

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

**MINUTES of December 5, 2005**

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

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

**Others:** Sharon Carr, Henry Cross, Joe Mandel, Evelyn Palmer, Dwight Marchetti, Joe Cote – Connecticut Valley Spectator, Police Chief Richard Crate, David Stewart, Director of Public Works Ken Daniels

**REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mrs. Scovner moved to accept the regular session minutes of November 21, 2005 as printed; Mr. Albanese seconded. Mrs. Scovner and Mr. Albanese in favor, Mr. Payne abstained, motion carried.

Mrs. Scovner moved to accept the non-public session minutes of November 21, 2005 as printed; Mr. Albanese seconded. Mrs. Scovner and Mr. Albanese in favor, Mr. Payne abstained, motion carried.

**III. ASSIGNMENT OF AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Schneider explained that this section of the agenda deals with old or new business that requires a motion and a sponsor of the motion would be sought. If a motion doesn't receive a sponsor the issue doesn't come up for debate. After some consideration, the Board agreed to delete this section from future agendas.

Mr. Albanese does like the idea of having the wording for large motions prepared for the Board in advance.

The following issues were discussed out of agenda order.

#### IV. PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Albanese moved to open the public hearing at 5:30 PM; Mrs. Scovner seconded, motion carried, hearing called to order.

Mr. Albanese read the posted notice for the hearing. The purpose of the hearing was to discuss the acceptance of a gift of personal property valued in excess of \$500, said give being goal posts for the Shaker Recreation fields.

Marcia Cornell, Recreation Director, was to attend the hearing to discuss the proposed donation, but was not in attendance. Due to a lack of information the public hearing was suspended until Mrs. Cornell arrives.

#### V. COMMUNICATIONS

##### **November Expense Reports:**

Mr. Albanese requested a more detailed expense report in the future. Mr. Albanese understands Steve Schneider will update the Selectmen on the budget quarterly. What will Mr. Schneider do monthly? Maybe Mr. Schneider can inform the Board of any anomalies. Mr. Albanese offered to call David Crate regarding submission of Fire Department payroll for the end of the year.

##### **Building Inspector's Report ~ November 2005**

##### **Public Works Notice ~ Proposed Removal of Trees:**

Due to scenic road designation of some locations, a public hearing for this purpose is scheduled for December 14, 2005 at 7:00 PM at the Public Works Facility, 74 Lockhaven Road. Mrs. Scovner does not agree about the pine tree at the end of Boys' Camp Road and will contest this at the public hearing.

##### **Planning/Zoning/Economic Development Report ~ November 2005**

#### VI. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This section will be referred to in the future as BOARD REPORTS giving each of the Selectmen the opportunity to report on what's happening on other boards and commissions.

##### **Planning Board Report:**

Mrs. Scovner reported on a recent Planning Board site visit to Whaleback Mountain where there was an attempt to raise a balloon to illustrate the height of a proposed tower. Unfortunately, conditions were too windy for a conclusive test and a second test will be rescheduled for another date.

Mr. Albanese questioned whether the proposed Iskandar subdivision on Evenchance Road was going to have a hearing in December. Mrs. Scovner replied that there wouldn't be a hearing on this proposal until January. Mr. Iskandar needs to reconfigure his plan to address the potential for run-off.

The Ironman development is on hold. The property has a new owner and they have not decided yet what they want to do.

Andy Lozeau is subdividing property on Jones Hill Road.

**Conservation Commission:**

Mr. Payne reported that two projects were discussed at the last Conservation Commission meeting. The Commission signed off on the Evenchance Road (Iskandar) subdivision and finalized a warrant article for the 2006 Town Meeting relative to the Bicknell Brook property. The proposed article turns the majority of the property over to the Upper Valley Land Trust for conservation, but leaves 7 acres available for sale as building lots. By involving the Upper Valley Land Trust it prevents the Town from changing its mind at a later date.

Mrs. Scovner questioned how it was possible that a large portion of the property can be put into conservation without a survey and subdivision that may cost as much as \$50,000, according to the previous town manager. Ken Daniels believes a survey would cost from \$15,000 to \$18,000.

Discussion ensued regarding whether a petitioned warrant article can be amended on the floor of town meeting, and whether two warrant articles can be presented.

The Selectmen would like to invite the Conservation Commission to the next meeting on December 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss the Bicknell Brook Property.

**VII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

A brief discussion ensued regarding the format of the Town Manager's report to the Selectmen.

Mr. Schneider asked how much information the Selectmen want to receive regarding correspondence to the office. Mr. Albanese replied that if it's anything from a citizen they should get a copy of it. Mr. Schneider informed the Board that a letter was received from William Martin regarding his property taxes. A copy of this letter will be provided to the Selectmen.

**Building Inspection Fees:**

Phil Neily discussed with Mr. Schneider the raising of building inspection fees. Mr. Neily will put together a report and proposal that includes a list of the town's existing fees and those of neighboring communities. The Town does not want development to be cost prohibitive, but wants to be in line with neighboring communities. New homes could cost more than renovations to existing homes. Mr. Neily will be invited to attend a Selectmen's meeting in January.

**Assessment Practices:**

The Town received a report from the NH Dept. of Revenue Administration regarding the town's assessment practices and we've been found to be right on target. The Town is doing what it needs to do and the equity of tax assessment is there.

Mr. Albanese extended a vote of thanks to Julie Huntley and Norm Bernaiche for the work they've done.

A copy of the DRA report will be provided to the Selectmen and posted on the town's website.

Mr. Schneider spoke briefly about the on-line database of assessments that has been available where he worked previously.

**Cable Access Channel and Internet:**

Mr. Payne asked if Mr. Schneider had a cable access channel in Batavia. Mr. Schneider replied that they did and also in VT. Mr. Schneider pointed out that it's a lot of work, but that it wouldn't be bad for them to come and tape one of the Selectmen's meetings once in a while. However, Mr. Schneider will not have the Town join the NH Coalition for Community Media at this time.

Discussion ensued regarding cable Internet. Mr. Schneider informed the Board that the Town already has a fairly robust Internet connection. There are contracts in place for T1 lines.

**GPS Grant:**

Ken Daniels is waiting for his GPS unit. The grant is pending and the equipment won't be purchased until the grant is approved.

Chief Crate had to make some changes to the grant, but is has gone through and is waiting for processing. He hopes it will get to Governor and Executive Council this week. The approval process was discussed briefly.

Mr. Albanese, in a memo dated December 3, 2005, asked about budgeting for engineering for the Lockhaven drainage issue brought to the Board by Henry Cross. Mr. Daniels replied that he's waiting to the aerial maps before proceeding. Mr. Daniels spoke to Sewals about flying the area again to obtain more detail, but at a cost of \$13,000 will settle for 5-foot contours.

**VNA:**

Mr. Schneider asked for a commitment from the Board of Selectmen for a work session with the Visiting Nurse Association.

**Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission:**

UVLSRPC dues are included in the 2006 budget. There is one planning board member appointed as a town representative and there is one vacancy. The UVLSRPC discouraged allowing Jim Taylor, Community Development Director, from sitting on the UVLSRPC board because he is not a resident of Enfield, but the Selectmen feel strongly that he is the best person for the job and will insist that Mr. Taylor be allowed to serve.

**Police Department Personnel:**

Mr. Schneider and Chief Crate have finalized the hiring of Wayne Agan as Captain on the Enfield Police Department beginning in January. Mr. Schneider interviewed him, speaking to him about how he's going to fit in the Department. Wayne Agan will be brought in to the Selectmen in January for an introduction to the Board and a ceremonial swearing in.

**VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS****David Stewart ~ Friends of the NRA:**

Mr. Stewart requested a renewal of the waiver of fees for use of the Community Building by the Friends of the NRA. The Friends received a preliminary grant for the Enfield Outing Club. They also give money to Scott Thompson for firearms training.

Mr. Stewart was informed that the firearms training done by Scott Thompson is an independent venture, not related to the town.

Mr. Albanese directed Mr. Stewart to Tate Picard, Chairman of the Enfield Community Building Board of Directors.

**Dwight Marchetti ~ Shaker Museum Status of Taxes:**

Mr. Marchetti read in the paper that that the Shaker Museum is asking for an abatement of close to \$80,000 in taxes. Mr. Marchetti voiced his objection to the granting of an abatement of property taxes for the Shaker Museum. He feels the town should either collect the taxes or take the property for non-payment of taxes and sell it.

Mr. Schneider pointed out that a payment of \$50,000 by April would stave off the taking of the property in 2006.

Use of the building was discussed, though the use of the buildings is irrelevant when discussing the payment of past due taxes. Use of the buildings does relate to any future taxation due to the Museum's tax-exempt status.

The Board of Selectmen will be meeting with the Museum Board at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, December 7, 2005 at the Enfield Community Building. The Board will not be voting on anything and can't do so until April. Because the Museum is asking for an abatement of taxes and is a unique situation the Board is looking at this ahead of time.

Henry Cross asked if other buildings owned by the Museum would fall under the tax-exempt umbrella. He was informed that there is a form that must be completed by the Museum on an annual basis that is used to determine tax-exempt status.

Sharon Carr noted that the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> floors of the Shaker Inn building were always tax-exempt. It is only the 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> floors that were taxable.

Discussion ensued regarding the taking, holding and/or selling of property. Mr. Schneider was asked to look at what could be sold in a one-year time frame and to review our property inventory.

Mrs. Carr stated that as a taxpayer she finds it hard to swallow the abatement request. How the Museum got in the position its in is unknown, but she doesn't think it's as simple if the town has to take the property and deal with it. The Shaker history in Enfield is unique. How that community shaped what Enfield is today is something that should be considered. She doesn't think they should be given an abatement of taxes.

Joe Mandel suggested that if the Museum owns other buildings maybe they should sell one.

Evelyn Palmer has watched the town let many things go, its history. This Shaker village is unique. She went to a Shaker community in Kentucky and learned that the Great Stone Dwelling is the largest one every built by the Shakers.

Mr. Albanese stated for clarity that the Selectmen are working aggressively to meet the needs of the Museum and the town. Taking the property has huge liability implications - part of the reason the Selectmen began working on the issue so early.

Mr. Schneider stated that the Board would have a structured meeting on Wednesday. The Museum has been asked for a strategic plan for getting out of debt.

Mr. Cross stated that the town has approximately \$300,000 in a long list of taxes due, some back to 2003 and 2004. In business the collection of money was attacked aggressively. How does the town aggressively go to get taxes? Mr. Cross was informed of the tax lien process and that much of the collection of taxes is defined by state statute. Mr. Albanese added that this Board has aggressively unloaded surplus property.

Discussion ensued regarding who has property in current use and has not paid their taxes. This would have to be researched.

Mr. Marchetti pointed out that you don't hear about Canterbury having financial problems. Maybe the Enfield Shaker Museum should contact another Shaker Village to find out how they stay viable.

**Evelyn Palmer ~ Enfield Center Post Office 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:**

Mrs. Palmer provided a quick update on the Enfield Center Post Office 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. January 1, 2006 will be the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first appointed Enfield Center Postmaster.

Mrs. Scovner has spoken to Representative Catherine Mulholland, who will request a citation from the Governor. Mrs. Scovner hopes Rep. Mulholland, other representatives and Senator Burling will be at the ceremony to present the citation.

Mrs. Palmer would like to prepare a commemorative item for presentation, perhaps a postage stamp blown up in size. The proposed date for the presentation is mid-January.

**IX. RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There was no further discussion of public comments.

**X. OLD BUSINESS**

No Old Business was discussed.

**XI. NEW BUSINESS**

**Administrative Items:**

The Board reviewed and approved the following documents: 2004 and 2005 property tax abatements, 2005 property tax refunds, land use change tax.

**Senator Peter Burling:**

The Board received a report from the 2005 legislative session from Senator Peter Burling. The Board briefly discussed Senator Burling's stand on consolidating county services.

**Town Report:**

The Board acknowledged individuals that passed away in 2004 and discussed their inclusion in the town report.

**Transfers to Capital Reserve and Trust Funds:**

Mr. Albanese moved to perform Capital Reserve and Trust Fund transfers in the first payment cycle of December each year; Mrs. Scovner seconded, vote unanimous.

There was discussion of a \$20,000 transfer to the Water and Sewer funds in 2004 that didn't take place. This will be further discussed at the next meeting when additional information is available.

Mr. Albanese moved to transfer, in accordance with the 2005 budget, \$10,000 each to the Water Capital Reserve Fund and Sewer Capital Reserve Fund; Mr. Payne seconded, vote unanimous.

**XII. OTHER ITEMS**

Mrs. Scovner moved to grant Alisa Bonnette a \$500 bonus for 2005; Mr. Payne seconded, vote unanimous.

Mr. Albanese moved to allow the remainder of the \$7,500 allotted for moving expenses to be used by Steven Schneider for hotel expenses; Mrs. Scovner seconded, vote unanimous.

Mr. Schneider reported that his family would be moving to Enfield the last week of December.

The Board of Selectmen will meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of January due to the holidays.

**CONFERENCE****I. STAGE**

Mr. Schneider spoke with Joe Mandel of STAGE (Sister Theatre Association Greater Enfield) about his passion for theatre and the good it might do for the community. Mr. Schneider recommended that Mr. Mandel bring his ideas to the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Mandel introduced himself. He owns Twigs, the bakery in town. He grew up doing theatre. His mentor, Claude McNeil, 35 years ago walked into a theatre in Bridgeport, CT, and invested in it, creating a thriving theatre community. He did this again in Indianapolis. Mr. Mandel would like to do something similar in Enfield, though on a smaller scale. He requested permission to organize people to raise money, so the town doesn't have to, to paint, dust, hang curtains, and the like in the Whitney Hall Auditorium. He likes the space and feels it deserves some improvements.

Evelyn Palmer brought Mr. Mandel to the Enfield Center Town Hall to look at that facility as well. Mr. Mandel brought pictures of the stage backdrop.

Mr. Albanese expressed appreciation of Mr. Mandel's enthusiasm and is delighted he is including the Enfield Center Town Hall, particularly since Whitney Hall is in flux while the town determines what to do about library and town office space. Mr. Albanese suggested focusing energy on the Enfield Center Town Hall. Though Mr. Mandel feels any improvements his group might make to Whitney Hall will only enhance the entire space.

Mr. Mandel noted that the Enfield Center Town Hall stage is very tiny. It could be a children's theatre or a puppet theatre. The obvious problems are the lack of restrooms, running water and lack of parking.

Mrs. Palmer reviewed records regarding the property surrounding the Enfield Center Town Hall and while she thought the town might have some leverage with one of the abutters, she found that the driveway that was installed on a portion of town property was quitclaimed to the Muzzeys back in 1977.

It was noted that the Town could often use the Union Church parking lot if it doesn't conflict with church uses.

Mrs. Scovner moved to go along with Joe Mandel's plans. There was no second. Some concern was voiced over the proposal and the degree of control that STAGE would have of the room. It was suggested that a member of the Board of Selectmen as a member of STAGE would be beneficial.

Mr. Albanese moved to appoint Curtis Payne to act as the Selectmen's representative of STAGE; Mrs. Scovner seconded, vote unanimous.

The Board recessed the meeting at 6:27 PM and reconvened at 6:50 PM

## **II. CHIEF CRATE BUILDING ALTERATION**

Police Chief Crate reported on alternatives for a new filing system ranging in price from \$2,200 to \$7,600. The first part of the system is the physical shelving and/or file cabinets. The second part of the system is the file folders and labeling. The system the Police Department will use has a computerized cross-reference. The decision was made to go with the less expensive infrastructure with the more expensive labeling. The total cost for the proposed system is approximately \$5,500. The Department will do the file transfers to save money.

The porch columns at the front of the police station were discussed. Chief Crate has received a quote of \$1,000 to replace the columns. The town will have to remove the existing columns, which are filled with concrete.

Mrs. Scovner moved to allow \$1,000 for the replacement of the porch columns, Mr. Payne seconded. Mrs. Scovner and Mr. Payne in favor, Mr. Albanese opposed, motion carried.

## **III. BUDGET UPDATE**

The Board discussed the expenditure of 2005 funds for projects that are budgeted in 2006 in order to save in 2006 when revenues are expected to be lower.

Mr. Schneider provided a report of anticipated expenses for the remainder of the year, the potential budget surplus and a list of projects planned in 2006, some of which might be completed in 2005.

It was the consensus of the Board to allow Ken Daniels to expend \$15,000 and Chief Richard Crate to expend \$12,000 in 2005 for projects planned in 2006. Chief Crate stated that he would like to take this opportunity to purchase a video system.

Mr. Albanese pointed out that this is a unique situation and the because of an expected revenue shortfall in 2006 and by paying now the town can save in 2006.

Chief Crate asked if the Selectmen were still going to talk about salaries at the end of the month. Mr. Albanese replied that the Town Manager has been asked for a recommendation.

Mr. Albanese provided the Board with a list of budget related questions for Town Manager input and future discussion.

#### **IV. SHAKER MUSEUM**

See discussion under PUBLIC COMMENTS section.

#### **V. REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS – ANNUAL REQUESTS**

Mr. Schneider will question how other communities address regional associations. The Budget Committee had questions about the funding process.

Mrs. Scovner spoke to Tom Donovan and was told that WIC and childcare clinics are being cut by the VNA.

Mr. Payne stated that these organizations need funding. They're underpaid and do what some don't want to do.

Mr. Albanese feels there are systemic issues and the VNA needs to be up front with the Board of Selectmen. He wants concrete solutions.

#### **VI. ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Scovner moved to adjourn at 7:53 PM; Mr. Payne seconded, vote unanimous.