

Town of Farmington
Board of Selectmen – Public Meeting Minutes
Monday, May 18, 2015
Selectmen's Chambers
356 Main Street

Board Members Present:

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

Others Present:

Town Administrator Keith Trefethen
Superintendent Steve Welford
SAU Director of Technology Rick Bailey

1). Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance:

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

2). Approval of minutes: Tabled until later in the meeting.

3). Public Comment:

Planning Board Chairman Charles Doke spoke to the board about the lack of a full time Planner and the Planning Office not being open five days a week. He stated that the office should be open to compliment the Code Enforcement Officer and to enable residents, board members and developers the opportunity to get information and timely answers to their questions. He cited getting the 79-e and TIF Districts set up as two reasons to open the office right away and asked Selectmen to consider adding nine hours to the Planning Dept. office schedule. He also asked the board about placing this matter on the agenda for more discussion between the boards.

Chairman King asked the Town Administrator about the possibility of a schedule change for the Planning Dept. Office. Trefethen suggested the interim part time Planner could schedule office hours starting from 4 p.m. on the days the Planning Board holds meetings and the Planning Board Secretary could modify her schedule to include more coverage for the office during the day.

Chairman King said the town can also seek professional assistance from the Strafford County Regional Planning Commission where the cost for experienced help would be based on an estimate given for each particular project. He added that sometimes the Planner is in conflict with the Code Enforcement Officer when he has to be an advocate for the client, helping them through the hurdles and also be the bad guy and make them follow the rules.

Planning Board Vice Chairman David Kestner told the board having the Planner show up on the night of the Planning Board meetings is “ridiculous and a day late and a dollar short”. He said this does not allow enough time for board members and clients to get timely responses, get plans reviewed, signed and recorded or do the work to follow state laws regarding the management of the 79-e and TIF Districts. He added that the Planning Board has been waiting for two months for material requested from the Planner which they have yet to receive.

Conservation Commission Vice Chairman Randy Orvis said he is also in favor of hiring a full time Planner. He said if the town goes back to having a permanent part time Planner, it will get a reputation as a part time town. He added that the Cons Com uses the Planning Dept. Office when the Planning Board sends applications or issues to them for review and also looks for grants for some of the commissions' projects. Residents use the office too, more than you think he added.

Planning Board and Economic Development Committee member Martin Laferte said he favored a full time Planner rather than using a consultant who will take the paperwork and then won't be seen for a month. He added that someone

should be there so if something comes up he can deal with it and keep things moving.

Chairman King asked if Planner Mike Garrepy has been attending Planning Board meetings. Former Planning Board Chairman Paul Parker said Garrepy only shows up for meetings that have an application review scheduled or if specifically requested to attend. He said the board is working on encouraging development along Route 11 and said Garrepy is not a craftsman who will help develop the TIF District and is not the person we need.

Selectman Rep. to the Planning Board and the EDC Jim Horgan said the town needs to hire a full time Planner and support the committee members' efforts.

Selectman Proulx noted that before the previous full time Planner Kathy Mendici left, she made a recommendation that the town didn't need a full time Planner and wondered if she talked to the Planning Board before making her recommendation.

Chairman King then advised the issue will be included on a future meeting agenda for more discussion and closed the Public Comment portion of the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

4). Technology Review/Cable Franchise Agreement:

MetroCast Cablevision representatives Danny Jobe and Steve Boudreau came before the board to discuss the town's options for renewing the franchise agreement. Boudreau said the agreement is for typical cable TV services such as basic and expanded cable TV, Video on Demand and Pay Per View. The agreement also includes services to the Town and the School District. Those services include free cable service, two Community Channels (Ch.25 and Ch.26) and Virtual Private Network (VPN) which is a private network that allows information to be passed back and forth between the town and school district.

Superintendent Welford said the school district uses the VPN, but noted that it is not fast enough or large enough to be of much use. Trefethen said the Town has the ability to use a VPN but it is currently not in use.

Welford said the school district is looking for more support for live broadcasting to all of the school buildings, a studio and equipment to teach students interested in video production, a municipal loop that connects all town and school buildings and better sound and video quality for the PEG (Public, Education, Government) Channel. He asked Selectmen to take into account the services the town and school district provide and take a holistic look at the TV and Internet needs of the community. He cited online testing where as many as 200 students are online at the same time as an example of the need for more Internet speed and capacity to meet the district's needs.

Discussion also included Internet streaming of committee meetings, additional origination (hookup) points, faster connections for the Police Dept., equipment and training for school and town users, additional VPN's, increased broadband speed and replacement of outdated equipment.

Boudreau said MetroCast uses a fiber optic transmission system and if the town or schools are having connection or quality problems someone should report it to the company. He also explained that the company does not provide Internet streaming to any of its communities and that a third party provider must be used for that service. He added that the original agreement is for cable TV service, not for broadband/Internet service, but since the company is also an Internet service provider, he is willing to discuss adding those services to the franchise agreement.

Boudreau said Farmington is not unique in its needs, but noted there is a cost for what is being asked for and the company must realize a return on its investment. He said they will consider everything discussed, but asked the board to be realistic in its requests and expectations.

Chairman King said the board will "Totem Pole" the dollar value of items discussed and take a look at the total package available. He noted that the board members are not experts in this area and said they appreciated the representatives coming in and listening to the discussion.

Director of Technology Rick Bailey will be the contact person for the school district and will provide a letter to the Town Administrator outlining the school district's interests in the contract renewal negotiations.

5). Non-Public Session- RSA 91-A: 3 II (d) Farmington Children's Center:

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (d) at 7:30 p.m. The motion passed 5-0 by a roll call vote (King, St. Onge, Proulx, Horgan, McCarthy - yes) at 7:20 p.m.

The board then took a 10 minute recess. The meeting reconvened at 7:30 p.m. and the board entered non-public

session.

Motion: (Horgan, second Proulx) to come out of non-public session. The motion passed unanimously at 8 p.m. Selectmen then entered into consultation with Attorney Kerri Ann Roman.

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (d) Farmington Children's Center. The motion passed 5-0 by a roll call vote (King, Proulx, St. Onge, McCarthy, Horgan-yes) at 8:45 p.m.

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to come out of non-public session. The motion passed 5-0 at 9 p.m. The board discussed the terms for a lease renewal and reached a tentative agreement for a 20-year lease for the Children's Center.

Motion: (Proulx, second King) to enter into consultation with Town Counsel. The motion passed 5-0 at 9 p.m.

6). Non-Public Session- RSA 91-A: 3 II (b) Fire Chief's Position:

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (b). The motion passed 5-0 by a roll call vote (King, St. Onge, Proulx, Horgan, McCarthy -yes) at 9:55 p.m.

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to come out of non-public session passed 5-0 at 10 p.m.

The board reviewed applications for the Fire Chief position and decided to interview four candidates at their June 8, 2015 meeting.

7). Non-Public Session-RSA 91-A: 3 II (b) Town Administrator's Position:

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (b) passed unanimously by a roll call vote (King, St. Onge, Proulx, McCarthy, Horgan-yes) at 10 p.m.

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to come out of non-public session passed 5-0 at 10:12 p.m.

Consensus of the board was to keep the deadline for application submissions open until the position is filled. The board will begin interviewing applicants at their June 15, 2015 board meeting.

8). Town Administrator's Reporting:

In preparation for his departure, Trefethen reported that all of the folders for recent issues that he has been working on can be found in his office desk. He also prepared a tentative agenda for the board's June 1 meeting.

Hay Day- Selectman McCarthy asked if the board was aware that the Recreation Dept. is charging the Conservation Commission for spaces at the Hay Day celebration. McCarthy said that as a town board, he did not think they should be charged for participating in the town event. Members asked where the line should be drawn as to who should be charged and who can participate for free. No action was taken.

Orange Street- Trefethen provided the new ordinance disallowing parking on Orange Street.

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to approve the no parking ordinance on Orange Street passed 5-0.

Transfer Station- Selectman Horgan reported receiving a suggestion to open the transfer station one hour earlier instead adding the hour on at the end of the day to allow residents to bring their trash to the facility before going to work. Consensus of the board was to keep the extra hour at the end of the day during the summer hours. Selectman Proulx requested the board receive a letter from the Union representing the employees stating that they approve the change in hours for the summer season.

Minutes- The minutes were tabled until the next meeting.

Annex Demo- Selectman Horgan asked for an update on the demolition of the Fire Dept. Annex building. Trefethen said he checked with Always Recycling to determine their availability if the board is ready to go ahead with the project. They could begin the work in two to three weeks of notification and the proposed contract amount is still good he said. He added that now the board needs to determine where the money for the demo work will come from.

Town Truck Use Request- Selectman Horgan told the board that Ed Askins is preparing to take the test to obtain a CDL license, but does not have a vehicle to use for the test. He asked if the town could let him borrow a Town truck for the test. Trefethen said he had already agreed to the request.

9). Adjournment:

Motion: (King, second Horgan) to adjourn the meeting passed 5-0 at 10:25 p.m.

Respectively submitted,
Kathleen Magoon
Recording Secretary

Charlie King

Paula Proulx

Brian St. Onge

James Horgan

Gerry McCarthy