

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

MINUTES of January 30, 2006

Board of Selectmen: Dominic Albanese, Chairman; Nancy Scovner; Curtis Payne

Administrative Staff: Steven Schneider, Town Manager; Alisa D. Bonnette, Secretary

Others: Richard Crate, Chief of Police; Wayne Agan, Police Captain; Dan Kiley; Joe Cote, Connecticut Valley Spectator; Ken Daniels, Director of Public Works; Leigh Davis, Alan Strickland & Fred Paradis, Conservation Commission; James Thaxton, Upper Valley Land Trust; Phil Neily, Building Inspector; Marjorie Carr, Library Director; Judith Kmon, Bart Thurber & Francine Lozeau, Library Trustees.

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Albanese called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Scovner moved to accept the minutes of January 9, 2006 as written; Mr. Albanese seconded, vote unanimous.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

Trustees of Trust Funds Report – 4th Quarter

The Board reviewed and approved the following documents: corrected 2005 Second Issue Property Tax Warrant, Yield Tax Warrant.

IworQ Systems Agreement

Planning Board Notice of Public Hearing

The following issues were discussed out of agenda order.

IV. BOARD REPORTS

None at this time.

V. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

A written report for the month of January was submitted to the Board of Selectmen.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

VII. RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS**Conservation Easement:**

The Board met with members of the Conservation Commission and James Thaxton of Upper Valley Land Trust to discuss the proposed warrant article that places the majority of the property known as the Bicknell Brook property on Grafton Pond Road (Tax Map 9, Lot 45) into a conservation easement. Seven acres, more or less, would be subdivided and sold by the Town as building lots. As proposed in this article, Upper Valley Land Trust would hold the conservation easement.

The Selectmen wished to discuss the concept, how to manage the presentation at Town Meeting, and the cost to place an easement on the property.

There is a one-time cost of approximately \$8,000 for Upper Valley Land Trust to accept the conservation easement. The Conservation Commission would like to cover the costs through fundraising, rather than through taxation. A private party has offered to match donations made to this project. The Town will pay the full cost of the conservation easement. Revenue from donations would be used to offset the expense.

Mr. Thaxton explained that a conservation easement would extinguish development rights on the protected property. The Town still owns the property and the land can still be used for education, recreation or forestry. That a portion of the property is to be subdivided away and sold would be specified in the easement.

The benefit of having the property monitored by a professional, non-profit organization such as Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT) is that UVLT can be around long-term to monitor use of the property and be sure the easement restrictions are followed, thereby taking some responsibility from the Town. UVLT would work with the Town to protect the property. UVLT would not hold the Town responsible for third party actions, but would instead approach the third party and, through negotiations, would have corrective action taken by the responsible party. An added feature of having the easement held by UVLT is the permanent status of the easement and resulting development restrictions. The Town would have to buy the development rights from UVLT if there was a need to use the property for a purpose that is restricted by the easement. The Town could reverse an easement held by the Town.

A model easement was provided to the Board for consideration. Typically a conservation easement would allow hunting, fishing and logging. While it would allow snowmobiles in the winter, it would prohibit the use of wheeled vehicles. Anyone interested in snowmobile trails

would first have to bring a plan to the Conservation Commission and Board of Selectmen for approval.

The Selectmen noted that they had not been specific about 7 acres. While the Selectmen do not want to greatly impact the vast majority of the acreage, they do want to have some leeway for subdividing a few building lots from the whole. Concerns regarding topography and optimal size of salable lots were voiced. The Board wants to be sure the building lots are attractive to sell. Mr. Albanese would like to meet with Jim Taylor and Phil Neily to discuss the viability of the proposed lots.

The mechanics of funding the easement need to be worked out, with review by the NH Dept. of Revenue Administration. Mr. Schneider was asked to look into these issues and report back to the Board. Fred Paradis feels the town, as a whole, should cover the expense.

The Board requested that members of the Conservation Commission be available at Town meeting to provide information to the voters.

Budget:

Mr. Albanese moved to town employees with a 2.5% step increase for those with a satisfactory performance evaluation and a 2% cost of living adjustment, effective April 1, 2006, pending town meeting approval of the budget; Mrs. Scovner seconded, vote unanimous.

Mr. Schneider will do a pay/benefit analysis in 2006.

Enfield Shaker Museum:

The Board received a letter from the Enfield Shaker Museum regarding payment of past due taxes, which was read aloud. The Selectmen received a draft agreement prepared by the Town's attorney, which the Selectmen discussed in non-public session.

Mr. Albanese moved to enter non-public session at 5:40 PM, RSA 91-A:2; Mrs. Scovner seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Albanese – aye, Mrs. Scovner – aye.

Mr. Albanese moved to come out of non-public session at 5:54 PM; Mrs. Scovner seconded, motion carried.

Joe Cote asked if there were any decisions reached in non-public session and if there was any abatement of taxes. He was informed that no decisions had been made, but the Selectmen are in negotiations. There were no abatements.

The letter from the Museum addresses 2003 past due taxes, but does not address 2004 and 2005 taxes. The Selectmen are looking for full payment in reasonable fashion.

Mr. Cote asked if the Museum has applied for tax exemption. He was informed that tax exemption is reviewed annually. Julie Huntley would have more detailed information.

IX. NEW BUSINESS**Police Captain Appointment:**

The Board conducted a ceremonial swearing in of Captain Wayne Agan, new to the Enfield Police Force.

Capt. Agan also serves as the new Deputy Emergency Management Director. He briefed the Selectmen on what Emergency Management has done regarding the washout on Oak Grove St. A comprehensive press release was disseminated.

Ken Daniels discussed the to-date unsuccessful efforts to acquire financial assistance from the State, the owner of the property that washed out and slid into the Mascoma River. A partially approved dredge and fill application is in hand. The permit application encompasses the existing area of damage as well as some of the surrounding area; the narrative for the wetlands permit states there is failing ground adjacent to the slide. While Mr. Daniels has an estimate for repairs at \$48,400, he'll have a firmer figure toward the end of the week.

The Selectmen discussed budgeting \$60,000 for repairs to Oak Grove Street, covering the existing area of damage as well as some additional damage should it occur.

Other New Business:

Discussion of emergency services and water & sewer rates was postponed.

X. OTHER ITEMS**Welcome Party:**

Steve Schneider thanked Nancy Scovner for arranging the wonderful welcome event, as well as the staff that helped pull it all together. It was a nice warm event and felt as if the town does this all the time.

Next Meeting:

The Selectmen scheduled a work session for Thursday, February 2, 2006 to discuss the proposed 2006 budget and town meeting warrant.

CONFERENCE**I. PHIL NEILY – BUILDING PERMITS**

Phil Neily is now requiring smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors on any construction site using a temporary heating source due to a problem that nearly developed at a construction site.

There will be a smoke detector giveaway on February 11th at the Enfield Community Building from 9 AM until 1 PM. These units will be given free to Enfield residents, however, if need is shown other persons will be considered.

Mr. Neily presented the Board with a proposal for increasing building permit fees to better cover the expenses of the Building Inspection Department, including a comparison of Enfield fees to other towns and a comparison of current fees and two options for increases. Increasing fees puts the cost for building inspection services on those that are using the service.

Mr. Schneider pointed out the need to balance affordability with subsidization by the town. It is in everyone's best interest to have homes that meet codes and are being inspected. The fees should not be burdensome, but should be fair.

Mr. Albanese wants to be sure those that have grown up in Enfield can afford to stay. He wondered if annual review of building inspection fees is something the Board should consider.

Members of the public felt the public would accept the proposed increases.

Mr. Schneider recommended a public hearing be held. The Board agreed to schedule a public hearing some time after Town Meeting proposing Option 1 as presented by Mr. Neily.

II. POLICE CHIEF CRATE – EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN

Discussion of the Emergency Management Plan was postponed until after Town Meeting.

III. TOWN OFFICES/LIBRARY PROJECT

At 6:00 PM. the Selectmen and Library Trustees met to discuss the Town Offices/Library project.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Albanese moved to adjourn at 7:30 PM; Mrs. Scovner seconded, vote unanimous.