

Board members present: Chairman John R. LaCourse, Selectman Frank DeRocchi and Selectman Griswold.

Others present: Bill Humm, George Walker, Shirley Walker, Dave Cedarholm, Tom Corrow, Irene Gagnon, Robert Gagnon, Scott Marsh, *** Cole, Roger Rice, Loren Meeker, Charles Cox, Laurel Cox, Tom Dolan, Katrinka Pellechia, Margaret Blickle, Stephanie Fischer, Gael Grant, Bill Henze, Catherine Fisher, Richard Miller, Kristin Forselius, Jay Hilyard, Bob Hart, Laura Gund, Phil Boucher, Deborah Boucher, Tim Moody, Andy Jones, Robin Jones, Andy Lelio, Leslie Martin, Dale Hardy, Lisa Colbroth, Dennis Gelsomini, Dorn Cox, David Olken, Town Administrator Julie Glover, Town Secretary Dawn Hayes.

1. Chairman LaCourse called the meeting to Order at 6:00 pm.
2. Chairman LaCourse opens the public hearing and asks for comment on Warrant Article #5 (to Rescind SB2).
3. Resident Charles Cox of Randall Rd signed the petition to Rescind SB2 and feels the wording of the warrant article last year was misleading, as it didn't tell people it would do away with Town Meeting.

Resident Gael Grant of Wednesday Hill rd is passionate about the value of Town Meeting and wants it reinstated.

Resident Rick Miller of Love Ln wants everyone to have a chance to vote and decide how to spend their tax dollars. Further stating, if you want to find out the pros and cons of any issue you can ask a Selectman or make use of the computer.

Resident Tom Dolan of Lamprey Ln asks what benefit is there by restricting voters by requiring them to attend Town Meeting. Further stating, he doesn't think it is a democratic best practice.

Resident Bill Henze of Wednesday Hill Rd states we didn't give Town Meeting on Saturdays a chance. Further stating, the Deliberative Session for the Oyster River School District is the meeting that all should attend, as their budget is ten times the town budget.

Resident Tom Corrow of Packers Falls Rd intends to vote no and believes democracy is one person equals one vote. Town Meeting is an old institution to be put on the mantel piece of government.

Resident Dave Cedarholm of Fox Garrison Rd notes that everyone is talking about Town meeting going away with SB2, Town Meeting was modified a bit. Town Meetings have been updated over time, the Deliberative Session for all intents and purposes is a reasonable update. Mr. Cedarholm further notes, those who attend Town Meeting are a small group and not necessarily a clear representation of the whole town.

Resident Roger Rice of Garrity Rd remarks on the editorial in Foster about the problems with SB2. Mr. Rice notes the warrant article from last year was confusing and further states, people won't be as informed as when they went to Town Meeting.

Resident Andy Lelio of Hobbs Rd read the same article but had a different take on it. He noted the main point of the article was for SB2 to be successful, you need informed voters. Mr. Lelio believes the town can push the information out to the voters so they are fully informed.

Resident Dave Meeker of Wadleigh Falls Rd signed the petition. Mr. Meeker states there are two parts to democracy: what you vote for and who gets to vote. He further notes, at Town Meeting everyone had an opportunity.

Resident Bob Hart of Tuttle Rd missed the Deliberative Session and notes he does not have cable or internet. Mr. Hart states, the Town Report should still be mailed out. He further notes the turn out for the Deliberative Session will be much less than at Town Meeting.

Resident Dorn Cox of Randall Rd missed the Deliberative Session and notes, those who have more of a stake will attend the Deliberative Session. Mr. Cox states he enjoyed hearing from each Department Head and their impassioned pleas (at the Town Meetings).

Resident Leslie Martin of Margaret Ln notes, people have been missing the discussions for years and the special interests are the ones that come to the meeting. Ms Martin further states that it is important that Lee upgrades the way people are allowed to express their opinions.

Resident Jay Hilyard of Plumer Ln missed the Deliberative Session. Mr. Hilyard notes, the Town has a lot of vehicles to help educate the public on warrant articles: the Website, the E-crier and the Mailer. He states they can be used more to help the SB2 process be a success.

Resident David Olken of James Farm Rd states he doesn't think half of the things that have been accomplished in the town could have been through SB2. (Transfer Station, Little River Park, Conservation Land) People who attend Town Meeting change the character of how things are done. Things will get done, but now through political campaigns.

Resident Bill Henze of Wednesday Hill Rd states one of the reasons for a low turnout is because the town is well run and the Board should be congratulated.

Resident Tom Corrow of Packers Falls Rd agrees the town is well run. Mr. Corrow remarks on the discussion of different classes of democracy that people are talking about; some are educated about the issues, some are not educated about the issues. He further notes, the responsibility in a democracy is to educate yourself.

Resident Dave Meeker of Wadleigh Falls Rd asks if the town officials will be distributing more information regarding the pros and cons of each article.

Chairman LaCourse remarks, that an online discussion board is being worked on and refers to the Town Administrator.

Town Administrator Julie Glover states, she has recently attended a workshop regarding governmental use of FaceBook, and they caution the use and how they are established. Ms. Glover notes a policy will need to be developed regarding structure, commenting and the mission statement. Ms. Glover advises the public the Town Report is now available on the website (although, not available in print yet).

Chairman LaCourse states, they are doing as much as they can to educate and put material out. Without further comment from the public, Chairman LaCourse closes the Public Hearing at 6:59 pm.

4. Bill Humm of the Lee Conservation Commission updates the Board on the property that was bequeathed to the town by Joe Ford (71 acres on Garrity Rd, including frontage on the Oyster River). Mr. Humm states the town currently holds a conservation easement on the property (Strafford Rivers Conservancy holds the backup position on the easement and the Audubon Society may be the potential backup holder of the easement). Mr. Humm advises the Board about the direction of the recent negotiations; submits a draft memorandum of understanding. Mr. Humm notes, Joe Ford intent had been for 10 acres to be maintained as grasslands for birds (he had negotiated a mowing schedule with Chuck Cox in exchange for harvesting of hay). Mr. Humm advises the Board, Chuck and Dorn Cox have submitted a grant application for a demonstration project to try various grasses on the property. Mr. Humm states the Conservation Commission wishes to continue an informal agreement with Mr. Cox to do periodic cutting in exchange for hay on the property; feels the Conservation Commission can get the maintenance on the property done at no cost to the town.

Chairman LaCourse asks about item #4 in the draft memorandum (payment of Durham property tax). Mr. Humm states, there is a 5 acre piece of the parcel that lies in Durham; he has not researched the matter of the tax.

Selectman Griswold asks about the grant for mowing and what happens when the grant is gone. Mr. Humm states, the cost figure he has seen is something in the range of a couple of hundred dollars. Selectman Griswold asks if the land will be maintained in terms of its nutrient value? Mr. Humm does not know, but he believes there is not an obligation on the part of the town when looking at the language of the easement. Selectman Griswold asks about road access mentioned in item #5. Mr. Humm states it is a woods road accessed by the farmer, it is chained for no public access (for tractor only, no maintenance required).

Selectman DeRocchi asks in regards to the easement, we are supposed to post it as to what can be done down there. Selectman DeRocchi further asks, what are the restrictions of the easement. Mr. Humm lists both the purposes: wildlife habitat protection, water quality and supply, open space, scenic enjoyment; the prohibited uses: no industrial or commercial activities, no subdivision, no structural improvements, no land surface alteration, no resource extraction, no waste disposal, no underground or above ground storage tanks, no hazardous substances, no additional impervious surfaces, no water quality degradation, no rare species harm, no hunting and trapping, no detrimental uses, no new trails or roads, no camping, no horseback riding, no motorized or mechanized recreation vehicles, no clear cutting and no commercial forestry.

Selectman Griswold inquires about parking. Mr. Humm states there is no specific parking area, but there are places to park off of Garrity Rd.

5. Town Administrator Julie Glover reports to the Board, she has met with the Community Planning Coordinator regarding the focus of the position. Ms. Glover will be working on the job description revision and has offered the Community Planning Coordinator use of the office on the second floor of the Town Hall.
6. Town Administrator Julie Glover mentions restarting the Town Center Committee and offers to move forward with the organization if the Board wishes her to do so. Selectman Griswold would like to think about it before moving forward.
7. Town Secretary Dawn Hayes present the Minutes of February 2, 2012 for the Boards approval.
8. Town Secretary Dawn Hayes submits and application for current use for .92 acres (abutting land in Durham (same owner) already in Current Use).
9. Town Secretary Dawn Hayes submits an abatement recommendation on 2 Depot Ln, based on structural issues and a recommendation by Assessor Scott Marsh.
10. Town Secretary Dawn Hayes submits supplemental assessment for Fair Point Communications (tax bill for \$38,102).
11. Selectman Griswold motions to enter into a Non Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c) at 7:23 pm. Selectman DeRocchi, seconds. All agree. Present in Non Public: Chairman LaCourse. Selectman Griswold, Selectman DeRocchi, town Administrator Julie Glover, resident Robin Jones and resident Andy Jones.

Selectman Griswold motions to seal the Minutes. Selectman DeRocchi, seconds. All agree. Selectman Griswold motions to end Non Public. Selectman DeRocchi, seconds. All agree. Non Public ends at 7:40 pm

12. Selectman Griswold motions to enter into a Non Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (c) at 7:41 pm. Selectman DeRocchi, seconds. All agree. Present in Non Public:

Chairman LaCourse. Selectman Griswold, Selectman DeRocchi, Town Administrator Julie Glover, resident Adam Keller and Assessor Scott Marsh.

Resident Adam Keller discusses his December tax bill with the Board. Mr. Keller purchased 6 Steppingstones Rd in July, and states the previous owner had an exemption on the property. Mr. Keller request the December tax bill be reduce to equal ½ the annual amount.

Chairman LaCourse refers to the Assessor for details and explanation. Scott Marsh explains, last year all properties in town were re-evaluated and updates and verifications on elderly and veteran's exemptions took place to ensure eligibility. Due to no response from the prior property owner regarding the inquiry, the exemption was removed from the tax card (unfortunately this occurred after the first (estimated) tax bill), thus the full amount was charged on the final bill.

Chairman LaCourse states the Board doesn't wave taxes, unless more information comes forward. The Board agrees to take it under advisement at this time. Mr. Keller departs the Non Public Session.

The Board discusses the matter further with Assessor Scott Marsh. Selectman DeRocchi notes, based on the value of the home and the tax rate you know what your taxes are going to be regardless of any exemption a prior owner may have had. Scott Marsh states, the title company holds some blames as when they inquired about the taxes, non were 'due' at the time. Mr. Marsh further states, the town has not done anything improper.

Chairman LaCourse instructs the Town Administrator to draft a letter to Mr. Keller regarding no changes will be made to the tax bill.

Selectman Griswold motions to end Non Public. Selectman DeRocchi, seconds. All agree. Non Public ends at 7:55 pm. The Minutes are not sealed.

13. Selectman DeRocchi motions to move forward with the organization of the Senior Advisory Committee. Selectman DeRocchi recommends Penny Stetson, and Jackie Neill as members and Pat Jenkins as an alternate, with the Welfare Director as a contact point and a Selectman as an additional contact point. Chairman LaCourse, seconds. All agree.

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Minutes transcribed by:

Dawn Hayes, Town Secretary

Minutes accepted by:

Chairman, John R. LaCourse

W. James Griswold

Frank J. DeRocchi
Lee Board of Selectmen