

**MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING
TOWN OF GORHAM
MONDAY, October 22, 2012, 6:30 PM
GORHAM TOWN HALL**

Gorham Selectmen present: Chairman David Graham, Paul Robitaille, Bill Jackson

Also present: Robin L. Frost, Town Manager; Jeff Stewart, Director of Parks and Recreation; Don Provencher, Jeff Schall and Dick Orsillo

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:30 by Chairman Graham.

2. Appointments:

a) Shannon Berwick – Vehicular Traffic in Town Forest: TM Frost explained to the Board that Mr. Berwick was not able to attend the meeting due to scheduling conflicts. Selectman Jackson felt that because of the letter that was given to Mr. Berwick, the selectmen should honor the permission granted for this year. It was discussed that no vehicular traffic should be allowed unless permitted directly by the Town Forestry Management Committee. While hunting and baiting is allowed, meat cannot be used to bait.

Selectman Jackson went on to explain that the Town Forestry Management Committee was formed in 1990. The Committee consists of 5 members as follows: 2 members to represent the Water & Sewer Commission; 2 members to represent the Conservation Committee and 1 member to represent the Board of Selectmen.

Selectman Robitaille remembers that Mr. Berwick was allowed some years ago to enter the property via vehicle to hunt. However, it was agreed by all that permissions of this sort need to revert back to the Forestry Management Committee for approval. The Board indicated to TM Frost that a letter be sent to Mr. Berwick stating that while this year it is ok, subsequent years approval and requested need to be directed to the Committee.

b) Jeff Stewart – Dugouts/Fur, Feather & Fin Building/Eagle Scout Project: It was agreed by the Board to review all items for Parks and Recreation at the same time.

RD Stewart informed the Board that the contractor has started the work on the Town Park Gazebo. He indicated the shingles, fascia and drip edge have all been removed and replaced. He also stated that front railing had been removed and the deck built. The spot light for the flag has been moved from the roof of the Gazebo to the large telephone pole next to the tennis courts. The balance of the work will be finished by next spring.

RD Stewart went over the burning of the Fur, Feather & Fin Club building. He indicated that it went very well. The Fire Department did quite a bit of training and he said it was nice to see the older guys working with the younger ones in training. It was very safe and the Fire Department did a great job. It was further discussed that the only thing that needs to be thought of in the future is to notify the neighboring properties so they are aware of what is going to happen. RD Stewart also indicated that Dave Patry has begun the clean-up of debris.

Town Common Kiosk – RD Stewart felt that it doesn't look as obtrusive as originally thought and that the natural wood was very attractive. He did say that there are still some advertising spots available.

Dugouts – RD Stewart presented new sketches of what the dugouts would look like. He stated that the dugout on the Park Street side will include an additional six foot area that can be locked up for storage. Chairman Graham thanked the rest of the Board for waiting to go back over the dugouts. RD Stewart said that Woodsville has the same type of dugout that he presented in the sketch. He had taken pictures but had forgotten to bring them in. Selectmen Robitaille commented that just because the ball field has not had dugouts for all these years do not mean it should not change. Further discussion took place and Chairman Graham said that he would like to see dugouts, but he would rather they be temporary buildings that can be taken down at the end of the season. **Selectman Robitaille made a motion to approve Mr. Stewart's latest design, seconded by Selectman Jackson, the Board voted 1-2 to deny the design Mr. Stewart presented.**

RD Stewart suggested that a petition will probably be pulled together by proponents of the dugouts and sent out to be part of the Town Meeting. Selectman Jackson told him that would be a good idea and suggested that those originating the petition go to TM Frost for assistance with this. In closing, the Board told RD Stewart that they are pleased with all of his hard work. The parks look great, and we receive compliments frequently about how nice and clean they look and are proud of the work that he has accomplished.

2. New Business

a) Delinquent Taxes/Pilots

TM Frost presented the Board with the most recent printout of delinquent taxes. Selectman Jackson voiced concerns regarding this outstanding money as it is looked at as an asset when preparing the annual budget. He stated that there are a number of properties that we will never see the money on. TM Frost informed the Board that Curriers has not made a payment since July and felt that something should be done. It was discussed that even when Curriers is making the payment, it essentially only goes toward the interest on the outstanding balance.

Discussion went on to cover all the small outstanding balances and larger outstanding balances and the general concern that most of the monies will not be collected and that we need to come up with a plan for going forward. Selectman Jackson expressed concern that we are a municipality and not in the

market to handle real estate and some properties may have environmental concerns. Selectman Robitaille wanted to know if we could proceed with taking properties and auctioning them off to recoup some of the outstanding funds. TM Frost suggested that while we can take properties and auction them off that the Town would need to proceed with caution indicating that we would need to treat all transactions consistently. Certain criteria should be in place and we would need to look at each property individually. The Board asked TM Frost to look into “dealing with the revenue in the clouds”. Selectman Graham suggested that she speak to the Auditor and get their opinion. Selectman Jackson indicated that due to proposed legislature changes in 2006, Dover hired a firm to do collections, and that in some cases this may work. The Board then instructed TM Frost, in conjunction with the Auditor; sit down with the Town’s Tax Collector to see who she has spoken with and to see if any of them are in payment plans. As far as Currier’s is concerned, Mr. Currier had convinced the Board he would make an effort; and that as soon as his Groveton property sale took place, we would receive additional monies. No payments have been made since July, and no communication has taken place with the Town. Even with the \$2,000 payment per month, at this rate it will never get caught up. TM Frost is to find out legally what the Town should be doing to collect this money. Selectman Jackson indicated that we should keep an eye on the property as far as the tires are concerned and any other possible environmental issue. TM Frost needs to contact the Town Attorney as well as the Auditor to see what we can do next to move forward in getting the balances resolved.

b) NRCS Update – TM Frost informed the Board that the two projects on Glen Road are now complete and that the Orsillo project should be completed by Tuesday, October 23, with the walk through scheduled at 3:00 pm. The project total is \$185,000; according to Ed Hansalik \$36,000 was to tie into the previous project, sure up the road and to make a bin wall, which is real stabilization beside the rock previously used. The funding for the project includes a 25% payment from the property owner. Mr. Orsillo is concerned/wondering why he should have to pay for the percentage of the \$36,000, if it relates to the other projects. TM Frost asked the Board if the Town would pay the \$9,000 (25%) out of the Riverbank Fund, which has approximately a \$40,000 balance.

Mr. Orsillo informed the Board that the Town would have had to sure up the sloughing where the road comes to a “vee” regardless. Mr. Orsillo did inform the Board that the project has gone well and that he is very pleased with the outcome of the NRCS project.

Selectman Jackson made a motion that the Town spend \$9,000 from the River Maintenance Fund to pay for the associated cost on the DSR #1 of the NRCS Project, seconded by Chairman Graham, the Board voted 3-0 in favor of making payment.

TM Frost went on to elaborate that NRCS took great care of everything unobtrusively and cannot say enough about the good experience from the Town’s perspective.

c) Tax Rate Setting Update – Regarding the new tax rate TM Frost said that they are setting rates however we are not in the queue yet. The Property Appraisal Division is just not done reviewing our

MS1. Jamie Dow is our Auditor now and was asked when we would get it and the answer was they are doing the best they can.

Race to the Top – Selectman Graham said it would allow the SAU to spend more money per pupil. It is a four year grant worth \$7,000,000. Selectmen Robitaille and Jackson both agree that we should assist with pushing the grant forward. **Selectman Jackson made a motion for a letter of support, seconded by Selectman Robitaille, voted 3-0 in favor of a letter being prepared.**

Corridor Coalition Maine – The Coalition would encompass Coos County in New Hampshire and Oxford County in Maine. While all Board members are in favor of passenger rail service, they feel that at this point in time, should be redirected to a better agency than just the Board of Selectmen. Selectman Jackson suggested that it might be more appropriate if turned to North Country Council. He indicated that at his next NCC meeting that he would press them to step up to the plate in this matter. Selectman Graham will direct a letter to the Coalition to let them know what the Board's plans are.

4. Old Business:

a) Shelburne Police Contract - TM Frost presented the Board with the information requested by Selectman Robitaille. It was further discussed that there needs to be a fair way to resolve this matter, not only to the Town of Gorham, but to the Town of Shelburne as well. Selectman Robitaille indicated that it should be cost effective to the Town of Gorham and not revenue negative. Selectman Jackson is not comfortable with the \$14,000 fee as previously set and not comfortable with the population based method for creating numbers. The Board asked TM Frost to get together with Chief Cyr to discuss what the value for the service should be and then sit down and have a work session with the Board to review. At this time, the Board and TM Frost believe that the meeting with the Town of Shelburne that is scheduled for next Monday be postponed so the Town can better prepare itself.

b) Building Permit Fees – TM Frost has met with John Scarinza and looked up information from other towns and believes that a per square foot fee based on the size of the project would be a good way to charge. The other item she discussed with Mr. Scarinza was Planning Board fees. She said a lot of what Mr. Scarinza chases is complaints and issues on those items. He thought that maybe the PB should look at that as well. After much discussion, the Board instructed TM Frost to work with Mr. Scarinza to come up with appropriate fees for the following categories: Residential; Residential for Spec; Commercial; Industrial.

5. Public Comments:

Don Provencher showed the Board pictures of the Fur, Feather & Fin Club and thank the Town for allowing him to take out some old artifacts and sentimental items for Rosaire Brault. He did talk about the sign/plaque that used to be on the front of the building. It was the logo painted on a piece of plywood. It was not there and/or burned. He would have like to be able to give that to Mr. Brault for his birthday. He said he was hoping that it would come up at some point in time.

Jeff Schall made sure that the Board was aware that the Burkes were very upset about not being told about the burning of the Fur, Feather & Fin Club. Both the Board and TM Frost informed him that the Burkes were apologized to and that it was a genuine oversight. He also asked about the Race to the Top and was wondering if it would bear any cost to the Town, and he was informed that it would not. He also indicated that the City of Berlin has been taking several properties and maybe they could give the Town some advice. He also stated that he felt that the Kiosk conduit connections were a bit on the amateurish side. He did not like the way the conduit was completed for the electrical and hopes that it would be fixed. He also asked about the NRCS project, what the original bid amount was versus what the final bill was. He also discussed the Police contract, Fire and Dispatch services for other entities. The Board discussed how it has been taken care of in the past, and how our in kind/mutual aid works. Mr. Schall would hope that we did tell Shelburne in the past, using their own constable, they had a good deal.

6. Other Business:

Town Manager Updates – TM Frost said that the Water & Sewer has been asking about the day before Christmas. The holiday falls on Tuesday, and wanted to know what the Town was doing for Monday. The Board and TM Frost discussed both Christmas Eve and New Years Eve, and it was decided that the employees would have Monday, Christmas Eve as well as Tuesday, Christmas Day off; and that the Town would shut down around 3:00 pm on New Year's Eve.

Selectmen Updates - Selectman Robitaille did observe the burning of the FFF from quite a distance. The Fire Department had it blocked off and it seemed to represent good training for those involved. The Fire Department is very safety minded. He also noted that he was quite impressed with the work on the bandstand/gazebo, and felt that it would be quite beautiful when completed.

Selectman Jackson – Said that at his last NCC meeting included updates on rail and some on the aeronautical progress. He indicated that there was a May 21 meeting in Berlin on November 1 at 7:00 pm at Berlin City Hall. It is a NCC vision meeting for a 5 year regional plan. NCC is looking for input from residents and local government. He also stated that he had looked at the Gorham Family Resource Center's Feasibility Studies and encourages everyone else to review them.

The Board also discussed the Town Garage Office's air quality. TM Frost said that a carbon monoxide monitor has been installed and has not gone off as of yet. Selectman Jackson expressed that our first concern should be for the safety of those who work in that office. TM Frost said that while it may smell bad it does not seem to be a safety issue yet. She is working with PW Director Holmes on how to move forward with other office options. Selectman Graham asked if there was any way to test for more than carbon monoxide, he also indicated that he would like to see it move forward.

Selectman Graham also spoke about the previous Budget Committee meeting. He indicated that the BC reviewed the last ¾ of the current budget, and everything seems to be on target. He expressed concern

over the positions that still need to be filled on the committee and wondered if we need an 11 member board. He stated that the vacant positions will go back into the local paper.

Approval of Minutes from October 9, 2012 – Selectman Jackson made a motion to approve as submitted, Selectman Robitaille seconded, the Board voted 3-0 to approve minutes.

Selectman Jackson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm, seconded by Selectman Paul Robitaille, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn.

REVIEWED AND APPROVED:

David Graham

Paul Robitaille

William H. Jackson