

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

MINUTES of November 19, 2007

Board of Selectmen: Curtis Payne, Chairman; Rebecca S. Stewart; Donald J. Crate, Sr.

Administrative Staff: Steven Schneider, Town Manager; Alisa D. Bonnette, Recording Secretary; Richard A. Crate, Jr., Chief of Police; Ken Daniels, Director of Public Works

Others: Kelley Wescott; David Stewart; Shirley Green; Dr. David Beaufait, Moderator; Judy Kmon & Bart Thurber, Library Trustees; Henry Cross; Dan Kiley; Fred Paradis; Dwight Marchetti; Jim Jetty

BUSINESS MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Payne called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Stewart moved to accept the minutes of November 5, 2007 as written; Mr. Crate seconded, vote unanimous.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

Andover ZBA Hearing Notice re: Wireless Facility

DES Certificate of No Further Action re: Tinkham's Store

Town Clerk's Report ~ October 2007:

Last month revenues were \$9,000 behind the prior year revenues. This month revenues are only \$5,000 behind the prior year revenues. At the tax rate setting the NH Dept. of Revenue Administration was informed that \$785,000 was anticipated for the year, slightly less than revenues realized in 2006.

Final Tax Bill Mailed 11/5/2007:

The Town tax rate went up one penny. The undesignated fund balance is still around \$1.1 million or roughly 9.5% of the total expenditures the Town is required to make, including school and county payments.

IV. BOARD REPORTS**Capital Improvement Program Committee:**

The FAST Squad was unable to attend the meeting, but should be at the next meeting. The next meeting will be held tomorrow evening at 6:00 PM at the Public Works building.

Heritage Commission:

The Heritage Commission received a report from Chris Hadsel regarding the scenic drops at Enfield Center Town Hall. It was a favorable report. The drops are in fairly good shape. There are a total of seven drops and a number of side panels. It will cost about \$17,000 to completely restore all of that. Two belong to the Grange. The Town can talk to the Grange about whether we want them.

Budget Committee:

The Budget Committee spent a half hour talking to the Cemetery Trustees. The Town has in excess of 20 cemeteries to maintain. They'll come back to discuss a storage building at Countryside Cemetery and the drive and tree work needed at Lakeview Cemetery.

Forty minutes was spent discussing the Police Department budget. They did talk about whether the Department would expand. Commissioner Sweeney wrote a memo regarding the officers, and organization of the Department. No additional officers are required.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 29 when they will discuss regional associations. As long as we financially support regional organizations there will be differences of opinion on support of those agencies vs. private support. This is a debate that needs to take place. The regional organization budgets need to be scrutinized.

Planning Board:

The Planning Board discussed a major 7-unit subdivision on George Hill. They received neighborhood input. They have already put a driveway in and knocked out some stonewalls and moved property markers. The neighbors would like restitution before the Planning Board approves the project, but it is believed the Planning Board can't put such a restriction on a subdivision.

They also discussed a minor sub-division on NH Route 4A, Mickey's Roadside Café's request for a drive-up window, and lastly they heard from Bob LaCroix with a proposal to add a room on the back of the Lake Sunapee building. Mr. LaCroix needs to return with more detailed plans for the proposed project.

Zoning Board of Adjustment:

The ZBA granted a variance for a new wind tower going in. It is felt that wind towers should be added to the list of exceptions for structure height restrictions.

V. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**Property Auction:**

The property auction took place on Saturday and went without a hitch. The mobile home was sold for \$2,200. The 12½-acre parcel sold for \$87,500. There were plenty of interested parties. The process was simple for the Town and eliminated much of the confusion we experienced in previous years with the sealed bid process.

Silent Auction:

A silent auction was held on the same day and location as the property auction. There were computers and bicycles, among other surplus items. The silent auction brought in around \$180 in revenue. The Town will continue to hold this type of event from time to time.

Water/Sewer Bills:

The staff has audited the water and sewer billing. Folks have come in and receive a credit if the delay in reading their meter pushed them into a higher category. Unfortunately, some people were caught by surprise because we weren't as good about notifying users when they'd see the change. One business owner had mentioned that if he'd known when the change in rates was going to take place he would have enacted a change in his business pricing. We'll do better in the future and will credit customers that are negatively affected by this mistake.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS**Jim Jetty ~ Water/Sewer Bill:**

Mr. Jetty explained that his concern is not so much the consumption part of the bill, but the fixed cost share that went up a large percentage, from \$12 to \$100.

Ken Daniels explained what constitute fixed costs that contribute to this charge, expenses that are not directly related to the consumption of water, including bookkeeping services, wages, insurance, etc.

Mr. Jetty asked if the general budget wouldn't cover salaries. He was informed that the Water and Sewer Departments are required by the State to keep their expenses separate from the Town's general funds. All expenses are supposed to be paid by water and sewer user fees.

Mr. Jetty was informed that the consumption charges went down, but Mr. Jetty does not feel they've gone down enough to offset the large increase in the fixed charges.

Mr. Jetty was informed that the rates are not set in stone. There's a possibility of adjustment. There are 2 people in the department. The cost of doing business is in our people. To reduce expenses in the Water and Sewer Departments would be difficult. The Town can look into what is put into the fixed costs vs. consumption, but we still need to cover expenses.

Upon his inquiry, Mr. Jetty was also informed that the new water class charge and sewer class charges were combined on the current bill. They will be broken out on the next bill.

Dr. Beaufait asked if everyone should have their bill audited. Mr. Schneider and Mr. Daniels replied that the Department is already doing it.

Mr. Payne stated that one of the things that was clear to him was that even though it's a jump in rates for some it's a fairer way to spread the costs. You're paying relatively more, but not compared to the really big users. The other system didn't do that.

Mr. Jetty doesn't feel there is anyone in the room that would use less than 6,000 cubic feet. Mr. Schneider explained that the Department used actual data to construct the classes so it didn't put too much of a burden on smaller users vs. larger users.

Mr. Payne looked at this very hard. Mr. Daniels explained it very well and Mr. Payne thinks overall that it's fair.

Laurie Smardon feels the increased in fixed costs is exorbitant. Mr. Payne acknowledged it might be larger percentage-wise, but how about dollar-wise? Mr. Jetty responded that it's another \$128.

It was explained that part of the reason that bills went up is that the meters were read late, adding another three weeks of usage to the bills.

With the old billing system the costs weren't equitably spread out based on the consumption of the user. Smaller users were subsidizing the biggest users. The tiered system was created on a bell curve based on volume.

Dan Kiley asked if anyone's bill went down. He was informed that some had.

Mr. Kiley asked what was billed third quarter this year compared to third quarter last year. If you don't look at those figures you don't know if the formula is right.

The Board was informed that Mr. Kiley's point could be investigated.

Dwight Marchetti asked what the effect will be of the 54% rise in Lebanon's sewer rates will have on Enfield. Mr. Schneider explained that is 54% over 5 years. Mr. Marchetti suggested raising the hydrant rental rate.

Mr. Jetty asked if the Water and Sewer Departments were losing money on the old rate. He was informed that they were.

Mr. Schneider stated that the Water and Sewer Departments will make adjustments and credits where warranted by the late meter readings.

Dwight Marchetti ~ Huse Park:

Is the completion of the Huse Park [Community Building] site work in the budget to be finished this year? Only one coat of pavement has been put down in the parking lot, the drain is 1" to 1½" above the parking lot and the other part is still gravel. When the \$40,000 was appropriated it was supposed to be done in 2 years. It's not complete.

Mrs. Stewart mentioned that this is one of the issues being discussed at the CIP meetings.

Mr. Schneider explained that the money was spent on the ramp, but the project is part of the CIP process.

Police Chief Crate ~ 4-Way Stop:

Chief Crate met with the NH Dept. of Transportation regarding the Main Street/High Street/Shaker Hill Road intersection and they will be putting in a 4-way stop in early December. They will put up temporary warning signs. Traffic will be monitored.

Laurie Smardon ~ Culvert Cleaning Equipment:

Does the Town own a piece of equipment to clean out culverts? Ken Daniels informed Mr. Smardon that the Highway Department has a modified pressure washer.

David Stewart ~ Whitney Hall Flag:

Mr. Stewart said the flag out front looks great lit. He asked about the Plexiglas and lighting of the windows.

Mr. Schneider replied that he is still working on the Plexiglas. To light the stained glass windows from the inside now won't provide the effect being looked for. Mr. Schneider is also looking into solar lighting for the flag to eliminate the need for extension cords.

The meeting was closed to public comments at this time.

VII. PUBLIC HEARING ~ EXPENDITURE OF CAPITAL RESERVE FUNDS

Whitney Hall Renovation Capital Reserve:

Mr. Payne called the public hearing to order at 7:35 pm. This is a continuation of the public hearing recessed on November 5, 2007. The purpose of this public hearing was to discuss the expenditure of funds from the Whitney Hall Renovations Capital Reserve Funds for the stage and window curtains in the Whitney Hall Auditorium. It is proposed to withdraw \$10,461.90 from capital reserve for this purpose.

Mr. Payne invited comments from the public.

Dan Kiley was dismayed that the Town would spend \$10,000 in the auditorium when plastic is still being put on windows in the Town Offices. He feels it is more important to spend the money on new windows than on blackout curtains.

David Stewart pointed out that the blackout curtains insulate.

Mrs. Stewart did not want to discount Mr. Kiley's comments, but the stage curtain prevents heat loss on the stage. That was one of the Board's considerations. Windows have been replaced in the conference room, the Town Manager's office, Julie's office and Wendy's office. The furnace has also been replaced with a much more efficient one.

Mr. Payne closed the hearing to public comments.

Mr. Crate moved to close the public hearing at 7:40 PM; Mrs. Stewart seconded, vote unanimous.

Mr. Crate moved to expend \$10,461.90 for the curtains from the Whitney Hall Renovation Capital Reserve Fund; Mrs. Stewart seconded, vote unanimous.

Technology Capital Reserve Fund:

Mr. Payne opened the public hearing at 7:40 PM. The purpose of the public hearing was to discuss the expenditure of Technology Capital Reserve Funds.

Mr. Schneider proposed the expenditure of \$4,464 to complete the study of the fiber to home project. This will provide a governance structure and a usable product so the WCNH.net project can move forward.

This is an ambitious project to run fiber to all homes in Enfield. It won't be free. Enfield is one of eight communities working on this project.

Henry Cross asked how much of the Town they plan to extend this to? He was informed that it is intended to extend fiber to the whole Town.

The project would provide higher Internet speeds than DSL.

Dan Kiley asked if the SegNet/Hanover suit would have an effect. Mr. Schneider explained that is part of the governance structure. It depends whether the 12" on the poles is strictly for municipal use, whether there would be a pole charge, or if it's run under ground.

Mrs. Stewart moved to close the hearing at 7:45 PM; Mr. Crate seconded, vote unanimous.

Mrs. Stewart moved to expend \$4,464 from the Technology Capital Reserve Fund to finish the fiber study; Mr. Crate seconded, vote unanimous.

Rebecca Stewart left the meeting at this time.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

Special Town Meeting:

Mr. Schneider proposed December 17th at 7:00 PM at the Public Works Facility for the Special Town Meeting.

Mr. Payne read the proposed article aloud, "To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into one or more agreements to lease town-owned property for longer than one year to one or more providers of wireless communication services for the purpose of installing and operating wireless communications facilities thereon. The commencement date(s) and terms of such lease agreements to be negotiated and agreed upon by the Board of Selectmen in the exercise of their reasonable discretion."

Currently the Selectmen can only enter into 1-year contracts.

Mr. Schneider reported the Bob Cusick would like to add the ambulance-billing question to the Special Town Meeting. The Selectmen can add it to the Special Town Meeting warrant.

Mr. Crate replied that it shouldn't go on the Special Town Meeting Warrant, but should be presented at the March Town Meeting where everyone can discuss and vote on it. Mr. Payne agreed. [Attendance at the Special Town Meeting is expected to be low in relation to March Town Meeting attendance.]

Mr. Schneider explained that Bob Cusick came before the Board in the spring to have it included on the March 2007 Town Meeting Warrant. Initially the Selectmen agreed to place it on the warrant, but changed their minds after it was too late for Mr. Cusick to present a petition. Mr. Cusick has contacted a third party billing firm for information.

Mr. Schneider will inform Mr. Cusick that the Selectmen will not voluntarily place the ambulance billing question on the Special Town Meeting Warrant because the expected low turnout. Under Bob Cusick's scenario only Medicare, Medicaid and insurance companies would be billed.

Dan Kiley stated that a fair try at collection must be made. The charge cannot just be written off with out attempting to collect. The Town must either bill everyone or not bill anyone.

David Stewart asked if the Board believes there is any concern about deductibles.

Dr. Beaufait responded that many insurance companies don't cover ambulance transportation.

Mr. Kiley stated that with ambulance services, deductibles will be billed by the hospital before the ambulance bill arrives.

The Board agreed to a December 17, 2007 Special Town Meeting. Mr. Payne and Mr. Crate said they would support an article on the March Town Meeting Warrant for the ambulance billing question.

CATV:

Mr. Payne is waiting to hear from Attorney Ciandella.

Grafton County Correctional Facility:

Mr. Schneider went to a meeting last Tuesday night. Superintendent Libby made a presentation at the meeting. A copy of the PowerPoint presentation was provided to the Board of Selectmen. The project is currently projected to cost in the area of the \$39 million to the low \$40 million. They cut the project costs by about \$5 million. There are more meetings being held in other locations.

They are thinking of a February bond vote by the delegation. The facility is not what is objected to, but the lack of financial planning.

WCNH.net:

WCNH.net is in full planning mode.

Whitney Hall:

The four windows closest to the ground were the ones replaced. The other 4 are next.

2008 Budget:

This has already been discussed.

IX. NEW BUSINESS**Conservation Commission:**

Projects coming up include: 1) Restoration of a stone culvert, part of the Shaker aqueduct system. 2) The old motel property. They want to do work there with minor stabilization and perhaps create a path to the rail trail and remove the rickety steps. This group does a lot of the labor themselves. 3) Preparation of a maintenance plan with Upper Valley Land Trust for the Bicknell Brook property as part of the management plan.

There is a vacant position on the Conservation Commission. Current members include Fred Paradis, Alan Strickland, Gary Gaudette, Shirley Green, Joan Fishman, Sue Hagerman and, as an alternate, Leigh Davis.

Two individuals have expressed interest in serving on the Commission: Celie Aufiero and Dwight Marchetti. Mr. Schneider reported that in a conversation with Rebecca Stewart she said she would support the appointment of Dwight Marchetti.

Mr. Crate moved to appoint Dwight Marchetti to the Conservation Commission; Mr. Payne seconded, vote unanimous.

Mr. Schneider can keep Mr. Marchetti up-to-date by email when he is away.

Mr. Marchetti thanked the Board for the appointment. He suggested that individuals that express interest in serving on a board or committee be kept up-to-date on the process.

Energy Committee:

Bill Martin, Robert & Carol Lammert, Doug Smith and Charles DePuy have indicated interest in serving on the Energy Committee. Steve Goldsmith has already been appointed. It was suggested that with these six individuals the Committee could also include a staff member.

The Selectmen chose to wait until the full Board is present before making a decision.

Administrative Items:

The Board reviewed and approved the Special Town Meeting Warrant and Land Use Change Tax Warrants.

X. OTHER ITEMS**Elections:**

Henry Cross said that Whitney Hall is where elections are usually held. Isn't the Community Building suitable? He was informed that the Community Building does not have enough space.

David Stewart asked, when Bill Coons moves the risers will there still be more room than the Community Building? He was informed that, yes, there would.

Dr. Beaufait pointed out that the Community Building also doesn't have a dedicated phone line.

Docks:

Mr. Crate asked who regulates the removal of docks before freezing. There are still some swimming docks out at LaSalette. This could be a danger to snowmobilers if the docks are left out all winter.

Fish & Game allowed them to use the space.

Dr. Beaufait, a member of the Sailing Club, will take to them informally.

CONFERENCE

I. LIBRARY BUILDING COMMITTEE

The Library Building Committee has looked at potential sites along Route 4 for a new library closer to the school. They have also discussed the desirability of keeping the library on Main Street or within the proposed historic district. They are also looking at a possible building on the Whitney Hall site. A map of what the Whitney Hall site might look like was provided.

They are currently looking at a two-story building of 7200 square feet at the back of the current site. One of the considerations was where to put it. If putting the building on the Whitney Hall property they need to look at long range plans for the Police Station, Whitney Hall and Huse Park.

Mr. Payne asked if the Committee had another options in mind at this point. Mr. Thurber replied that they have nothing they can discuss publicly.

Dan Kiley said the Budget Committee seemed to be open to the idea of approving funds, but not expending the funds until the library has completed its fundraising. Mr. Kiley does not think the Committee, of which he is a member, should go past its mandate of looking at a library. He does not think it's the Committee's job to do a far-reaching proposal that affects other departments. He does not feel the Committee should be making that decision.

Mr. Payne mentioned two issues that came up at the Planning Board meeting: 1) confusion about whether \$150,000 comes out of the \$400,000 surplus; and 2) if the Library Trustees can raise \$1.5 million why not raise the \$150,000 and not spend any taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Thurber replied that from a fundraising point of view the funds are needed to show good faith.

Mrs. Stewart likes the concept of moving the library to this general location. She asked if they considered placing the library behind the Verizon building so they wouldn't have to expend funds on a parking lot when we already have parking.

Mr. Thurber replied that this is what the architect came up with.

Discussion ensued regarding a library on the Whitney Hall site; that the placement of the library does not preclude development of existing entities, spending some funds from the Byrne Foundation grant to look at the planning process. Construction is not expected to begin until 2009.

The property behind the Verizon building could perhaps be bought or leased for use as parking. Mr. Schneider added that he has spoken to Verizon about use of the land. Enfield would have to double or triple in size before Verizon would need to expand. Even then, the space retained behind the existing building would leave space of expansion.

Mr. Thurber provided data to the Board of Selectmen on how the size of the Enfield Library relates to other libraries. There are 39 other towns with similar populations, plus or minus 1,000. Library size, employees, etc., were considered. Enfield currently has 3,248 square feet. The median is 6,000 square feet. What's unusual is that Enfield has the third highest density of books per square foot.

Henry Cross, a member of the first Building Committee and their idea to use the space behind the Police Station and Verizon building was shot down because it was believed to be a watershed area. He doesn't recall who said it, but believes it may have been an architect. Some people were also adamant about not having two stories and that is what's being proposed now.

Mr. Thurber replied that they looked at 7200 sq. ft. on a single level and the potential locations and found they needed to make compromises.

David Stewart asked how big the Town could grow. Mr. Payne believes the Town can grow to about 9,000 based on current zoning. Mr. Thurber explained that the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission has some projections as well.

The proposed library plan does not include a meeting area; they will instead make use of existing meeting space.

It was considered appropriate for the Library Building Committee to talk to the Planning Board.

The purpose of bringing this issue to the Board of Selectmen was to find out if this is something the Library Building Committee should pursue. They would like the consensus of the Board of Selectmen.

Mrs. Stewart stated that to the best of her knowledge the only other lot large enough for this project is near Oak Grove Cemetery. She does like the idea of keeping the library close to Town Hall and within walking distance of the school. She did, however, encourage the Committee to look at shifting it around a little bit.

Mr. Schneider will review some of the past documents the Town has on the use of the wet area behind the Police Station and Verizon building.

Fundraising for a new library has not begun yet. They are now creating a 501(c) 3 organization – Friends of the Enfield Library. If successful at the next Town Meeting with a commitment of \$400,000 it would go a long way toward their fundraising efforts.

Fred Paradis asked who owns Whitney Hall. He was informed that the Town owns it. The Library Trustees control what happens within the confines of the Library. Mr. Schneider will get copies of building research to the Selectmen.

Mr. Thurber stated that if the Library were to build behind Whitney Hall the Selectmen would be agents to expend funds. It would be a town-owned building.

Mr. Paradis asked if the Town Offices would expand into the vacated space in Whitney Hall for office and storage space. He was informed that yes, the Town Office would expand into the unused space.

Town funding was discussed. Architect and engineering fees will be about \$150,000. Roughly 20% of that is construction management. So 80%, or about \$120,000 would possibly be spent up front. The majority of those funds are to develop plans. The Library Trustees would never ask the Town to raise more than 50% of the total cost, which is now at \$1 million to \$1.2 million now without property cost.

Mrs. Stewart requested reassurance that they would not come back to Town Meeting for additional funds later. She was informed that is what the engineering documents are for, to provide firm numbers.

Mr. Payne stated that the Library has to make it clear to people that they're asking for money up front.

Mr. Crate and Mrs. Stewart made comments that were favorable to having the Library located on the Whitney Hall property. Mr. Payne would like to speak further to Mr. Schneider, but is supportive of the project.

Dwight Marchetti asked if they anticipate any problems with the Library located in the back of the lot with the Police Station located so close by. He was informed that none were anticipated.

II. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Crate moved to adjourn at 8:25 PM; Mr. Payne seconded, vote unanimous.