

**MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
TOWN OF GORHAM
MONDAY, JULY 28, 2014, 6:00 PM
GORHAM TOWN HALL**

Gorham Selectmen present: Jeff Schall, Bill Jackson, Grace LaPierre

Also present: Robin Frost, Town Manager; Michelle Lutz, Assessing Tech; Kirstan Lukasak, *Berlin Daily Sun*; Dennis Arguin, Rob Pharr, Wal-Mart Tax Representative

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Chairman Jackson.

Public Hearing: Acceptance of Grant from NH Emergency Management

Chairman Jackson explained that the grant was for a required update of our Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Town will hire a consultant to assist in this update. The grant is for \$6000, with a match of \$2000 from the Town's Emergency Management budget.

There were no questions or comments from the public.

The Public Hearing was closed at 6:05 pm.

2. Appointments:

a) Rob Pharr – Wal-Mart Abatement Request: Mr. Pharr, who is the tax representative for Wal-Mart, distributed several documents that support the 2013 abatement request. He stated that the assessment in 2012 was \$12,800,000 and the assessment in 2013 was \$19,874,800. The 2013 assessment represents a cost of \$137 per square foot. This can be compared to the Wal-Mart in Hinsdale at \$100 per square foot and the Concord Wal-Mart at \$96.62 per square foot. He feels the 2013 number is not even in the ballpark. The square foot cost is more representative of a shopping center rather than a free standing store. As further information, Mr. Pharr states that the empty Shaw's building is assessed at \$57 per square foot and the Plaza with Tractor Supply is at \$48 per square foot. Given the amount of information presented at this meeting, the Board felt that our assessor should review the materials and give us his recommendation. Selectman Schall asked Mr. Pharr where he thought the assessment should be and Mr. Pharr replied \$13,000,000.

b) Chief PJ Cyr – Department Staffing and Introduction: Chief Cyr was not in attendance since the patrolman he was to introduce was not available to attend this meeting. This will be rescheduled.

3. New Business

a) State Election Law Training – August 11, 2014: Because of the State Election Training scheduled at the same time as our next scheduled meeting, The Board decided to postpone our August 11th meeting to August 18th. The Board will then meet on August 25th to get back on schedule.

b) Prospect Terrace Water/Sewer Concern: TM Frost explained that there is a dispute about water/sewer lines that cross an individual's property at Prospect Terrace and service other properties beyond. The owner of the property over which the lines travel does not want to continue to provide that access. One of the property owners affected is trying to find a record of the original

installation and what assurances may have been given at that time. The Water/Sewer Department has indicated that they do not have any records on this and directed the property owner to Town Hall. Chairman Jackson suggested that the Board sign a letter to the Water and Sewer Department stating that this is an issue they should be researching. Meanwhile, he also suggested that we try contacting Sam Appleton, a former owner of the property,- through Howie Wemyss to see if he has any knowledge of the installation.

c) Randolph Taxes on Town Forest: Chairman Jackson added this item to the agenda in light of the notifications of new assessments on the properties the Town of Gorham owns in Randolph. The Board agreed to ask the Town Forest Committee to attend a Board of Selectmen meeting in the very near future to ask them what their plans are for the forest.

4. Old Business

a) Munce Properties: This item was moved to non-public due to ongoing legal concerns.

b) Report on Public Safety Contract Development Committee: Chairman Jackson stated that he was disappointed with the report given to the Board. He feels it doesn't tell them anything they didn't already know. He wants firm costs for the operations of the departments and what the cost is for getting a crew out the door. TM Frost stated that this information will be forthcoming, but all of the detail had not yet been obtained. There was a short discussion about defining the services for the other entities and our stand moving forward. TM Frost stated that she felt it was not as simple as charging the other entities whatever it costs us to provide the service. There are other considerations, such as the possibility of leaving Gorham residents uncovered for a period of time if one ambulance is on a transfer and the other is answering a call in another town. All agreed more information is needed and soon.

c) Ambulance Billing Hardship Policy: Chairman Jackson edited the policy which was provided to the Board in their packets. Those changes will be reviewed and incorporated in a new version. **With regard to the New Hampshire Health Access Network, the Board voted unanimously to participate on a motion by Selectman Schall, seconded by Selectman LaPierre.** The Notice of Intent to participate document was signed.

h) Airport Hangar: Assessing Tech Lutz was not able to find anything in the files that resembled a lease. Chairman Jackson said that he recalls that Attorney Boutin drew up a lease some time ago. We will contact Attorney Boutin to see if he has that recommended lease.

6. d) Abatements: An appraisal was received from the KGI property, which KRT Appraisal suggests using as a reason to reduce the assessment. Chairman Jackson would like to have Skip Sansoucy look at the appraisal and give his opinion. He also asked that the BTLA decisions for the years 2007 and 2008 be available at the meeting of August 18th.

d) Street Light Survey: TM Frost stated that the review of this list has not yet been completed.

e) Correspondence to Tax Deeded Property (Former owners): All of the correspondence has been mailed certified, return receipt to all former owners and mortgage holders.

f) Public Works Roof: Final approval of the grant has not been received, so this project is stalled until that is received. Once approved, we will go out for public bid on the project.

g) Boston Post Cane: TM Frost found a Town Ordinance that states this must be advertised in a newspaper. This is being done and we should get a new recipient from that posting.

i) OHRV Extended Hours, Jimtown Road: The request to extend the hours for OHRV travel on the roads in Gorham was approved. Our hours for the ATV Festival weekend will mirror the hours in Berlin so people staying in Gorham can get back to their lodging after the festivities. However, the request for local OHRV traffic on Jimtown Road was not approved. The permission given to the State over the former Yankee Forest property was only for those people staying at the Moose Brook State Park.

j) Review of Legal Fees: The Board was given a spreadsheet of legal expenses for the last several years as updated by Elaine Riendeau. It will be kept up to date so these expenses can be tracked more easily.

k) Town Hall Windows: Chairman Jackson asked where this project stands. The last time the Board visited this, they decided that simply caulking the windows would be the best solution. Denise Vallee was looking into alternate solutions.

5. Public Comment

Dennis Arguin asked if there had been any new information on his problem on the Moose. There is no new information, though Mike Scala from Senator Ayotte's office did have contact with the Army Corps of Engineers. They didn't find anything to do with construction of the berm, but they also did not look back far enough. Chairman Jackson had a source that was going to get him information, but that has not come through as yet either. Mr. Arguin reiterated that he would like the Board to meet with him at the site that they have been discussing so the Board could see for themselves what his concerns are. The Board members all said they would do so.

6. Other Business

a) Town Manager's Update: Nothing further to report.

b) Selectmen's Update: Neither Selectman Schall nor Selectman LaPierre had anything to share. Chairman Jackson asked about the Multi-modal Route easement. TM Frost said that the mylar had just come in after 5 pm today. It will be in the mail to the registry tomorrow. He also wondered if the use of the bathrooms at the Information Booth by the flea market people in the early morning could be effected by Phil Ross picking up a key at dispatch and returning it the same day.

c) Approval of Minutes (July 14, 2014): Selectman Schall made a motion to approve the minutes of July 14, 2014, seconded by Selectman LaPierre, approved unanimously.

d) Sign Manifest: All manifests were signed.

e) Sign Abatements and Exemptions (if necessary):

7. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-a:3, II d: On a motion by Selectman Schall, seconded by Selectman LaPierre, the Board voted unanimously by roll call to move into non-public session at 8:11 pm. Jackson –Aye, Schall – Aye, LaPierre – Aye.

On a motion by Selectman Schall, seconded by Selectman LaPierre, the Board came out of non-public session by unanimous roll call vote at 8:35 pm. Jackson –Aye, Schall – Aye, LaPierre – Aye.

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 PM.

REVIEWED AND APPROVED:

William H. Jackson

Jeff Schall

Grace LaPierre