

Official

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES Regular Meeting Wednesday, August 24, 2011

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Sirak called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

PRESENT: Nancy Comai, Michael Downer, Vincent Lembo, James Levesque, Todd Lizotte, Susan Lovas Orr, James Sullivan (excused), Nancy VanScoy, Elizabeth Dionne (Acting Town Administrator) and Chairman William Sirak.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 10, 2011 – *T. Lizotte moved to approve the August 10, 2011 minutes. Motion seconded by J. Levesque. Motion carried unanimously.*

PUBLIC INPUT

John Gryval, 5 Elmer Avenue: I'm here to ask for your support for a sign to be placed on Elmer Avenue. There are two curves on Elmer Avenue and it's impossible to see what's on the other side. New families have moved in with a lot of young children. It's getting to be dangerous. I'd like to make a request to have Public Works install a sign letting motorists know there are children in the area.

L. Dionne will follow up on this matter.

Marc Miville, 42 Main Street: Just a clarification on the September 17th meeting. Is that meeting just for boards' chairmen or all board members.

Chair Sirak stated the Council would prefer to have all board chairmen present but all committee members are invited and the Council would like to have as much participation as possible.

Deb McCurdy, owner of Just Cuts: I opened a business on 3A at the Riverside Plaza. I'm having a tough time with the location of the business to put a sign up front. I called the DOT and was told they had no issues with it because it's not visible from the highway. I'm just asking for your support to try and get some kind of signage that can be removed to let people know that there are businesses in the Riverside Plaza on 3A. I own two businesses in Hooksett. I really would like to see this one do well. I know there are other businesses that would like to go into that plaza but they can't because it can't be noticed. I've put signs out but they were taken down. I've had no calls that the signs were gone. I paid for these signs. I'm not trying to do anything against what the Town wants. I'm just trying to run my business. It's really difficult and I'm asking for your support.

L. Dionne will follow up on this matter.

T. Lizotte stated the Council should come up with solution to these issues.

Chair Sirak stated there should be a balance between sign pollution and proper signage.

NOMINATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

Planning Board Appointment - Nominees: Tom Walsh and Brendan Perry

Tom Walsh, 15 Berry Hill Road: I've supplied everyone with a revised copy of my résumé, which explains my background in construction which is the reason I chose the Planning Board. I've always been

involved with large projects. My attendance has been good. I'm asking for your consideration. I've read through the regulations, ordinances and the master plan. Reading them is one thing but actually seeing them applied is the best way to learn.

J. Gryval, Planning Board Chair: I'm here to support both members. They're both good members of the board. I'm here to answer any questions you may have with regards to their work with the Planning Board.

There was a discussion regarding attendance of both nominees.

Roll call vote for Tom Walsh carried unanimously.

Tom Walsh was appointed to the Planning Board as full member.

Economic Development Committee

William J. Gillet was nominated at the meeting.

Craig Ahlquist, HEDC Chair: We're asking for you to vote and appoint William J. Gillet, Dean of School of Business at SNHU.

C. Ahlquist read Mr. Gillet's bio for the record. He is an accomplished international businessman, who most recently served as president of RiverStone Resources. He was responsible for its overall strategic direction and new business acquisitions. He brings wealth of international partnerships, many formed as managing director for RiverStone's European division. He guided the firm's business development operations in its London, Paris and Stockholm offices. He has also been an active participant in New Hampshire's business and philanthropic communities and is an engaged member of the national and international insurance and banking industries.

Discussion regarding non-resident members serving in an advisory capacity.

N. VanScoy stated she sees the benefits of having advisory members but questioned why the Town is unable to find professionals who live in Hooksett. Is the Town doing enough outreach to people who live in Town? Is Hooksett lacking professionals? Is there anything the Council could do to encourage professionals to volunteer?

Chair Sirak stated the committee sought for a representative from SNHU, the largest employer in Town.

C. Ahlquist added like any other boards in Town, EDC is having a hard time staffing the committee.

T. Lizotte stated people are not aware how to apply their skills and what EDC needs. The committee should inform residents of their specific needs or what type of expertise they are looking for.

William J. Gillett was appointed to EDC as an advisor.

SCHEDULED APPOINTMENTS

Old Home Day Committee

Committee members Joan Lydon and Nancy VanScoy (stepped down from the Council to speak as committee chair) asked the Council if they would like to put on a fireworks display for Old Home Day. In the past, \$5,000 was included in the Public Works Department – Parks and Recreation Division's budget for fireworks. The committee is also looking for volunteers for the event. The event is 100% free for everyone. Generally, people expect to see fireworks at Old Home Day.

L. Dionne will check with the Finance Director if funds are available.

OLD BUSINESS

Charter Review Process & Time Lines

J. Levesque suggested pushing the deadline for getting member to serve on the committee until the 1st 2012 and have a discussion at the first and second meeting of 2012. This would give everyone time to think about what direction they would like to go. He does not see any reason to rush on this. This is his and Mr. Sullivan's opinion.

N. VanScoy stated she does not see any reason not to put it off but it needs to be a priority of the Council to determine what the committee's charge would be.

J. Levesque suggested coming up with a temporary charge, appoint the members and hold a public hearing then finalize the charge.

Chair Sirak stated there was a consensus to look at the broader issues in terms of districts, number of Councilors, etc. The administrative changes were reviewed by the Legal Counsel. It is not necessary for a new group of people to look at the whole document again.

T. Lizotte requested to have copies of legal opinions regarding the Charter review.

Chair Sirak suggested for the executive committee to take a look at the original charge, make some changes and present it to the Council for discussion.

V. Lembo moved to table until the September 28th meeting. Motion seconded by M. Downer. Motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Budget Philosophy/Guidance

There was a general discussion on the guidance and general approach to be followed relating to the budget.

Suggestions included the following:

1. Work closely with Budget Committee and CIP Committee.
2. Collect data showing revenues, projected revenues, comparative data of other towns' budget similar in size, similar budgets by departments.
3. Schedule educational sessions involving budgets to include members of the Budget Committee, Town Council and CIP.
4. Review all Town fees schedule and compare to other towns.
5. Have department heads present what they need and justify their needs as opposed to giving them a goal to reach. In the past, department heads complied with the Town Council recommendation, i.e., 1% reduction, only to be cut when the budget is presented. The format for justification should also be laid out.
6. Determine departments' needs rather than making budget cuts across the board.
7. Focus on budget policies for departments rather than making specific cuts.
8. Provide direction and lay out the path the Council sees the Town going. Allow the Town Administrator and department heads to present a budget within those perimeters. The Town Council having an oversight rather than going through the budget line item by line item.
9. Consider the CIP self-audit and priority needs.
10. Implement policies, i.e., no new hires, limited warrant articles, ideas on raising additional funds, etc.

T. Lizotte pointed out most departments is down to bare bones in terms of personnel, which creates a challenge since 80% of the Town's budget is personnel-related.

Chair Sirak stated the Council will have to deal with general direction, policies and oversight and try to avoid getting into details. The Town Administrator will try to work with all departments to present a budget the Council can support.

Discussion regarding the school i-pad purchase.

The School Board was within their rights to make the purchase. Purchases such as technology items should be handled through CIP, whether they are School budget or Town budget.

Life and Disability Insurance Bid
See Town Administrator's Report.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

E. Dionne informed the Council on the following:

1. PSNH Easement Deed - This is an easement on Legends Drive. E. Dionne asked for an approval to authorize the Chair to sign the Utility Easement Deed on behalf of the Town. Construction is scheduled to begin September 5th. The deed has been reviewed by the Town's legal counsel.

V. Lembo recused himself. He works for PSNH.

Laura Gaines, PSNH stated PSNH granted the Town 2 easements for emergency vehicles and sewer. In turn, the Town granted PSNH access to utility easements for construction, maintenance and repair of (1) telephone, electric and cable, (2) underground water line and (3) drainage. PSNH is requesting for the approval of the utility easement deed.

N. Comai moved to authorize the Chair to sign the Utility Easement Deed. Motion seconded by T. Lizotte. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Life and Disability Insurance Bid – The Town's Life and Disability Insurance for full- time employees expires the end of August. This was put out to bid. David and Towle, the Town's agent recommended awarding the contract to Boston Mutual Life Insurance Company. E. Dionne asked for the Council's approval to award the two-year contract to Boston Mutual Life Insurance Company.

N. VanScoy moved to accept the two-year contract with Boston Mutual Life Insurance Company. Motion seconded by T. Lizotte. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Town Administrator's Contract – The wordings on the contract for the new Town Administrator had to be changed due to the re-calculation of the NH Retirement system contribution rate for employers.

M. Downer moved to approve the changes. Motion seconded by T. Lizotte. Motion carried unanimously.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

September 17th Best Boards Win Seminar

The seminar will be held at the Public Library from 8:30 am until noon. All Town Board members are encouraged to attend this seminar. Light refreshment will be served.

Hooksett Town Priorities Discussion

Chair Sirak submitted a draft list of priorities for the Council to consider.

T. Lizotte suggested adding the Automated Collection system and clarifying the role of Councilors.

N. VanScoy suggested adding reasonable attainable goals for the Town Administrator.

T. Lizotte asked for clarification with regards to the “executive” committee.

Chair Sirak explained he refers to the Council Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary as the “executive” committee only for communications purposes. He realizes there is no such committee.

V. Lembo asked for clarification on how the Town Council’s board representatives should express the Council’s wishes to each board.

Chair Sirak stated the Town Council does not respond to a particular issue but simply to communicate the general direction the Council would like to go. He does not see the Council giving directions to each representative.

N. VanScoy added anytime a decision has something to do with policy, she brings that up to the Council and tries to get a consensus.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

Board of Assessors – J. Levesque

- The board granted most of the recommendations except for a couple.
- Data verification is driving the costs upward.

Recycling & Transfer Advisory Board – J. Levesque

Discussion on the proposed amended Ordinance to cover the curve-side pickup. Mandatory recycling will be included on the amended ordinance. This will be presented to the Town Council for approval. By the time the barrels are delivered to all households, residents will be made aware of what goes in which barrel. Informational materials will be sent out to all residents. The Superintendent will brief the Council.

There was a discussion with regards to mandatory recycling.

J. Levesque stated mandatory recycling will be included on the amended ordinance. The Town Council approves Town ordinances after a public hearing.

N. VanScoy stated at this point in time recycling is not mandatory. She understands it has not been decided whether or not recycling will be mandatory with the automated collection. This matter should be clarified.

T. Lizotte mentioned the Town should be educating the residents as to how the system would work.

N. VanScoy added residents should be educated as to what goes in which barrel and what happens if you don’t recycle. It should be clarified whether the Town is offering or making the ability to recycle easier or adopting mandatory recycling.

V. Lembo stated he agrees with Councilor VanScoy. Mandatory recycling has never been brought up in any conversation.

The Superintendent will make a presentation of how the whole process of Automated Collection works at a future meeting.

Union Negotiation – V. Lembo

There was a meeting to discuss the Fire Union contract. The new Town Administrator will be updated and will be joining the discussion at the next meeting on September 14th.

Police Commission- M. Downer

M. Downer attended his first meeting with the board. It lasted for more than 6 hours.

- The audit data are all in and being analyzed. The Chair asked for a timeline but the audit company was unable to provide it.
- Overtime has been cut in half. There have been significant changes to the schedule.

- SRO position was discussed in depth. Commissioner Karolian stated he would not authorize wages for a Sergeant to continue in that role.
- They are looking for specific guidance from the Council with regards to the NH Retirement System.
- Lt. Cline tendered his resignation. The commission voted to accept the resignation.
- They now have 13 officers on staff.
- There is some confusion on getting gas from State. Are we locked into a rate?
- They went over the operations manual. Lt. McDaniel organized all the tires. There was a very long discussion regarding tires and swapping of snow tires. It was suggested to possibly have DPW swap the tires for the Police fleet during winter.
- All expenditures were approved. One request for transmission repair was not approved.
- There was a significant public input on a number of topics.
- Non-public session was held. A statement was made that a Sergeant will no longer be performing the SRO duties.
- The meeting adjourned at 12:18 am. The Chair is advocating for holding meetings twice a month.

M. Downer stated the commission is doing a good job. They are detail oriented. The department has no spending authority so the board has to approve all expenditures. There is a lot to cover and once a month meeting is not sufficient.

T. Lizotte stated they are authorized to spend funds to cover day-to-day operations and anything that affects services.

Chair Sirak met with Police Commissioner Joanne McHugh and Police Chief Agrafiotis. The new Town Administrator will address some of these issues.

Planning Board – N. VanScoy

- A couple a lot line adjustments and a minor subdivision plan were approved for completeness.
- Don Winterton came before the board to request for a waiver of sprinkler system requirement, which was approved, 6-2.
- Mega-X – The outside is done. The interior is on hold. They are finalizing a contract with Dunkin Donuts. Once finalized, they will start working on the interior.
- Pizza Man – They have an approved plan for a building to be rented out as a dance studio. This plan is now on hold. They are scheduled to come before the Planning Board at the next meeting. They have a few items to be addressed. The stumps in front have to be removed. They submitted a geo plan, which was unacceptable to the Town Engineers. There are some concerns with stabilizing the slope on the abutter's side and buffers need to be re-planted for privacy.
- A Car Wash was approved for 1125 Hooksett Road.
- The study area for Exit 11 has been defined. They are asking for input before the end of the month.

The new Town Administrator is scheduled to meet with the Town Planner and SNHPC.

- Two members of the Planning Board, Yervant Nahikian and Robert Duhaime serve on the Aesthetics Committee. There is an issue with two members meeting with developers prior to meeting with the whole Planning Board. Another issue is that Robert Duhaime is no longer with the Planning Board. N. VanScoy suggested discussing this matter at the meeting on September 14th.
- Sign Ordinance – Currently, the ordinance indicates a 16 square feet sign is allowed. N. VanScoy stated if the Council feels these policies need to be looked at, it needs to be discussed at a future meeting.

S. Orr asked about the gas station by Exit 9 that is all boarded up. How long do they stay boarded up?

L. Dionne will follow up on this.

Town Hall Preservation Committee

The representative has not received anything from the committee. The committee membership will have to be reviewed.

PUBLIC INPUT

M. Miville: I seem to remember there is \$5,000 in this current budget for fireworks under Parks & Recreation. I don't recall the budget committee cutting that. I believe it's still in there. I believe there is also \$1,000 for Old Home Day. Regarding the discussion about budget appropriations and the School budget, I know you don't have jurisdiction on that, all budget spending requests must be appropriated as a specified purpose. That's how it's stated on the RSA. There must be a purpose for every line item. If there's no purpose, after the public hearing and after the voters have decided to vote on it and approve the final budget, no further subsequent purpose could be added to the budget once final approval is approved by the voters. Once approved, no more specific purposes added into it as an afterthought. The School Board hasn't publicly outlined, to my knowledge, its stated budget purpose as to how the board managed to transfer the funds to pay for the i-pads and any other encumbered funds. I don't think it's illegal but there should have been better communications to the Budget Committee and the voters. I'm also on the CIP Committee. It's more complicated than just creating a list of items that the Council wants to list as priorities. CIP spends a lot of time mentally listing whether it should on the list of CIP. We also delve into more in-depth as to whether the item should be purchased or leased. We dig into not only setting up priorities for items and programs but we also put them into specific years over a six-year period. It gets a little more complicated than that.

Lisa Labrie, 3 Oakhill Road: I just wanted to come and see if I can be put on record to request an immediate far hearing and investigation of Family Services decision regarding my case for the last two months. My request is partly due to their failure to provide me with a date for a most recent hearing as they said they would. For two months in a row, they basically maneuvered me into missing a hearing by not providing information and being unavailable for two consecutive months when I tried to contact them for information. It's put me in a position where my housing is in immediate jeopardy.

Chair Sirak: Thank you. We've been made aware of your situation and we will respond accordingly.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

N. VanScoy moved at 9:10 pm to enter into RSA 91-A:3, II (d) "Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property, which if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community."

Motion seconded by T. Lizotte. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

N. VanScoy moved at 9:25 pm to exit the non-public session. Motion seconded by T. Lizotte. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

The Council made a statement that they voted to seal the minutes of the non-public session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Evelyn F. Horn
Administrative Assistant

Nancy Comai
Town Council Secretary