

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

MINUTES of March 6, 2006

Board of Selectmen: Dominic Albanese, Chairman; Nancy Scovner

Absent: Curtis Payne, excused absence

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

Others: Beth Lewis and son; Richard Crate, Jr., Police Chief; Lee Carrier, Enfield Village Association; Ken Daniels, Director of Public Works; Karen Hambleton, Keith Oppeneer, Barbara Brady, Earl Brady, Doug Smith, Enfield Shaker Museum; Meredith Smith, Heritage Commission Chairman

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Albanese called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

Mrs. Scovner announced that Curtis Payne would be unable to attend this meeting. Mr. Payne is in the hospital and hopes to be back soon.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Scovner moved to accept the regular session minutes of February 27, 2006 as printed; Mr. Albanese seconded, vote unanimous.

Mrs. Scovner moved to accept the non-public session minutes of February 27, 2006 as printed; Mr. Albanese seconded, vote unanimous.

The following issues were discussed out of agenda order.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

- Building Department Report ~ February 2006
- Town Clerk's Report ~ February 2006
- Tax Collector's Report ~ February 2006
- Community Development Director Report ~ February 2006

IV. BOARD REPORTS

There were no Board reports.

V. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Letter of Commendation:

Mr. Schneider shared a letter from Captain Wayne Agan to Sergeant Ken May in which Capt. Agan commends Sergeant May's recent theft investigation. Throughout the investigative process, Sergeant May was able to prioritize his work, be a resource to his fellow officers and maintain his personality. Mr. Albanese noted that this is particularly impressive because the Police Department is currently short-staffed.

Mr. Albanese moved to thank Ken May for the good job he continues to do; Mrs. Scovner seconded, vote unanimous.

Town Meeting:

Mr. Schneider would like department heads to sit at the head tables to be readily available to answer questions.

Mr. Schneider is also looking into an 18" – 2' high stage for the head tables to make it easier for people seated in the back to see their Town officials.

Mr. Schneider has been getting a lot of questions about Article 3 regarding limiting the length of rights-of-way and the Town Attorney's opinion that RSA 674:41, III supercedes this article. Someone from the Planning Board should be prepared to answer questions at Town Meeting.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

VII. RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

Water & Sewer Rates:

Mr. Albanese moved to accept the proposed water and sewer rates as provided by the Town Manager and Director of Public Works in the memo dated February 24, 2006, for presentation at the public hearing; Mrs. Scovner seconded, vote unanimous. The Public Hearing will be scheduled for March 20th and a press release will be disseminated prior to that date.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

Enfield Village Association Grant Application Support:

The Enfield Village Association (EVA) requested support for its application to the New Hampshire Main Street Center for a Main Street Challenge Grant, and to agree that the local building and fire code officials, who may be responsible for inspection of project properties, be involved as needed.

Mr. Albanese moved to support the Main Street Challenge Grant as requested; Mrs. Scovner seconded, vote unanimous.

Lee Carrier reported that there would be \$300,000 available from HUD for Main Street Programs in NH, of which there are 18. EVA is requesting \$10,000 - \$50,000 of these funds. EVA currently relies on donations and volunteers, but there are some things you simply must spend money on. These grant funds will go a long way toward completing the 78 Main Street project. While there have been 3500 hours of volunteer time and \$46,000 in donations of time and materials, there is still \$160,000 worth of work to be done.

Town Offices/Library Project:

Mr. Albanese would like the EVA Board to meet with Board of Selectmen at one of their Facility Committee meetings to talk about Main Street real estate.

Mr. Carrier feels the expenditure of funds the Selectmen have been talking about for the Town Offices/Library project is money well spent.

Mr. Albanese drafted a handout for Town Meeting explaining the Board's proposal for an amendment to the Budget to prepare a plan for Town review that will deal with the space and function issues of the Town Offices, Library and Whitney Hall.

Lee Carrier will email the Budget Committee members to obtain their views and level of support for the proposed amendment. If necessary, the Committee can meet on Saturday, March 11, to discuss it.

Mrs. Scovner moved to request \$35,000 for architectural services; Mr. Albanese seconded, vote unanimous.

Handouts will be prepared for both the March 14th elections and March 18th deliberative session.

Veterans Tax Credit Application:

The Board reviewed and approved a Veterans Tax Credit Application as presented.

X. OTHER ITEMS

Historic Markers:

The Heritage Commission, in cooperation with the Museum and Enfield Village Association (EVA), will be installing historic markers along Main Street. In December, EVA received a grant from the Mascoma Foundation for \$1500 toward the purchase of these markers. The Commission's proposal was for 6 markers with two more to be added at the EVA property at 78 Main Street (the Leviston house and tannery site). EVA generously donated the remaining funds needed for the markers. Mrs. Smith was informed that the Public Works staff would be able to install the 8 historic markers.

Boy Scout:

Mr. Albanese took a moment to recognize Mr. Lewis, a 6th grader and First Class Scout working toward an Eagle Scout Merit Badge. Mr. Lewis was invited to ask any questions he might have as the meeting progressed.

Connecticut Valley Spectator Article:

Mrs. Scovner has received four phone calls since the article came out in the Spectator regarding the Co-op. Each of these callers was thrilled with the idea of the Co-op opening a store in Enfield.

Discussion ensued on how best to indicate to the Co-op that the people of Enfield want them here in Town. A letter of support, signed by residents of the Town, was considered a good way for the residents of the Town to show their support. Perhaps a table can be set up at Town Meeting.

Vehicle Use Policy:

Mr. Albanese asked Mr. Schneider to draft a policy on the use of Town vehicles.

Ambulance Department:

Mr. Albanese asked Mr. Schneider to take a look at the Ambulance expenditures for the current budget year.

Kim Withrow asked for a written comment from the Board at the Selectmen's last meeting. Mr. Albanese informed her that the Board's intentions were in the minutes of the meeting.

Highway Shed:

Mr. Albanese asked about the status of the old highway shed on Shedd Street. He was informed that half the building was used for salt storage.

Mr. Albanese noted that as long as the Highway Department doesn't have a salt building at the Lockehaven site, this building must be kept.

Mr. Kiley asked why the Highway Department couldn't store salt in the old garage building on Shedd St. He was informed that the building is not high enough to get the machine in to get the salt out.

School Land Purchase:

The Board briefly discussed the School warrant and the article proposing to purchase land on Flanders Street to alleviate traffic safety issues at the Enfield Village School. The land intended for purchase is not identified and the Town has not been contacted regarding the intended flow of traffic.

Police Chief Crate stated that there is a School Resource Officer that could possibly be utilized to direct traffic at the new, rear entrance to the school.

Mr. Schneider stated that if the article passes there should be a meeting of School and Town officials.

Mr. Daniels expressed concern that Flanders Street is not wide enough to meet the demand of busses.

Mr. Albanese would like to be pro-active. Mr. Schneider replied that the school has not provided the Town with enough information for the Town to take any particular stand on the issue.

CONFERENCE**I. SHAKER MUSEUM**

The Board of Selectmen met with representatives of the Enfield Shaker Museum to discuss past due taxes.

Karen Hambleton would like to address the Selectmen's concerns regarding repayment of past due taxes on the Shaker Museum property. She is not opposed to providing financial information on a periodic basis while payment of past due taxes takes place.

The Board of Selectmen were interested in a more rapid pay-off than originally proposed by the Museum, hoping for 2 years rather than 3 years. Mr. Albanese suggested repayment of half of the past due taxes by September 30, 2006 and the remaining half paid by September 30, 2007. After full payment of the principal is made, and the actual amount of interest can be determined for the period of January 1, 2006 through to the date of final payment, the Selectmen can look at abating the interest amount as a lump sum.

Ms. Hambleton expressed concern of the Museum Board of Directors. The proposal to pay off \$2,000 per month is what the Museum is comfortable committing to. The Museum is not open until May, and the Museum doesn't expect to see much activity until school closes. They will be able to pay the current tax bill in June. Ms. Hambleton was informed that any tax payment must be applied to the oldest amount due. The Museum is not open until May, and the Museum doesn't expect to see much activity until school closes, thereby limiting the payments that can be made at this time.

Mr. Smith explained the need of money from the capital campaign for deferred maintenance, repairs and to enhance programs to make more money. The Museum does not feel they can proceed with a capital campaign until a decision is made on the taxes.

Mr. Albanese hopes funding from the capital campaign can be used for programs and repairs and free up fund designated for those purposes to pay off taxes.

Ms. Hambleton explained that the Museum had an agreement with the Innkeepers to pay the taxes, so the Museum did not budget to pay taxes. The Innkeepers defaulted on the agreement and subsequently went bankrupt.

Mr. Schneider informed the Selectmen and Museum that these needs of the Town and the Museum can be incorporated in to an agreement so everyone has structure to work with. Structure provides a basis for discussion rather than discussion in the abstract. The Town's attorney will be asked to incorporate protections for the Town and Museum and solidify the Town's intent. The drafted agreement can then be sent to the Museum for review. The \$2,000 payment can be adjusted up when revenues increase. The agreement can also include a requirement for the Museum to report to the Town every few months. The agreement could also freeze interest on all of the unpaid balance as of December 31, 2005, dependent upon meeting goals and making payments.

Mr. Albanese said the Museum does bring value to the Town, but he can't deal with the abatement until some of the past due taxes are paid off. The Town is not going to try and take the property.

Ms. Hambleton reiterated that the Museum is not comfortable promising money they don't know they'll have. The Museum could have a bad season. September 30th is a good deadline as this is the end of the Museum's fiscal year.

To recap the discussion, Mr. Albanese stated that payment of half the past due taxes is to be made by September 30, 2006 and half made by September 30, 2007. The Board of Selectmen will be willing to abate the interest for the period of January 1, 2006 through September 30, 2007. Mrs. Scovner concurred.

Mr. Oppenheer asked if the Selectmen would consider reducing the interest rate. He was informed that the interest rate was set by State law and could not be adjusted.

Mr. Schneider informed the Museum that as of January 6, 2006 the past due tax amount was \$79,852.

Doug Smith stated that what the press wrote about the tax delinquency makes it look like the museum is callously ignoring the taxes. He assured the Selectmen they are not. Mr. Albanese replied that the Selectmen are aware of that.

II. NON-PUBLIC SESSION

Mr. Albanese moved to enter non-public session at 6:37 PM, RSA 91-A:3 II (c); Mrs. Scovner seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Albanese – aye, Mrs. Scovner – aye, motion carried.

Mrs. Scovner moved to come out of non-public session at 7:15 PM; Mr. Albanese seconded, vote unanimous.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Scovner moved to adjourn at 7:15 PM; Mr. Albanese seconded, vote unanimous.