

Town of Farmington
Board of Selectmen – Public Meeting Minutes
Monday, April 13, 2015

Board Members Present:

Charlie King, Chairman
Brian St. Onge, Vice Chairman
Paula Proulx
Jerry McCarthy
Jim Horgan

Others Present:

Town Administrator Keith Trefethen
Auditor Taylor Roberts
Auditor John Kangas
Public Works Department employee Sumner Scott

1). Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance:

Chairman King called the meeting to order at 6 p.m. All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

2). Approval of Minutes:

Selectmen did not receive copies of the minutes of April 6, 2015 so the matter was tabled until the next board meeting.

3). Public Comment: None

4). Review of Internal Controls-Cash Collection/ Roberts & Greene – 6 p.m.:

Selectmen welcomed auditors Taylor Roberts and John Kangas of Roberts & Greene, PLLC to the meeting. Town Administrator Keith Trefethen gave a brief summary of the events leading up to the board's request to review the town's internal control measures. Following charges filed against the former Fire Chief Fowler for alleged missing funds, Selectmen authorized asking the auditing firm to review procedures in all departments that handle cash including the Ambulance/Fire Department, Police Department, Recreation Department, Transfer Station and the Planning/Zoning/Code Enforcement Departments. Ms. Roberts said she and staff members began the review by meeting with each of the department heads and interviewing them about the procedures for handling cash in their department. The draft report presented to the board contains what they observed and were told at the meetings and their recommendations for possible improvements to the procedures she said. She added that the report is not an opinion on the financial status of the town. Chairman King then asked for questions and comments from the board. Discussion included better control of the town credit cards, prior approval of purchases, restricting the use of the cards to the person whose name is on the card, reconciliation of cash taken in and material given out (dump stickers, pistol permits, etc.), who performs the reconciliation for each department, providing some type of audit trail for services provided, and having someone outside the department perform the reconciliation for that department. Chairman King then asked Trefethen what he would recommend be done differently. Trefethen said he would suggest having one town credit card which is kept at the Municipal Building, talk to the Town Clerk about reconciliation of dump stickers and issues at the Transfer Station, and have a procedure where someone is not reconciling their own department. Chairman King asked if Ms. Roberts if it is better to have a separate reconciliation policy for each for each department or one policy for all town departments. He also asked if the verification should be performed

monthly or quarterly. Ms. Roberts said the answer really depends on the volume of services and cash taken in for each department.

Selectman Proulx suggested the reconciliation process should include a verification signature which would provide another set of eyes to verify the amounts submitted. Ms. Roberts agreed this would provide firm control of the process.

Selectman Horgan said that although the report did not cite anything drastically wrong, he would like to see better control of credit cards and not allow them to be passed off to others to use who are not named on the card. He also said some issues at the landfill need to be fixed such as receipts for large items such as TV's and furniture, multiple trips to the scale from one user and the lack of a remittance slip that categorizes types of funds collected for the Town Clerk's office.

The auditors' report recommended the following improvements:

Recreation- Implementation of a town policy requiring a general town credit card to be kept at the Town Office and be logged out only with the approval of the Town Administrator. Employees that need to use a credit card on a regular basis should have a card assigned to them so they are responsible for charges to that card. Disallow the practice of employees' use of cards assigned to someone else. The use of credit cards should be kept to a minimum, require prior approval and personal charges should be prohibited.

Police Department- If the town wants the department to make purchases online to get a better deal, a credit card should be assigned to the Chief and purchases should not be done through the Police Association's credit card. All purchases should be approved prior to being made and not when they are reimbursed to the Association. Also, when a grant is applied for by the Police Chief (or any other town employee) a copy of all paperwork associated with the grant should be kept on file with the Town Finance office to make for easier preparation of the annual audit of federal funding.

Transfer Station- Better reconciling of dump stickers sold, stop the practice of having drivers leave their licenses and a blank check at the landfill for multiple trips to the site and require a cash deposit for anyone wishing to pay at the end of multiple trips.

Ambulance/Fire- Implement a written policy regarding write-offs for uncollectable billing which would require write-offs to be discussed with the Town Administrator and approved by Selectmen. Review each billing report from Comstar to ensure that all ambulance runs have been billed.

Planning- Adopt a formal town policy regarding the timing of remitting monies received by all departments to the Town Clerk's office. The policy should include procedures for small amounts of money and require all money collected during the month be remitted by the last business day of the month.

5).Cable Franchise Agreement Discussion with Attorney (Non-meeting) at 7 p.m.:

This item was moved to later in the meeting.

6).Letter to NHDOT on State Owned Land:

Trefethen told the board he received a letter from NH Department of Transportation Administrator Charles Schmidt proposing the sale of state land consisting of approximately 0.36 of an acre on the southeast side of Route 11 near Flagstaff Road. The letter said the department is in the process of selling the parcel to A.J. Cameron's Sod Farms for \$13,100 and state statute requires the Town of Farmington must be notified of the sale to determine if the town has an interest in purchasing the property before it is sold to the public. The letter asked the town to reply within 30 days. Acquisition of this parcel would allow Cameron's to secure all of the property in front of their business so they can reconfigure the entrances to the property.

Motion: (Horgan, second St. Onge) to authorize the Town Administrator to write a letter of non-interest in the sale of the property to NH DOT passed 5-0.

7). CDBG /Winnisquam Wood Products:

Trefethen said Winnisquam Wood Products has defaulted on an agreement for a Community Development Block Grant by failing to keep three of the 24 committed jobs filled. As a result of the default, the company has agreed to return \$60,000 to NH Community Development Finance Authority. The town is not a party to the default or to the repayment agreement but has been asked to acknowledge receipt of the agreement by signatures of the Selectmen he said.

Motion: (Horgan, second Proulx) to acknowledge the receipt of the agreement to return \$60,000 to the NHCDFA passed 5-0.

8). Request for Modification of Work Schedule:

Public Works employee Sumner Scott came before the board to discuss a modified work schedule for the summer as per the Teamsters' agreement. Scott said he was asking Selectmen to consider adjusting the work schedule from five eight-hour days to four 10-hour days from April 20 through October 16, 2015. The intended work schedule would be as follows:

Public Works- Monday through Thursday from 6 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Someone would be on-call from Monday through Sunday and would be paid two hours straight time unless called in.

Water and Wastewater- Nine hour days Monday through Thursday and a four hour day on Friday to cover work needed to be completed on Fridays.

Transfer Station- Work an extra hour on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday with Thursday off. Discussion by the board included making the extra hour at the Transfer Station open to the public, if the Union is agreeable to the suggested adjusted hours, amount of on-call pay to be received, having half of the crew take Monday off and the other half would have Friday off and what is the benefit to employees or to the town in changing the hours.

Selectman McCarthy asked if the longer days would trigger over-time pay. Scott said it would not as over-time pay is based on working more than 40 hours per week, not on the number of hours per day.

Motion: (Horgan, second McCarthy) to approve the recommended modification of hours for the Public Works, Transfer Station, Water and Wastewater Departments with the added one hour at the Transfer Station to be open to the public passed 4-1(St. Onge opposed).

9). Any Further Business:

A) Meetings with Public Safety Building Bidders- Trefethen said he scheduled board meetings with bidders North South Construction and Martini Northern for their April 20 meeting. There will be two more bidder presentations scheduled for the May 4 meeting he said.

B). Christmas Lights- Selectman Proulx asked if there has been a response from Eversource (PSNH) regarding the town's request to continue hanging the Christmas lights from utility poles in the downtown area. Trefethen said he did receive a response from the company stating that they will not reverse their decision to disallow electrified decorations to be hung from their poles. He said he asked the company to provide a written copy of the denial which has yet to be received.

C). Farmington Child Care Center- Selectman Proulx asked if there has been a response from the center regarding the lease renewal for the facility. Trefethen said there has been no response.

D). Safe Routes to School- Selectman Proulx asked when the class for new representatives to the program is scheduled. Trefethen said it is scheduled for April 23.

E) Authority for Site Plan Review- Selectman Proulx asked if there is any progress on recording the authority to conduct site plan reviews at the Registry of Deeds. At a previous meeting, resident Randy Orvis said he discovered the omission when researching the subject of an application before the Planning Board. Trefethen

said one authority was recorded and another one was not recorded. He will ask Interim Planner Mike Garrepy to research the matter and if the authority was properly approved, have it recorded.

F). Resident Dump Stickers- Selectman St. Onge asked if residents will be required to obtain new dump stickers this year and if the public has been informed. Trefethen said he would check into the matter.

G). Medical Cards- Selectmen Proulx asked if all employees required to do so have obtained Medical Cards. Trefethen said he was pretty sure everyone in the Public Works Department have obtained their cards, but will check to be sure.

H). Local Contractors Bidding- Chairman King asked if Trefethen had received any information as to why none of the local contractors have placed a bid for the construction of the proposed Public Safety Building. Trefethen said he has not yet received any information on the matter.

Recess- Motion: (Horgan, second Proulx) to take a short recess passed 5-0 at 6:55 p.m.

Chairman King reconvened the meeting at 7 p.m. The board then consulted with Attorney Kate Miller regarding the Cable TV Franchise Agreement from 7 to 8 p.m.

10). Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3 II (a) 8 p.m. Employment Interviews:

Motion: (Proulx, second Horgan) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) to conduct interviews for a public works employee passed 5-0 (King, St.Onge, Proulx, McCarthy, Horgan- yes) at 8 p.m.

Motion: (McCarthy, second Proulx) to end non-public session passed 5-0 at 8:58 p.m.

Motion: (McCarthy, second Proulx) to offer a position of employment to William Cardinal and approve an hourly rate of \$16.50 /hr. pending a review of his background passed 5-0.

11). Adjournment:

Motion: (St.Onge, second Horgan) to adjourn the meeting passed 5-0 at 9 p.m.

Respectively submitted,
Kathleen Magoon
Recording Secretary

Charlie King

Paula Proulx

Brian St. Onge

James Horgan

Gerry McCarthy