

**MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING  
TOWN OF GORHAM  
MONDAY, JULY 15, 2013, 6:00 PM  
GORHAM TOWN HALL**

Gorham Selectmen present: Bill Jackson, Jeff Schall, Paul Robitaille

Also present: Robin L. Frost, Town Manager; Steve Gauthier, Gail Scott, Berlin Daily Sun; Ron Donato, Clermont Drouin, Jay Holmes, Dennis Arguin

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

**2. Appointments:**

**3. New Business:**

**a) Acceptance of Donation to Parks and Recreation:** TM Frost informed the Board that the Dagesse Family made a \$10,000 donation to the Parks and Recreation Program, which is earmarked to be used specifically for the Park Program. TM Frost went on to inform the Board that there were no other conditions attached the money. Selectman Jackson asked if it could be placed into the revolving account, TM Frost said that it could be. Selectman Schall asked TM Frost who decides how the money is spent. TM Frost stated that RD Stewart would need to present expenditures to the Board for approval. The Board asked TM Frost to prepare a thank you for the Dagesses for their signatures. Further discussion took place, **Selectman Jackson made a motion to accept the donation as presented by the Dagesses, seconded by Selectman Schall, voted unanimously.**

**b) Selectmen's Meeting of July 29th:** TM Frost informed the Board that she will be on vacation starting July 25<sup>th</sup> through August 9<sup>th</sup>, therefore, would not be able to attend the BOS meeting scheduled for July 29<sup>th</sup>. Discussion took place between the Board and TM Frost and it was decided that the Board would not meet at all on July 29<sup>th</sup>, Selectman Schall went on to say that, he would be on vacation for the following scheduled meeting of August 12, 2013. Further discussion took place, and it was decided that the meeting scheduled on August 12 would be moved to August 19<sup>th</sup> and that the Board would get back to its regular schedule on August 26<sup>th</sup>. It was also agreed that if there was a pressing issue that arose between the July 15<sup>th</sup> and August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting that the Board would meet to handle the issue.

**c) Proposed Amendments to Personnel Policy:** TM Frost presented three amendments to the Board, noting that Denise Vallee, Director of Finance, had noticed these items in the current Personnel Policy. TM Frost stated that the first change was regarding the overtime rate, stating that the current policy indicates overtime will be paid at one and ½ times an employee's current regular rate. The new language states that employees will be paid at one and ½ times the average rate of pay. Selectman Schall asked if this new rate would cost the Town more money, TM Frost responded that she believes that if it did, it would be minimal. Further discussion took place regarding the wording for the current Police/Dispatch Union Agreement and the redundancy that is included in the new wording. TM Frost informed the Board that she would get more information on this subject. TM Frost reviewed the bereavement section, noting that when the Personnel Policy had last been updated the leave aspect for relatives other than "immediate family" had been left out. Again, the Board questioned the fact of what is included in the Union Contract and why that needs to be included. TM Frost and the Board then discussed the medical policy, noting that the amendment was date specific. Further discussion took place noting that the amendment should probably be non-date specific and noted that the Selectmen will approve year-to-year. TM Frost informed the Board that she would get clarification on the matters discussed.

### 3. Old Business:

**a) Currier Property:** TM Frost informed the Board that she had been working with the Town's attorney with regard to the Currier's property. At this time, the attorney is strongly suggesting to get an engineer in there to look at the property and potential spill issues. Selectman Jackson asked TM Frost to try and locate the report that NH DES did about four to five years ago, stating that it might be of assistance even though it is not quite up to date. Selectman Robitaille stated that he has been seeing activity going on in and around the building. Selectman Schall stated that maybe a portion of the vacant land could be possibly be used as ATV parking if the Town does end up with that property. TM Frost informed the Board that she will search for the DES report for Currier and attempt to contact the owner so the property can be inspected. Further discussion took place as to who was Currier Sales & Service Corp. TM Frost said she would find out who was part of that corporation. After further discussion, **Selectman Jackson made a motion to have TM Frost proceed with the advice of the Town's Counsel for doing research of the Currier Sales & Service Corporation property located at Map U9-Lot 10A and Map U10-Lot 11, seconded by Selectman Schall, voted unanimously.**

**b) Unpaid Taxes – First Issue 2013:** TM Frost presented the Board a report of the outstanding taxes for the first half of 2013, informing them that it was for informational purposes only. Further discussion took place regarding some of the outstanding balances. The Board asked TM Frost for a report that included all outstanding taxes to date prior to the next meeting.

Chairman Robitaille asked the Board members and TM Frost if they had any other old business.

Selectman Schall brought up the status of the public phone pedestals that are still around Town that no longer had phones, noting that he felt they were eyesores. Further discussion took place regarding this issue. Selectman Jackson asked if KRT Appraisers are scheduled to come up and look at the Kardell, Schall properties. TM Frost said she would check with Michelle Lutz, Assessing Clerk, and let the Board know. Selectman Jackson also asked how the solid waste report was coming along. TM Frost said that Regan Pride was in Gorham today and had apologized that he did not have a report with him. Mr. Pride informed TM Frost that he would forward a report to the office. Selectman Jackson informed the Board and TM Frost that at a previous meeting he stated that he had never seen the USPAP Manual. Selectman Jackson stated that after further thought he did remember TM Frost telling him about the Manual. Chairman Robitaille asked if we had heard anything from the State with regard to the ATV Trail proposal. TM Frost stated that she has not. Further discussion took place regarding the matter. Chairman Robitaille expressed his concern with regard to the perception to the public that the Town's Main Street, being a part of the ATV Trail System. He went on to say that, he had a local motel owner state that they were getting several phone calls regarding the Town being open to ATVs. The local motel owner has been clarifying that, as well as Chairman Robitaille.

**5. Public Comment:** Ron Donato – Mr. Donato asked the Board who decides where and how the money that the Dagesses donated to the Rec Department is spent. The Board explained that RD Stewart will bring proposals for expenditures to the Board of Selectmen for final approval. Mr. Donato expressed his concern to the Board with regard to the public utilities, asking why Mr. Sansoucy's value was so much higher than the DRA value, and who will pick up the shortfall. The Board explained that they were confident that the Town would prevail, noting that the DRA uses the "unit method" when placing a value on public utilities; and that because of this, the Town(s) prevail in their cases brought before the BTLA and/or Court. Further discussion took place regarding the Town's status of the current and future BTLA cases. Mr. Donato also asked the Board about the current abatements being sought after by the Schalls and Kardells. Selectman Jackson informed Mr. Donato that the Board wanted more research done on those properties and have requested KRT Appraisers to come back up and look at them. Selectman Jackson went on to clarify that Selectman Schall recused himself from the Board to present his request for abatement and stated that it is up to them (Jackson & Robitaille) to decide whether or

not there is justification for the abatement for the Schall property. Mr. Donato also asked the Board about the monies that the Budget Committee appropriated for a new roof on the Public Works Garage. The Board stated that while the Town did put some money in the capital reserve fund, the Board decided to put it off until next year. Further discussion took place regarding the Public Works Garage as well as the Fire Department Garage roof, with Mr. Donato noting that he feels that items need to be scrutinized before the Town spends money. TM Frost informed Mr. Donato that the Town does, in fact, take care and scrutinizes expenditures before the Town spends monies. Mr. Donato stated that he thought the Board had to meet once a week, and if they do not meet are they still paid. The Board informed Mr. Donato that they are paid a yearly stipend, stating that there have been instances that they have met five weeks in a row and the job also involves more time than just the meetings, noting that they even partake in training.

Jay Holmes expressed his concern regarding the abatements for the Schall and Kardell properties, stating that these abatements will open the door for all of the properties values to be dropped. Mr. Holmes also said that he thought that property owners had the opportunity to be able to meet with KRT Appraisers during the re-evaluation period. The Board informed Mr. Holmes that both property owners did in fact meet with KRT Appraisers. Further discussion took place regarding the abatements. Mr. Holmes also expressed his concern regarding the public utilities and the differences between the Town and State's evaluation, asking the Board whether the Town had a contingency in place if the valuation ends up on the utilities side. Mr. Holmes stated that he is extremely concerned that the Town will end up bankrupt if the Town loses its cases. Further discussion took place with regard to the current BTLA cases.

Dennis Arguin asked TM Frost and the Board if there had been any reports received by the State yet. TM Frost informed Mr. Arguin that she is still waiting on the State.

## **6. Other Business:**

**a) Town Manager's Update:** TM Frost informed the Board that Libby's Pool is open again, stating that it should be okay as long as the rain holds off and we do not have any run off. TM Frost presented the Board with a packet of information from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. TM Frost stated that the Appalachian Trail Conservancy came in and asked that the Town of Gorham consider being part of the Conservancy. Further discussion took place regarding the request, and the Board asked what the cost if any were associated with this action and why type of commitment the Town needed to give to them.

**b) Selectmen's Updates:** None

**c) Approval of Minutes (July 1, 2013):** Selectman Schall made a motion to approve the July 1 minutes, seconded by Selectman Jackson, voted unanimously.

**d) Sign Manifest:** All manifests were signed.

**e) Sign Abatements and Exemptions (if necessary):** None were presented.

**7. Non-Public Session: RSA 91-a:3, II a-e:** There was no need.

**8. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

**REVIEWED AND APPROVED:**

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**Paul Robitaille**

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**William H. Jackson**

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**Jeff Schall**