

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

MINUTES of April 21, 2003

Board of Selectmen: Ilene P. Reed, Chairman; Keith Oppenneer; Dominic Albanese

Administrative Staff: April Whittaker, Town Manager; Alisa D. Bonnette, Secretary

Others: Mary Murray, Connecticut Valley Spectator; Police Chief Peter Giese; Sergeant Kenneth May; Lieutenant Richard Crate; Special Officer Michael Lecuyer; Amy Howe; Henry Cross; Tracy Hayes; Rick Barrows; Lloyd Hackeman; Phil Neily, Building Inspector; Ken Daniels, Director of Public Works; and other members of the public.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM.

SITE VISIT

The Board of Selectmen met at the “Craig” property at 18 High Street to view the site. Mrs. Whittaker explained that if the Selectmen choose to sell the property a survey will be needed and the buyer should pay for the cost of the survey. The sale of the property should be subject to substantial completion of repairs within 12 months of the purchase date.

A neighbor informed the Board that the school was located in the garage. The garage was demolished due to its unsafe condition.

If a retaining wall is put in and the ground leveled there should be adequate parking for several vehicles and be adequate for professional use. There is water and sewer on site and the roofline is straight.

There was discussion of a requirement for installation of a plaque that could state that the building is a possible 18th century building and former school site.

There is concern that there be a method in place for enforcing the requirement of substantial completion within 12 months of purchase, without going through a long legal process.

ADMINISTRATIVE**“Craig” Property ~ 18 High Street:**

Mr. Oppeneer moved to authorize the Town Manager to confer with the town’s attorney to advertise and deed the town-owned property at 18 High Street with the appropriate conditions, time limit and performance bond; Mrs. Reed seconded, vote unanimous.

Fire Truck Acquisition Review:

Mr. Albanese asked about the condition of the Fire Dept. blazer, and if it had been repaired. Mrs. Whittaker advised that she was still awaiting advices from the Fire Chief.

The Fire Dept. obtained three quotes for their new pick-up. Mrs. Whittaker explained some of the differences between the pick-up truck order by the Fire Dept. and a typical truck ordered by the Highway Dept. in a comparison manner. While the price came in under what was approved at town meeting, lights and other accessories have not yet been added to the quoted \$26,000 for the pick-up acquisition.

The Board would, at some point, would like to discuss the new truck with the Fire Department and have Ken Daniels available to provide the Public Works perspective as to their truck bid specifications, for comparison.

Mr. Albanese questioned if the Board was in agreement to discuss with the Public Works Director the prospect of having the department use the sidewalk tractor to plow out the hydrants.

PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS**Oaths of Office:**

Michael Lecuyer was sworn in as a full-time patrolman. Amy Howe was sworn in as a Special Police Officer.

Chief Giese explained to the officers that they should remember three important things:

- Remember your oath of office;
- Treat everyone as you want them to treat you; and
- Don’t lie.

Chief Giese said to the Officers Lecuyer and Howe that just because they put a badge on, they are no less a husband or wife; family comes first.

Mrs. Whittaker welcomed the officers to the Town of Enfield.

ADMINISTRATIVE, CONTINUED**Fair Hearing Officer:**

Mr. Oppenneer moved to appoint Joyce Osgood as the Welfare Fair Hearing Officer; Mrs. Reed seconded, vote unanimous.

Eagle Scout Commendation:

Mr. Oppenneer moved to assign a letter of commendation to Bradley Woodward for attaining the rank of Eagle Scout; Mr. Albanese seconded, vote unanimous.

Other Administrative:

Mr. Oppenneer moved to deny the Gibbons abatement due to lacking documentation of his wife's income and asset statement; Mrs. Reed seconded, vote unanimous.

Mr. Oppenneer moved to deny the Gibbons tax exemption application due to a lack of documentation; Mrs. Reed seconded, vote unanimous.

The Board reviewed and approved the following documents: 2002 Property Tax Refunds, Excavation Yield Taxes; Intents to Excavate.

Committees & Commissions:

Mrs. Whittaker explained that advertisements have been composed and letters were to be sent requesting expressions of interest to selected individuals from the Board to seek service for the Heritage Commission.

Similar letters of expressions of interest will be forwarded to selected individuals for the formation of the Town Offices and Library Planning and Building Committee.

The Board discussed various committees. There appeared, to the Board, to be the appearance of overlap between the independent Historical Society and the town-appointed Heritage Commission. Mr. Albanese queried if the head of the Historical Society should be invited to come in before appointments are made to the Heritage Commission.

Delinquent Property Taxes:

Mrs. Whittaker reported that, at this time, it looks like two properties might be up for deeding, and that extraordinary efforts were being conducted by staff to ensure communication between the town and property owners. The property can be returned to the current owner upon payment of past due taxes, costs & fees within the legal time frame of 3 years.

Town Signs:

Mr. Oppenneer read an article in the recent City & County magazine about a town out west that had customized town signage. It might be helpful to have an Enfield style sign, so all of the signs look like they come from the same family of signs. Mrs. Whittaker advised that the goal was to head in this direction, but to provide signs that were more in keeping with a New England colonial flavor, and to take advantage of the town seal.

Public Works Facility:

The need for lighting and a flagpole at the Public Works facility were discussed. Mrs. Whittaker pointed out that no money was approved for improvements in 2003. A streetlight request has been submitted to Granite State Electric, and Ken Daniels is working to resolve the sign issue.

Underground Utility Design:

A bill was received from Verizon for preliminary work on the Underground Utility Design. The preliminary work was required in order to provide estimates for a warrant article at the 2002 Town Meeting. The Board of Selectmen would like to see a set of plans before the bill is paid.

Highway Garage ~ Shedd Street:

Mr. Albanese inquired whether the Highway Department was moved out of the Shedd Street garage.

Mr. Daniels replied in the negative, there are two impounded vehicles in the building and a stock of tires. The building also needs to remain heated. Mrs. Whittaker stated that the town must keep the gas pumps running until the town has the money to move them to the new facility.

Mr. Albanese questioned the storage of plows at Shedd Street, shouldn't they be moved to the Public Works facility? Mr. Daniels replied that part of the formerly proposed salt barn was to include storage for the plows.

PUBLIC HEARINGS**Sewer Rate Decrease:**

The hearing was called to order at 6:10 PM, motion Albanese, second Oppenpeer to open a public hearing, vote 3 – 0. Mrs. Reed proceeded to read the public notice that was posted for the hearing (copy enclosed.)

The audience was advised that the decrease was a formality initiated by the 2003 Town Meeting vote to “forgive” the deficit in the sewer fund and endorse the Town’s general fund use to cover the debt.

Mr. Oppenpeer questioned whether the \$60,000 in capital reserve funds could be used to reduce the rate even further. Mrs. Whittaker advised against it. The capital reserve fund is a cushion should an emergency expenditure be required or engineering be required at any given moment and encouraged good management practices in protecting the monies in the capital reserve. d

Mr. Oppenpeer suggested reducing the amount that goes into capital reserve from 5% to 2.5% and enquired what the worst-case cost scenario could be. Mr. Daniels, Public Works Director, advised that the large pump replacement could be in the realm of \$40,000, and that the reserve fund was only realizing about \$60,000 in savings thus far.

He further explained that the way the rate structure is set up is to provide coverage monies for the designated life of a sewer system of 50 years. The Town is closing in on 20 years now. Putting money aside will mean that when the service life of they system is reached, the town will be in a better position financially should the state revolving loan fund not be in existence.

Mrs. Whittaker stated that borrowing from capital reserve is what has happened in the past. The rate had been buffered by the capital reserve fund. This is not a good practice. Mrs. Whittaker would prefer to have the capital reserve fund at \$100,000.

Tracy Hayes recently moved to Enfield and is a first time homeowner. She and her husband are professionals, but are still living on a fixed income. They will spend \$1,000 / year just on this difference. She has worked in the restaurant and business management field for many years. She understands that Enfield is encouraging new business, but as a business, particularly a restaurant, overhead costs must be considered; water is a large part of that. She would like the Selectmen to consider these things.

Mr. Oppenneer stated that the town voted to have the undesignated fund balance pay off the Sewer deficit. Negotiations have begun with Lebanon. And the Sewer Sub-committee is working on potential expansion alternatives.

Mr. Albanese stated that in the short term the town needs to take a real hard look at the sewer budget. Historically, the Selectmen and Budget Committee have not looked very hard at these budgets as water and sewer funds should be normally "revenue neutral", and should not hamper the town's general fund or tax rate. The Sewer Fund should be 100% user fee based thus fees should cover 100% of the budget.

Mrs. Whittaker explained that negotiations are time consuming. If the town goes to arbitration, it could be another year before a conclusion of negotiations. Mr. Albanese advised that he would be willing to go along with Mr. Oppenneer's proposal to use the contribution to the capital reserve funds to offset the rate if it represented significant reduction. Unfortunately, it does not provide enough bang-for the buck. And the bottom line, the town has not been putting capital money aside for major expenditures in the Sewer Department.

Mrs. Whittaker stated that is why the town needs to build up those reserves; that's just being prudent. She would rather do it this way and keep the rates stable albeit that the rate is high.

Rick Barrows asked if the capital reserve funds were strictly for repairs. He was informed that the funds are for upgrades, repairs, equipment, and engineering expansion investigations.

Mr. Barrows expressed his concern over expenditures in the Sewer Department in particular citing \$60,000 for a new alarm system for the sewer and water departments. Mr. Albanese stated that this discussion is after the fact and suggested that Mr. Barrows attend the Budget Committee meetings when the next year's budget is being prepared.

Mr. Daniels explained the reason for the new alarm system, which will pay for itself in 8 to 10 years, and questioned why on something as vital as a good alarm system, this should not be considered as a worthwhile expenditure.

Mr. Albanese was informed that the town is still selling water to a testing company that is trying to develop a water softening system that could be beneficial at the McConnell well. Mr. Albanese wondered if there might be another way to raise money. Mrs. Whittaker said the town

has to look at this every way possible. There are treatment charges that must be paid and money needs to go into capital reserve. Lebanon is, in good faith, looking at our contract.

Mr. Albanese moved to close the hearing at 6:35 PM; Mr. Oppenneer seconded, vote unanimous.

Mr. Oppenneer moved to reduce the sewer rate to **\$9.80** effective for the first quarter billing of 2003; Mrs. Reed seconded, vote unanimous.

Building Permit Fees:

Mr. Albanese moved to open the public hearing at 6:35 PM; Mr. Oppenneer seconded, vote unanimous.

Mrs. Reed read the public notice that was posted for the hearing. (copy enclosed.).

Mrs. Whittaker provided information sheets outlining the costs charged by neighboring communities and the proposed charges for Enfield.

The last time permit fees were increased was in 1997. A typical home would have cost \$265 under the old fee schedule and will cost \$328 under the proposed schedule.

Phil Neily, Building Inspector, explained that the new building codes require additional inspections and services. The State is also attempting to cut back on services they provide so towns will have to fill the gap.

The building permit application process is quick, easy and consistent.

Mr. Oppenneer moved to close the public hearing at 6:40 PM; Mr. Albanese seconded, vote unanimous.

Mr. Oppenneer moved to adopt the Building Permit Fee Schedule as proposed; Mr. Albanese seconded, vote unanimous.

Lloyd Hackeman asked about the effective date of the new fee schedule. The board rationalized that the public hearing had set the date per the notice. Mr. Hackman suggested providing builders with at least a few days from this meeting date for those people that are planning applications and expecting to submit them under the old rates.

Mr. Albanese appreciates that, but the public hearing was advertised providing people with advance notice. However, he advised that he was happy to move the date.

Mr. Oppenneer moved to make the effective date of the new Building Permit Fee Schedule, May 1, 2003; Mrs. Reed seconded, vote unanimous.

CITIZENS FORUM**Lloyd Hackeman ~ Planning Board Fees:**

Mr. Hackeman was at a Planning Board meeting when the Shaker Valley Storage fees were cut in half because the planners felt that the fees would be onerous and excessive to the applicant given the square footages of the proposed storage warehouse unit.

Mr. Albanese questioned whether the Planning Board could cut its own fees. Mrs. Whittaker advised that she will investigate the circumstances for the reduction and if any past practices in this direction had been initiated in previous cases.

OLD BUSINESS**Rick Barrows Sewer Abatement Request:**

Mr. Barrows provided a copy of his 2002 Income Tax Return for the Board's review. They will take the matter under advisement in order to properly review the return.

Veterans Memorial Park:

Henry Cross reported that the blade would hit the ground after the week's rain. The monuments and signs are done, except for the foundations and irrigation system. Sod will be used rather than seed.

Sewer Review ~ Base Map Study:

Mrs. Whittaker reported that the Sewer Sub-Committee voted 4 to 1 to proceed with the sewer map fly-over. One member of the Committee wanted to wait for a feasibility grant, but time restraints would compromise the long grant process, and could hamper the work for the new master plan in the utility chapter.

Mr. Albanese asked if the purpose of the fly-over was to justify holding on the 300,000 gal per day capacity reserves or some other reason. Mrs. Whittaker explained that it would also assist with the Master plan, future and current numbers of users., and would provide a basis for good decision making for future expansions, if any. Funds for the fly-over would come from Sewer capital reserve funds. \$5,000 has been received in the first quarter of 2003 for sewer hook-ups to defray the \$7,000 fly over cost for specialized base mapping.

Mr. Oppeneer moved to expend \$7,000 from Sewer Capital Reserve for mapping possible future expansion; Mr. Albanese seconded, vote unanimous.

May Street Property:

Doreen Wyman has been contacted for a value of the property to provide a probable estimate of value. The State is occupying it at the town's behest and will need to make different accommodations for the storage of the bridge equipment once the property is advertised. Mrs. Whittaker will advertise the High Street property and the May St. property together to maximize advertising costs.

Mr. Albanese suggested selling this property with a minimum to encourage purchase of the lot as a house lot. Mrs. Whittaker will seek advise with respect to covenants denoting single family dwelling.

Whitney Hall Building Committee:

An advertisement has been placed for volunteers to the Town Office/Library Committee. Letters will be sent personally to the following individuals to determine their interest in serving on this committee: Henry Cross, Bill Kmon, Denise Smith, Frank Phillips, Paul Mirksi, Fred Paradis, Ken Wheeler and Donna Brazas.

The Committee will consist of a representative from the Library Board of Trustees, Board of Selectmen, Enfield Village Association and Budget Committee.

Other Old Business:

Mr. Oppeneer would like to see a list of inspected buildings. Mrs. Whittaker reported that Phil Neily is now inspecting all rental properties, even those with just a single apartment so the process has been initiated. This request will be forwarded to Mr. Neily.

Howard Adams Retirement:

A potluck retirement party will be held for Howard Adams on **Wednesday, May 21, 2003 at 6:00 PM at the Public Works Facility**. Town employees, officials, boards, and committees will be invited for the informal occasion.

Capital Reserve Funds:

Mr. Oppeneer questioned why the town has \$8,600 in a Town Dump capital reserve fund. Shouldn't this fund be closed at Town Meeting? There is also a similar Recreation fund.

The Town also has two similar capital reserve funds: Municipal Building CRF and Whitney Hall CRF, however each fund has a different purpose.

Mrs. Whittaker will review how the funds were initiated and their various purposes from past town meetings.

Well Drilling: Town Water Capacity

Mr. Oppeneer asked what the town is doing with well drilling. Mr. Daniels replied that the town is pushing its capacities, but is not near its limit. General discussion of the town wells followed.

Non-Public Session ~ RSA 91-A:3 II (a) & (c):

Mr. Albanese moved to enter into non-public session at 7:15 PM, under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) & (c); Mr. Oppeneer seconded. Roll call vote: Mr. Albanese – aye, Mrs. Reed – aye, Mr. Oppeneer – aye; vote unanimous.

Mr. Oppeneer moved to close the Non-Public Session at 7:25 PM; Mrs. Reed seconded, vote unanimous.

No decisions were undertaken.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

City of Lebanon Correspondence re: 2002 Wastewater O&M Charge/Estimated 2003 O&M Charge.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Oppenneer moved to adjourn at 7:25 PM; Mr. Albanese seconded, vote unanimous.