

Town of Farmington  
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes  
Monday, June 19, 2017

**Board Members Present:**

Paula Proulx, Chairman  
Neil Johnson, Vice Chairman  
Jim Horgan  
Charlie King  
Ann Titus

**Others Present:**

Arthur Capello, Town Administrator  
Rick Conway, Recreation Director  
Bill Letsky, Virtual Town Hall  
Residents Sylvia Arcouette, Tom  
DeJulio, Elise Haig, John Law,  
Bobbie Storrman

**1). Call to Order:**

Chairman Proulx called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

**2). Pledge of Allegiance:**

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3). Public Input:**

**A). Sylvia Arcouette** said she came to invite the board to National Overdose Awareness Night on Thursday, August 31, 2017 at Fernald Park. This will be the second time that Farmington has joined the annual national event and this year's hosts are Farmington Responds and the Friends of Farmington. The event starts at 7 p.m. but participants can come at 6 p.m. to decorate bags in memory of those we have lost or for those who are still fighting the fight every day. She gave the board some flyers and their own bags to decorate before the event if they chose to do so.

**B). Tom DeJulio** came forward representing the Farmington Preservation and Improvements Organization and thanked the board for giving the organization permission to hold a car show in the parking lot of the former Fire Station on Hay Day. He said he discussed how to handle any potential overflow of cars for the show with the Police and Fire Chiefs and had one more question for the board.

He said at Hay Day last year there was no one in the spaces on Main Street from Pleasant Street to Garfield Street. He asked if that were to happen again this year if that portion of the street could be used for the overflow of car show participants. He said the only conditions set by the Chiefs were Selectmen approval for the use of the street and that a 12 foot wide lane be left open for emergency vehicles to pass through the area.

Mr. Capello said that he already denied the request because there would be people milling around the cars and there would be no way to guarantee a 12 foot lane for emergency vehicles to safely pass through. He asked the board to go with what they approved at the last meeting and to figure out a contingency plan for the overflow cars next year.

Mr. Horgan was absent from the previous meeting and asked if the cars would be from a single organization and if the board picked a total number of vehicles that would be allowed to attend.

Mr. Johnson said the board did not choose a particular number of vehicles that would be allowed

to attend the show. He said they gave approval for use of the parking lot from the right hand side of the entrance across to the old Fire Station and in front of and to the left of the station. The 22 spaces at the bus stanchion and the right-of-way into the other properties were to be left clear he said.

Ms. Proulx said the approval was contingent upon Mr. Capello and Recreation Director Rick Conway visiting the site and determining a potential layout that makes sense while keeping in mind the resident parking and parking for the Hay Day vendors.

Mr. Horgan asked if Mr. Capello and Mr. Conway were to establish a fixed number and limit the number of vehicles allowed to participate.

Mr. Capello said there is no fixed number of cars expected to attend the show. The fixed number is based on how many cars show up and can fit into the space allowed for use and then send the rest home he said.

Ms. Proulx said Mr. DeJulio could also get confirmation of the vehicles planning to attend the event.

Mr. King asked if some of overflow cars could park in the Municipal Office Building parking lot.

Mr. Capello said that would be allowed and that he didn't want to see them parking in the street for safety reasons.

Mr. King asked if parking is permitted on Main Street why the overflow cars couldn't park in the parking spaces along the street.

Ms. Proulx said parking is not permitted in the spaces along the street as the street is blocked off for Hay Day.

Mr. DeJulio said he was talking about having the cars park in one travel lane of the street perpendicular to the sidewalk facing toward the old Fire Station.

Mr. Capello said with people walking in the streets around the cars a 12 foot lane for emergency vehicles can't be guaranteed. He said if the board chose to approve the request he would ask them to monitor the situation on Hay Day and to make sure there is 12 foot lane all the way through the event.

Mr. DeJulio said he was going to keep the right travel lane of the street open which is approx. 12 or 14 feet wide.

Mrs. Titus listed some of the streets in the downtown area where parking is not allowed and asked for other designated No Parking areas downtown.

Mr. Capello said he did not know and that it is too late to be adding things and getting into this much detail about any changes to be made. He suggested they take what can be done this year and figure out how to make it bigger next year.

Mr. King asked if there is a car club coming to the show, if there is a list you must get on if you want to attend or if the spaces are on a "first come, first served" basis.

Mr. DeJulio said they do not have a club which will bring 100 cars to the show. He said they plan to do their own advertising at other car shows like they were advised to do and that he did not how many cars will show up.

Mr. King said if someone wants to participate in the show, put it on their calendar and then drove down here, he would want to know that there would be a spot for him when he gets here.

Mr. DeJulio said that was why he was asking for the overflow space because unless the owners RSVP for a space there would be no guarantee of a parking space for them when they arrive. He said that even with an RSVP you are not sure who is really going to show up so they decided to leave it open to see if they can get 50 or 60 cars to come here. He added if they turn away cars it may "blow it" for next year.

Mrs. Arcouette asked that when they went to the other car show if they included a notation on the flyer asking the participants to RSVP due to limited parking.

Mr. DeJulio said they have not distributed any flyers yet and they had the conversation at the other car show only last Saturday.

Mrs. Arcouette asked where the show was held and how many cars participated.

Mr. DeJulio said about 100 cars attended the show held behind Spaulding High School in Rochester.

Mrs. Arcouette asked if the group considered holding the show at Farmington High School.

Mr. DeJulio said the group is trying to help out Hay Day and be part of the activities downtown.

Mrs. Arcouette suggested the group put out a flyer asking the vehicle owners to RSVP for the show because there is limited parking. If they still want to come they will come she said.

Mr. DeJulio said they are still trying to figure out how many spaces they will have for the event.

Ms. Proulx asked Mr. Capello if he expected to have a chance to get to the old fire station lot to look at the physical set up for the show.

Mr. Capello said he hoped to get to it this week.

Mrs. Titus asked if there is a charge for the vehicle owners to participate in the show.

Mr. DeJulio said the clubs make their money from each car attending the show and not from the gate receipts.

Mr. King asked how much they are planning to charge the vehicle owners.

Mr. DeJulio said the cost will probably be about \$5 a car. He said a show was held recently at FHS but they only advertised it in the school newspaper. They charged \$10 a car and got 10 cars, 4 trucks and a motorcycle to attend the event. He added that he would hate to think that after the group spends the money for advertising and for the trophies that only 15 cars would show up.

Ms. Proulx asked if the board wished to do anything different from the decision that was made at the last meeting after hearing this conversation.

Consensus of the board was not to make any changes to their previous decision.

Ms. Proulx told Mr. DeJulio they are at a standstill until Mr. Capello and Mr. Conway go to the site and determine an approx. number of vehicles that will fit in the space allowed which should be included on the flyers, posters, etc. for the show. She suggested he take the number of spaces allowed at the lot and put there is limited parking for that many cars on the flyers and to go with that for this year and attempt to expand it next year if they want to do it again.

Mr. Horgan asked what time the vehicles would have to be in place for start of Hay Day.

Mr. DeJulio said the road is closed at 9 a.m.

Mr. Capello said the cars would need to be in place by 8 a.m.

Ms. Proulx suggested Mr. DeJulio have everything “all down pat” so there aren’t any problems with the car owners arriving late, etc.

Mr. Capello said he will contact Mr. DeJulio when he and Mr. Conway have a chance to walk the parking lot.

**C). Town Water Report-** Mr. Capello said that Town water users recently received the annual regulatory notice from the state Dept. of Environmental Services (NHDES) regarding water testing and the level of any contaminates found in the water. He said the town water is tested on a regular basis and is well within the standards required by NHDES. He said that contrary to postings on Face Book, there is no issue with the Town water system. He advised anyone with concerns to call rather than getting their information on Face Book.

Mr. King asked if the seasonal hydrant flushing has been done.

Mr. Capello said that is usually done in the fall.

Mr. King said sometimes there is discoloration of the water when the hydrants are flushed.

Mr. Capello said no one was complaining about the color of the water but were calling demanding a copy of a notice that we don’t even have because supposedly the water is bad.

#### **4). Review of Minutes:**

June 12, 2017- Public Meeting Minutes- No errors or omissions

Motion: (Johnson, second Titus) to approve the minutes as written passed 3-0-2 (Horgan, King abstained).

June 12, 2017- Non-Public Session A – amend the motion to come out of non-public session to 9:40 p.m.

Motion: (Johnson, second Titus) to approve the minutes as amended passed 3-0-2 (King, Horgan abstained).

Motion: (Johnson, second Titus) to unseal the Non-Public Session A minutes passed 3-0-2 (Horgan, King abstained).

#### **5). Virtual Town Hall Presentation:**

Mr. Capello said a representative of Virtual Town Hall would like to make a presentation to the board regarding possibly providing an upgrade to the Town website and noted that the upgrade would make the website “mobile friendly”.

Mr. Horgan asked for a description of the term “mobile friendly”.

Mr. Capello said it would allow visitors to website to use their mobile devices (cell phones, Smartphones, tablets, e-readers, etc.) to navigate the site to obtain information which is a critical component for the site given how many people are dependent on their mobile devices to access information.

Virtual Towns and Schools Director Bill Letsky told the board that about 7 years ago Virtual Town Hall created the current Town website. Since that time technology has changed a lot and has gone to what is referred to as responsive design where the website will change to make it super user friendly for any device. He said the current web site has a fixed width which does not

shrink/expand to accommodate mobile devices.

Mr. Letsky said the current website was built in their legacy system (outdated software, program or application) called First Class. The upgrade will allow the website to configure the width, the section tabs and information stacking depending on the device. The site would also integrate with Face Book and Twitter and allow users to easily find what they are looking for through a “Find It Fast” section and a more responsive search engine he said.

In a brief overview of the company, Mr. Letsky said they have been building websites since 2001 and will have more than 600 clients by the end of 2017, 90 of which are NH cities and towns.

He said the site will be built in an open source (can be modified and shared with a source code) shared platform called Drupal which is a customizable content management tool and if the company were to go out of business the Town would own the site. He added that the software is very secure and that the White House and many of the federal government agencies use Drupal. Mr. Letsky said some of the other features of upgrade include daily off site backups, a business directory where the businesses would be classified by categories and have individual pages for each business to add content about their business, the ability to post bids and RFP’s by subject and end date, automatic notice of RFP addendums to the potential bidders, view the most popular pages at the site, ability to trend the searches from the search box and an unlimited number of calendars (Town meetings, sponsored events, individual depts., community organizations, etc). He said it will be easier for Town staff to make content changes to the site as links can be added to multiple places at the same time by checking off boxes, allowing access to as many users as needed, sending out alerts to Twitter and Face Book as well as to subscribers, identifying and fixing broken links, online forms for calendars, set dates to publish and remove information, receive e-mail reminders to review content and allowing someone in the field to post alerts if needed.

He said it will take 12 weeks to create and build the site and to train users at a cost of \$6,000. He added that the cost can be spread out over 1-3 years interest free.

Discussion also included e-mail capability and costs, whether to hire a third party to manage and run the site, additional annual management/tech support fees (\$2,400), cost to build a website from scratch, providing oversight of content and adherence to the social media policy.

Bobbie Storrman said it is difficult to find things on the current website and that it presents an unprofessional image to businesses looking at our site. She said she felt it is important to make investment in how we present ourselves as a town. She added that she has been asking since November for an official Town Face Book page that can be linked to the website and asked the board go forward with the proposed upgrade of the site.

Mrs. Titus asked if the Town Face Book page would allow for public comment.

Mr. Capello said the page will be set it up for informational purposes only.

Mrs. Titus asked for the current total amount in the Future Technology Fund.

Mr. Capello said there is about \$30,000 in the fund now and that it is also being replenished with the franchise fees from TDS. He recommended the board fund the upgrade with money from the

fund if approved.

Ms. Proulx asked Mr. Capello for his opinion on the proposed upgrade since he will be the one to manage it behind the scenes.

Mr. Capello said he felt it is a good investment for the town and that he has always liked Virtual Town Hall because it gives us the ability to control it and it can be done quicker than by a third party manager. He said they need to get Town staff/dept. heads together to set up the process and coordinate everything. He added that he liked the idea of the calendar sites being linked and that the Police Dept. could send out an emergency notification without going through the Selectmen's Secretary to be put out as an e-mail blast.

Mr. Conway said his dept.'s page is not user friendly as there are a lot of steps to add links or forms to the page. If it was easier to do we would do it more often he said.

Mr. King said the first step is for the board to approve the upgrade and then review some examples of other town websites and the different styles of layouts and flows and why picked them. Some websites might be easier for staff to populate than others he said.

Ms. Proulx said that would be a discussion for another meeting where they could hold a workshop with dept. heads and staff and choose the design and functions of the website.

Motion: (Horgan, second Titus) to authorize the Town Administration to move forward with the upgrade to the Town website at a cost not to exceed \$6,000 to be paid in full from the Future Technology Fund passed 5-0.

#### **6). Town Administrator's Business:**

**A). Town Administrator's Contract-** Mr. Capello said his contract is coming up for renewal and if the board decides not to renew it they must inform him of the decision by July 1 or it will automatically renew on August 1. Consensus of the board was to discuss the matter during non-public session at the next meeting.

#### **B). Abatements-**

Hardship- Consensus of the board was to discuss the abatement request in non-public session.

Utility Abatement- Mr. Capello said 3 utilities have filed for abatements and the Assessor has recommended the request be denied.

Motion: (King, second Johnson) to deny the abatement requests for Eversource, FairPoint and NH Electric Co-op as per the recommendation of Assessor George Sansoucy passed 5-0.

#### **7). Discussion on Use of the Former Police Station:**

Selectmen reviewed copies of the blueprints for the former Police Station showing the dimensions that differ from the original plans for the building.

Ms. Proulx asked how the board wished to approach the discussion.

Mr. King said that the Community Action Partnership (CAP) previously came before the board requesting \$30,000 to rehab the Old Court House for their purposes. Because this building was available the board talked about relocating CAP there and other uses they were considering for the building. He suggested that the first step may be to decide if CAP will relocate to the old station or not as they would not want to layout the building to include the CAP office and then



have them say they don't choose to swap locations.

Mr. Capello said the CAP office would have no choice but to move if the board were to choose to move them.

Mr. Horgan agreed and said the Town is only obligated to provide a space for the CAP office and it doesn't say where in the contract.

Mr. King said the plans show quite a bit of space at the old station and that the Mr. Conway has proposed that a Youth Center and a Senior Center be considered for that space.

Mr. Horgan said that until the board decides what it will allow Mr. Conway to do at the site there is no point in rearranging the building. Then we can figure out how to arrange the space to use it more effectively he said.

Mr. Johnson said that the more he looked at the plans the more he feels it will be expensive to move anybody into it because of the lack of handicapped accessible restrooms and handicapped access to the building. He said he would rather see money spent to make a few modifications for a Senior or Youth Center rather than to accommodate someone moving into the space.

Ms. Proulx said that was her main argument to begin with when they had the initial presentation from CAP and that if they spent money to move them somewhere else they would be defeating the purpose. She said CAP needs to stay in the Old Courthouse and make their own adjustments as the Town provides them with a lot of things at no cost. She added one would think they would want to do that to make things a little better for us especially where they serve other towns there besides Farmington. She asked Mr. Capello if he had any response from CAP as to whether they have gotten any donations from the other towns the office serves.

Mr. Capello said he has not heard a word from them since the previous meeting with the board.

Ms. Proulx said she agreed with Mr. Johnson that CAP should upgrade the site themselves and added that they also have the option to back out of the contract with the Town and move their office to Rochester.

Mr. King suggested that they not force CAP to move into the old Police Station and to have Mr. Capello and Mr. Conway develop a floor plan that makes sense for the uses suggested and how to best utilize the space. There may need to be some structural changes and rehab to the space to allow for those uses he said.

Ms. Proulx asked them to make it safe and user friendly keeping costs in mind.

Mr. Horgan said that at this point it seems the board is not inclined to make any modifications to the Old Courthouse and to leave the CAP office there.

Mr. Capello suggested the board wait until they hear back from CAP regarding how successful their request for donations from the other towns has been as they may find the organization was successful in raising some funds and may request a smaller donation from Farmington.

Mr. Capello said that he and Mr. Conway would return to the board with a proposal for the building after Hay Day.

## **8). Additional Board Business:**

**A).Street Lights-** Ms. Proulx asked for an update on the non-functioning street lights in town.

Police Chief Jay Drury was in the audience and told the board he has a list of those street lights

that he would forward to Mr. Capello the next day.

**B). NH Solar Gardens-** Ms. Proulx asked if there has been a response from the Town Attorney regarding their questions concerning the solar panel company.

Mr. Capello said he has not received a response regarding this matter but that the Attorney has been busy handling other matters for the Town. He said he would follow-up with the Attorney.

**9). Non-Public Session A:**

Motion: (Horgan, second Titus) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Reputation passed 5-0 by a roll call vote (Proulx, Johnson, Horgan, King, Titus-yes) at 7:20 p.m.

Motion: (King, second Johnson) to come out of non-public session passed 5-0 at 7:35 p.m.

The public portion of the meeting was reconvened at 7:35 p.m.

Motion: (King, second Johnson) to seal the minutes of the non-public session passed 5-0.

Motion: (Johnson, second King) to deny the hardship abatement request of the previous non-public session meeting based on lack of information passed 5-0.

**10). Next Meeting:** Monday June 26, 2017

**11). Adjournment:**

Motion: (Johnson, second Titus) to adjourn the meeting passed 5-0 at 7:37 p.m.

**12). Non-Meeting:**

The board then held a non-meeting with the Town Attorney.

Respectively submitted

Kathleen Magoon

Recording Secretary

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Paula Proulx, Chairman

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Neil Johnson, Vice Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Jim Horgan

\_\_\_\_\_  
Charlie King

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Ann Titus