

Board of Selectmen
Meeting
May 5, 2008
MINUTES

This meeting was properly posted. Anderson, Hardwick and McAuley present comprising a quorum. McAuley calls the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

McAuley moves to adjust selectmen's meeting from 1st and 3rd Mondays to 2nd and 4th Mondays and as needed so as not to conflict with Conservation Commission meetings held the 1st Monday of the month. Hardwick seconds. Passed 3-0.

McAuley advised the library would like to relocate the Carolyn Lord memorial tree to where the signboard is located adjacent to the village store. Investigation disclosed FIHS and library don't own the signboard, and Alan Thulander does not think it belongs to the town.

McAuley moves to authorize removal. Hardwick seconds. Passed 3-0 with proviso that the sign be preserved in case someone comes forward to claim ownership.

McAuley reports the following per ton bids for paving Poor Farm Road:

Pike - \$62.50

Villeneaux - \$59.75

Brox - \$57.25

Handwork is priced at \$110 by each bidder.

McAuley reports the highway department would like to summer hours as follows: 4/10 hour days, 6:00 am to 4:30 pm., weekly. This would result in a fuel savings for grader and loader use. Polly Freese expressed traffic concerns. Hardwick observed 10 hour days are productive and safe. McAuley moves to implement change with next pay period and ending at time change for Daylight Savings. Anderson seconds. Passed 3-0.

McAuley reports the new budget reports generated directly from Quick Books are now available to departments, boards and commissions. We are now at 65% of budget but highway big-ticket items are not in. Hardwick recommended recinding the Board's letter requiring authorization for expenditures exceeding \$250. The letter implies a lack of confidence in their judgment and chairs might find it irritating. She recommended revising it to read, "unanticipated, unexpected or unusual expenditures should be discussed with the board". The board agreed to the revision.

Abigail Arnold questioned why the board had imposed a 5% budget reduction on all town departments, boards and commissions when the savings were already proposed prior to town meeting. She reminded the board that \$20,000 was coming from surplus, \$20,000 from the bridge budget, \$10,000 from town buildings, \$5,000 from the police department and \$16,000 from grader funding. To tell the town at Town Meeting that the winter costs would be absorbed by the budget, then cut the budget 5%, seemed disingenuous. It is not

fiscally sound and sounds like the town was scammed at town meeting. Panic budgeting is not effective. Charles Pyle, speaking for the budget committee, observed that selectmen had the option of requesting a supplemental appropriation from the town, but agreed on a plan to reduce the budget prior to town meeting. Hardwick agreed that the message to town meeting was not to cut the budget except as specifically noted. Sara Pyle, speaking for the Planning Board, stated that a 5% cut was too drastic and the planning board might not be able to perform its service to the town. No one is going to pay attention to the 5%. McAuley observed the calculations for town meeting were done March 1 and did not include the 5 March storms. Therefore, the shortfall might be greater than anticipated. Bell will adjust shifts to accomplish the reduction.

Charles Pyle stated the \$500 flags and markers line item in the cemetery budget had been moved to the selectmen's patriotic purposes line item.

Polly Freese asked if the "phone tree" proposed by Officer Thibeault was going to continue in his absence. McAuley will check with Chief Bell.

Hardwick moved to re-appoint McAuley as board chair for the near future. Anderson seconded. Passed 3-0.

Hardwick discussed her observations of town office operations including coverage when the AA is out and extending work hours beyond business hours to accomplish payroll and AP functions. Sara Pyle felt the new website might facilitate obtaining forms and instructions.

Polly Freese observed that the Francestown News reported that the library book drop in the town offices was available from 8 am to 4 pm, but the town offices were only open until noon.

Anderson addressed Barbara Jean Carbee's concern voiced 4/28 over the town's use of contractors, specifically DH Hardwick, to haul material for the town. On 4/29 Anderson discussed the issue with the Road Agent, who reported that no outside contractors are hauling for the town. DH Hardwick hauled sand to a construction site in Bennington using the 2nd NH Tpk. N under permit from the road agent. The Francestown grader was in for repairs from 3/31 to 4/22. Repairs to the 2nd NH Tpk. N from the Deering line to Rte 47 were done on April 10 using the Bennington grader and Francestown trucks to haul material. Mrs. Carbee questioned whether Hardwick or anyone else could use a posted weight limit road. **Selectperson B.** Hardwick explained that it was common for the road agent to issue permits based on road conditions at the time.

McAuley moved to adjourn at 6:57 pm. Hardwick seconded. Passed 3-0



5/5/2008

William McAuley

Betsy Hardwick



Thomas Anderson