

# Enfield Board of Selectmen

## Enfield, NH

### MINUTES of August 16, 2004

A regular business meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 5:00 PM in the Ilene P. Reed Training Room located in the Department of Public Works, Lockehaven Road, Enfield.

**Present:** Dominic Albanese, Acting Chairman  
Nancy Scovner, Selectman  
April Whittaker, Town Manager and Recording Secretary

**Absent with Apologies:** Keith Oppenneer, Selectman

**Approval of Minutes:** The board reviewed the Minutes of July 19, 2004, and made the following changes:

Page 7, Last paragraph, second sentence, change from *“Both the Enfield Center and Union Street Fire Departments have drafted Standard Operating Guidelines, (SOG’s) for review by Mssrs. Wedon and Gagnon”* to *“Enfield Center FD has drafted full guidelines and adopted and reviewed the same with members of their Department. Union Street FD has begun draft guidelines still to be reviewed and adopted.”*

Page 8, third paragraph, second sentence, *“Mr. Crate replied that a little training has been done, but that no one has gotten back to them regarding a defensive driving class”* to add an insert sentence following the aforementioned sentence to read *“Mr. Weden indicated that details of the defensive driving course as conducted by the Local Government Center was sent out last year, but he was happy to resend.”*

Page 8, paragraph 8, insert the word *“training”* ~ sentence to read, *“Mrs. Whittaker can take notes and type up the training schedule determined by the officers.”*

Page 9, paragraph 4, insert the following words to the second sentence to now read: *“Mr. Weden stated that Property Liability Insurance Trust feels that indifference to the town’s policies can have serious consequences in a legal challenge if there is not consistency and continuity in how the policies are both interpreted and acted upon.”*

Page 9, last paragraph, insert the following, first sentence to now read: *“There was discussion as to who has control over Fire Department equipment and the buildings.”*

Page 11, last sentence under paragraph entitled "Town Facilities", insert as follows:  
*April Whittaker, Phil Neily and Ken Daniels will do some very preliminary cost estimated of the "Safety Complex" idea.*

Motion Scovner, second Albanese, to accept the Minutes of July 19, 2004 as amended, vote 2 – 0.

The Board reviewed the Minutes (Non Public) of July 19, 2004, and requested that a note be added to the fifth paragraph to read *"The letter as reviewed from the third party attorney also contained a factual error in as much that town personnel, namely the Chief of Police, had been in contact with the third party in February 2004 regarding the Annual Firework Display."*

Motion Scovner, second Albanese to accept the Minutes (Non Public) of July 19, 2004 as amended, vote 2 – 0.

The Board reviewed the Minutes of August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2004 and accepted the same without amendments; motion Scovner, second Albanese, vote 2 – 0.

### **Public Appointments**

**Senator Clifton Below Presentation:** The Board presented Senator Clifton Below with an appreciation gift of a town plaque for his service to the Town of Enfield. The Board noted that Mr. Below's retirement from the Senate and his presence will be sorely missed. For the record Mr. Below has served for three terms (6 years) as Senator for the now newly constituted District 10 in the Upper Valley.

**2003 Audit Review:** The Board welcomed staff, budget committee members and Bob Sanderson, and Armand Martineau of Plodzick and Sanderson Auditors. Mr. Sanderson presented the 2003 audit report and entertained questions regarding the various funds and explained how the combined balance sheet represented and interacted with the more detailed schedules in the audit. Mrs. Whittaker will work with Dept. of Revenue auditors to accomplish movement of funds from the general fund into the sewer fund.

Mr. Lee Carrier asked the auditor's advices regarding the imposition of fixed asset accounting also commonly referred to as GASB34, on a small town such as Enfield. Mr. Sanderson advised that as in all changes there are pros and cons, but on the whole he felt that eventually the town would have to comply with providing fixed asset accounting. Discussion briefly ensued that there may be a possibility that bond rating companies would increase the rate of interest offered for borrowing for those towns that had an adverse remark by the auditors regarding their lack of participation in a fixed asset program. Mr. Sanderson did not believe that would happen in the short-term, but may be applicable in the long term.

In conclusion of the presentation there was brief discussion with the auditors regarding their services to the community and questions of a bidding procedure.

The board thanked the auditors for their review noting that there were no adverse comments regarding the Town's financial procedures or accounts.

**Townwide Reappraisal Process ~ Norman Bernaiche and Julie Huntley:** The Board met with Norman Bernaiche, the town's contracted Assessor and Julie Huntley, Enfield's Assessing Coordinator, to review the process of the Town's Certification of assessing practices with state statutes, the Department of Revenue Administration's assessing guidelines, and to review the town-wide reappraisal as part of the 2004 Certification requirements. (See enclosed attachments).

Mr. Bernaiche advised the methodology for the proposed townwide reassessment and the components that are reviewed in determining benchmark pricing for raw land, land and buildings etc and the influence of the various neighborhood delineations. He provided notes as to how ratio studies are calculated, denoting that the Town of Enfield's equalized value is 59.7% meaning that the town's current assessments are about 40% below indicated sales values being generated by willing sellers, and willing buyers.

He further defined the expressions of Coefficient of Dispersion (COD) and the price related differential (PRD), which had indicated that the low-end priced properties are currently carrying the brunt of the town's tax burden i.e. the lower end properties are over assessed, and the high end properties are under assessed. This was a fairness issue that would be addressed if the new benchmark values are adopted as presented.

Mr. Bernaiche confirmed the sales data information that had been utilized to determine the current market benchmark values (said sales data duly recorded and available in a binder) and was vocal regarding the challenges of the continued upward spiraling real estate market. If the benchmark figures are accepted by the board, Mr. Bernaiche advised that his goal would be to have assessment values at about a 98% ratio. He explained that a 100% ratio is unrealistic and is viewed by the courts, and Board of Tax and Land Appeals as "sales chasing."

Following discussion and clarifications of acronyms, the board determined the benchmark values as presented to be valid and accurate according to accepted assessing practices and in compliance with state statutes, and certification requirements. Motion Scovner, second Albanese to direct Mr. Bernaiche and Mrs. Huntley to apply the benchmark figures, vote 2 - 0.

Mrs. Huntley and Mr. Bernaiche requested a further meeting with the board to review documentation letter to Enfield residents, explanation of the assessing card and the time frame for public hearings. Mr. Bernaiche will report back as soon as possible.

### Administrative

- ❑ The board signed a birthday card to Mrs. Ann Tarney who would be celebrating her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2004.
- ❑ The board reviewed and signed a Certification of Yield Taxes Assessed to Deborah Hurley Map 13 Lot 48 – 1.
- ❑ The board approved for the record that all elected officials of the Town be permitted to engage in the town's health insurance plan subject to **100% reimbursement** of the plan's costs by the elected individual. Motion Albanese, second Scovner, vote 2 – 0.
- ❑ The board signed an extension request to October 1 for submission of the Town's Statement of Valuation (MS-1) to the State of NH due to the proposed reappraisal process.
- ❑ The Board signed a Current Use Change Tax Lien partial release for Map 17 Lot 14-1.

### Citizen's Forum

Dwight Marchetti and Henry Cross questioned whether or not it was appropriate for the Town Manager to be endorsing and assisting a non-profit entity with a fundraiser mailing wishing to set up an Academy for Advanced Musical Studies at the Shaker Village complex.

Mr. Albanese advised that the Town offices are often a resource to many entities, not just non-profits due to the public nature of the town's records. The Board also, supported the premise that such an academy would foster economic development, provide a sustainable source of revenue for the Shaker complex, and provide a cultural platform of high visibility for the community. Further, the academy was prepared to open their learning seminars free to local music students and teachers and provide free concerts to the community and the immediate environs. For the record, he advised that the non-profit group had fully reimbursed the town for postage, and mailing labels, and that any labor involved was generated through the "work-welfare" roles.

Mrs. Whittaker further advised that her office had aided many local groups and that it was common administrative practice to provide labels and postage capabilities subject to reimbursement of those costs. She agreed that economic development and the Town Manager's role was subjective as everybody had a different interpretation as to what

economic development could constitute. She stated that she endorsed the non-profit because she felt there was intrinsic economic development value not only to the local business, but also perhaps in the establishment of new business. There was also merit to providing support to the Shaker complex with a permanent annual tenant. Further she advised that there had been a collaborative effort and charge to support economic development in the 2004 budgetary process. She also endorsed the community and educational value in such an entity moving to Enfield. However, she did agree that it would be helpful for clarity in procedures as misinformation was damaging to her office and staff and economic development was a new step in the administrative flow of the office. She felt it was important that the office not be stymied in trying to determine whether support should be rendered because of on-going questions regarding the town's role in an economic development situation.

Mr. Bob LaCroix thanked the board for providing clarity and endorsed that Mrs. Whittaker should be assisted with guidelines in support of commercial and business growth to the community in the manner as discussed. He stated that he was pleased to see that economic development was being recognized.

Following further discussion, motion Albanese to (i) support continued practice of providing mailing lists, labels, and disks with appropriate reimbursement for all members of the public, (ii) have all town-wide correspondence reviewed by the Board of Selectmen prior to any mailing, (iii) any endorsement for any group as proposed by the Town Manager to be discussed with Board of Selectmen and vice versa and (iv) support continued practice of allowing non-profits use of the postage machine with full reimbursement of postage, second Scovner, vote 2 - 0.

Dan Kiley discussed the postage impact to the expense reports and in particular to the postage expense line as the reimbursement could not be applied against the expense but rather had to be placed into the revenue account. He suggested that postage money should be drafted into the 2005 economic development budget with a notation that the money raised would be revenue neutral. All concurred.

Mr. Dwight Marchetti raised issues of safety at the recent Department of Transportation Public Hearing for improvement proposals to Route 4A, and the reconstruction of Shaker Bridge. Said public hearing being held at the Shaker Inn. Mrs. Whittaker advised that the town was not consulted or involved with choice of venue for the public hearing. It was agreed by all that the room was overcrowded, and that the landlord had allowed officials to block off a means of egress leaving only one means of egress in the event of a fire. Permits of Assembly and the standards applicable to gathering places in Enfield were reviewed and discussed. Mrs. Whittaker will speak with Mr. Neily for an updated listing of Permits of Assembly and the annual review schedule.

On the same subject of the DOT's public hearing, Mr. LaCroix once again, questioned the wisdom of the 100 foot long bridge, as proposed, on the rail trail with respect to snowmobiles, and quad bike riders. Speed was often a factor in the two sports, and his concerns focused on the impact of the rider upon hitting the proposed bridge and design proposal at speed and with loss of control and points of impact.. Mrs. Whittaker advised that it was on her radar screen of response follow-up with the project manager, namely Alex Vogt.

### **Old Business**

**Sale of Town Property ~ Bid:** The board reviewed the bid results and determined to lay on the table property identified as Map 18 Lot 50 pending investigation into the subdivision approval as to whether or not a dock could be permitted on the property. Motion Albanese to accept the high bids in all the categories of listed real estate (see enclosed sheet) with the exception of Map 18 Lot 50, second Scovner, vote 2 – 0.

**Release of Information Policy:** As delineated in the policy, an annual review took place and there were no deletions or additions. Recommended by the Town Manager to stay "as is."

**Mailbox Replacement Policy:** Deferred to next meeting.

**Polling Place Accessibility Plan:** Mrs. Whittaker confirmed that she had duly replied back to the Attorney General's office with an action plan to address the deficiencies as noted. Copies of the response had been posted with the Town Clerk, Moderator, and Supervisors of the Checklist.

**Don Robert's High Street Property:** In conclusion of the terms and conditions of the deed, the property was reviewed by Phil Neily, Building Inspector who confirmed that outside substantial completion had been achieved ~ see enclosed letter. The Board made note with credit that Mr. Neily had provided an interview to the Mascoma Valley Health Initiative newsletter in his capacity as health officer for the Town of Enfield.

**Humane Society:** Mrs. Whittaker advised that she had left a telephone message with the Director to inquire why the town was receiving bills for the upkeep of stray dogs at the Humane Society. The Society received a tax exemption based on their charity for the benefit of Enfield residents, and Mrs. Whittaker was concerned that the new director was not aware of the exemption and the requirements of sustained charity to be applicable to enable the exemption of taxes to be continued.

**Non-Public Session:** Motion Scovner, second Albanese to enter into a Non Public Session at 8:15 PM under the terms and conditions of RSA 91-A: 3 II (c) and (d), vote 2 – 0.

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Roll Call: Albanese ~ yes, Scovner ~ yes.

The board returned to regular session at 9:05 PM having made no decisions with respect to non-public discussions.

There being no further business, motion Scovner, second Albanese to adjourn, vote 2 – 0. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted

April Whittaker, Town Manager and Recording Secretary.