

Present: Chairman A. Raymond Randall, Selectman Mark W. Lynch, Selectman Jeffrey D. Jones, Town Administrator Brendhan Zubricki, and Selectmen's Assistant Pamela J. Witham.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. in the T.O.H.P. Burnham Public Library and announced that the Board would hear Public Comment. There was no one present from the public to offer any comment.

Mr. Zubricki presented a recap of the current status of revenue and expense to budgeted revenue and expense that has been prepared by the Town Accountant at the Selectmen's request. It will be placed in the reading folder for later review.

Discussion regarding the January 8th, 2009, Conomo Point meeting protocol: Barry Weiner has asked to meet with the Selectmen and the Conomo Point Planning Committee to share his professional experience and views regarding future possibilities at Conomo Point when the Conomo Point leases expire in 2011. The meeting has been scheduled and posted for Thursday, January 8th at the Senior Center. Chairman Randall said that he will begin the meeting by introducing Attorney Weiner. Mr. Weiner will then make his presentation to the assembled group, after which those attending will be able to ask questions of Mr. Weiner. The Selectmen do not intend to discuss or answer questions about Conomo Point at this meeting. The meeting will be an informational meeting, allowing Mr. Weiner to share his knowledge with other residents of the Town.

Horsley Witten discussion of options with the DEP: The Horsley Witten Group is in the process of completing Task I of their contract with the Town regarding Conomo Point and has asked permission to discuss the situation at Conomo Point with the Department of Environmental Protection. The DEP is willing to discuss Conomo Point with Horsley Witten, but would like someone from the Selectmen's Office to also take part in the conversation. The Selectmen asked Mr. Zubricki to represent their interest and arrange a conference call between the DEP and Horsley Witten on Friday morning, January 9th. Mr. Zubricki has been holding an invoice for Task I from Horsley Witten pending completion of Task I, at which time the invoice will be processed for payment.

On a related matter, it was agreed that the Chairman of the Conomo Point Planning Committee would be contacted to make sure he is aware of the deadlines for placing an article on the warrant for the May 2009 Annual Town Meeting.

Federal Stimulus Projects: Mr. Zubricki said that he has been informed of a proposed economic stimulus program originating from President-elect Obama's office. Based on a recent study that the Town has regarding the repair needs of the Town Hall and work done by the ad hoc building study group, Mr. Zubricki feels that the Town is in an excellent position to immediately meet the criteria required to qualify for funding from this program. The Selectmen agreed that Mr. Zubricki should prepare two applications to be submitted by the January 8th deadline. The first proposal will request assistance with funding for Town Hall repairs and the second will request funding for a new facility to house the Police Department with renovations to the existing Fire Station.

In other business, the Selectmen discussed the fact that the Essex Package Store has been closed recently without requesting permission to do so from the Selectmen. The owner of the business had been contacted and had said that the business is currently for sale. The Selectmen's Assistant is in the process of verifying that the Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission does require a licensee to be open for business during the hours stated on the licensee's license. The Selectmen agreed that if the ABCC requirement is confirmed, they will have no choice but to revoke the license as specified under the ABCC guidelines unless the business owner resumes regular business hours immediately. The Selectmen's Assistant agreed to contact the owner and inform him of the Selectmen's wishes pending verification of the ABCC rule.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously Voted to approve a request to transfer \$1,489.20 from the Reserve Fund to pay for coverage of the clam flats while the Shellfish Warden is in the hospital.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously Voted to approve the renewal of beaver trapping permission to Robert Brophy. The Selectmen also approved a thank you letter to Mr. Brophy for his volunteer service to the Town in this capacity. Because of his efforts, the water level of Chebacco Lake has been kept in check over the past several years.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously Voted to approve the acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$50 to the Fire Department from Helen and David Tory. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously Voted to approve the acceptance of a donation in the amount of \$200 from Edward and Patricia Marchetti, a donation in the amount of \$50 from David Tory, and a donation in the amount of \$10 from Annette Osborn to the Essex Police Department.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously Voted to approve the following expenditures from the Luther Burnham Fund:

- \$73.45 to Timothy Lane for fixing the water bubbler in the Town Hall.
- \$50.00 from the Luther Burnham Fund to Keane Fire & Safety for the annual fire extinguisher inspection at the Town Hall.
- \$30.00 from the Luther Burnham Fund to Keane Fire & Safety for the annual fire extinguisher inspection at the T.O.H.P. Burnham Library.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously Voted to approve and sign the weekly warrant in the amount of \$570,670.24.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously Voted to approve and sign the minutes for the December 15th, 2008, Selectmen's Open Meeting and the minutes for the December 15th, 2008, Selectmen's Executive Session.

The Selectmen reviewed a letter from Mr. Brenneman regarding his views on the future of Conomo Point. The Selectmen asked that a letter to Mr. Brenneman be prepared acknowledging receipt of his letter and indicating that Mr. Brenneman's concerns would be taken under advisement. A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously Voted to approve the Chairman's signature on that letter.

A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously Voted to approve a request for an Auction License by Richard A. DiFillipo, d/b/a R.A. DiFillipo Auctions, for use on Tuesday, January 27th, 2009, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 p.m. within the confines of 125 Main Street.

The Selectmen were reminded that the next Board of Selectmen's meeting will be held at the Senior Center at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 8th, 2009.

The Cape Ann Breakfast Club will meet on Friday, January 9th at the Elks at Bass Rocks, Gloucester at 7:30 a.m. Lynn E. Browne, Executive Vice President and Economic Advisor to the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston will offer remarks on the Economic Forecast. The Selectmen will attend.

Citing the need to discuss strategy concerning collective bargaining, the Chairman entertained a motion to move to Executive Session. He said that the Board would not be returning to Open Session and invited Town Administrator Brendhan Zubricki to attend. The motion was made, seconded, and per a unanimous Roll Call Vote, the Board moved to Executive Session at 9:35 a.m.

The Board returned to Open Session at 9:40 a.m.

The Chairman asked Mr. Zubricki if he would put a request on the Town's website asking property owners to voluntarily assume responsibility for shoveling their sidewalks as a favor to the Selectmen. The Town has limited resources with regard to manpower and equipment and it would be greatly appreciated if property owners would help during snowstorms, allowing the Town to focus more of its efforts on maintaining the roads.

There being no further business before the Board, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously Voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:45 a.m.

Prepared by: _____
Pamela J. Witham

Attested by: _____
Jeffrey D. Jones