**

Mr. Kluge moved to enter non-public session at 6:17 PM to discuss, with Attorney Kate Miller, a Cable Franchise Agreement renewal, RSA 91-A:2 (b), Mr. Crate seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Kluge – aye, Mr. Crate – aye, Mrs. Stewart – aye. Vote unanimous, motion carried.

Mr. Crate moved to come out of non-public session at 6:49 PM; Mr. Kluge seconded, vote unanimous.

**Property Sale:**

The Board of Selectmen completed paperwork for property recently sold by sealed bid.

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

**New Street Name:**

The Board considered a new street name for a private road to be constructed near the Shaker Hill Road/Crystal Lake Road intersection. Mr. Crate moved to name the new private road “Stone Hill Drive,” Mr. Kluge seconded; vote unanimous.

**Public Hearing Date:**

The Selectmen will hold a public hearing on December 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss the expenditure of capital reserve funds.

**Administrative Items:**

The Selectmen reviewed and approved the following documents: Petition & Pole License for Bog Road, Yield Taxes Assessed, Corrected Second Issue Property Tax Warrant; Property Tax Abatements & Refunds.

**X. OTHER ITEMS**

**Next Meeting:**

December 15, 2008, Whitney Hall Conference Room, 23 Main Street

**CONFERENCE**

**I. DEBRA TRUMAN ~ TAX INCREMENT FINANCE (TIF) DISTRICT:**

Debra Truman came before the Board to provide an update on her proposal for modification of the TIF District boundaries. She met with the County Commissioners and explained what her thoughts were. She did the same with the School Board. The next step is to hold a public hearing. She was also asking the Selectmen to consider supporting an article on the warrant given the economic downturn.

Ms. Truman stated that the Town is looking at a \$400 to \$600 tax increase per household if [the Laramie Farms development] puts 75 to 100 children into the schools.

Mr. Kluge said the problem is that the Laramie Farms development is the “cash cow” of the TIF District. If you take that property out you take away the funding for the District. The purpose is to enhance the economic viability of the Town. The goal of the TIF District is to increase the value of the Town as a whole.

Ms. Truman stated that the Town has had the TIF District for 3 years and has raised \$80,000. The water/sewer extension should be a separate article on the warrant and the community has a right to vote on it. She does not think that when the TIF District was presented that it was understood. Ms. Truman doesn't agree with including a residential area in the District. The monies from the residential district should go to the general fund. She strongly urges the Selectboard to reconsider and support this.

The TIF Advisory Committee has suggested a list of things for the Town to consider as TIF funded projects.

Mrs. Stewart stated that one of the rationales for the TIF District was the water/sewer extension.

Ms. Truman does not think people truly understood the impact and during this time she doesn't think it's the right time. She doesn't think it's fair to do it to people this way. They should be able to vote on a water/sewer extension as a separate issue. She does not think a residential area should be included in the TIF district. Twelve years is a long time to ask people to put money into the TIF District.

Mrs. Stewart said that one of the projects that won't get finished is the Community Building site work. That project is estimated at \$263,000 and there would be a shortfall in TIF funds. The TIF Advisory Committee was going to request that the shortfall be made up through general taxation.

Ms. Truman responded that the Community Building project and water/sewer extensions do not have to be completed now.

Mrs. Stewart stated that if you eliminate the funds from the Laramie Farms development you won't get that back. The Laramie Farms development is a commercial development.

Ms. Truman contends that Laramie Farms is not a commercial development. The Public Works Department and Police Department will be asked to do more.

Mr. Kluge stated that the reality is that whatever the Town does with the TIF District the Laramie Farms project will go on. Kids will still go to school.

Ms. Truman said there were going to be 154 units in the development. Some are slated to be 1-bedroom units. She feels that what the developers say they'll do and what they will do may be different.

Mrs. Stewart replied that she understands what Ms. Truman is saying. If people are putting their kids in our schools maybe they should bear the brunt of that costs. We all pay to educate our children.

The Community Building project has been pushed out and pushed out and has to be completed. It can't be pushed out any longer. TIF funds are slated to be used for the completion of the Community Building project.

Ms. Truman said the additional cost for the Community Building could be bonded. She has no problem using TIF funding to pay for a water/sewer extension, only with using a residential area to obtain TIF funds.

Mrs. Stewart feels the TIF District presentation at Town Meeting was quite clear.

Ms. Truman feels some people were misled. Some people she has spoken to could not believe it was true. Several people on the School Board were astounded. They did not understand. The way this was presented it would not raise taxes and was misleading.

Dr. Beaufait moderated the meeting at which the TIF District was presented. He also attended public hearings that were held, though not the School Board presentation hearing. It was a complicated issue. Perhaps it was not as clear as it might have been but it was crystal clear to him and discussion too place on cost of children to the school district. There's been a turnover of Town and School Board members and the School Superintendent. There was plenty of discussion whether you agreed with it or not. Dr. Beaufait feels it was discussed at great length. The issue is, have circumstances changed so much that you want to abandon the District? If the Town loses the District, he won't expect to see a water/sewer extension in his lifetime. He thinks there needs to be some continuity of process.

Ms. Truman responded that the boundaries could be adjusted.

Mr. Kiley stated that if you take the Laramie Farms development out of the District you might as well do away with the TIF District entirely.

Ms. Truman disagrees with Mr. Kiley 100%.

Mr. Kiley responded that there is no other place that will be developed within the district.

Mr. Kluge agreed that it's just different buckets and all still for the good of the Town.

Mrs. Stewart's final comment is that she believes the Board is not prepared to propose a change in the District.

Mr. Crate would like to take some time to think about it and discuss it as a Board at another meeting.

Mrs. Stewart informed Ms. Truman that she could present it as a petitioned warrant article. She is not prepared to put it forth as a Selectmen's article. She respects Ms. Truman's viewpoint but doesn't agree with it.

**II. ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Crate moved to adjourn at 8:15 PM; Mr. Kluge seconded, vote unanimous.