

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD MEETING

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Board members present: Chairman LaCourse, Selectwoman Dennis and Selectman Cedarholm.

Others present: Sheila St. Germain, NHMBB, Roger Rice, Katrinka Pellecchia, Paul & Annie Gasowski, Bill Humm, Caren Rossi, Sharon Taylor, Lou Ann Griswold, Cary Brown, Pat Barbour, Larry Kindberg, Scott Bugbee, Leslie Martin, Bill Henze, Bob Smith, Peg Dolan, Cynthia Giguere-Unrein, Randy Stevens, Chet Murch, Scott Nemet, Town Administrator Julie Glover and Town Secretary Denise Duval.

1. Chairman LaCourse calls the FY 2015 Budget Public Hearing to order at 6:00 pm.
2. The Town Administrator Julie Glover points out that there are copies of the proposed operating budget on the table for the public to review. TA Glover states that the overall departments budget proposal is up \$191,441 and the ABC's overall budget proposal is up \$91,057. There are 3 significant increases that are the major contributors to this year's increase. First, the proposed new firefighter, second, increased legal expenses and third, the need for a new IT server at Town Hall and the PD. TA Glover asks how the Board would like to proceed. Chairman LaCourse says by department. TA Glover reviews each line item by department. The default budget is \$3,555,732.00.

Chairman LaCourse opens the floor to public comment.

Bill Henze asks about the 2% COLA that is in the budget. Chairman LaCourse says the Board is considering this, other towns are doing 2%. Bob Smith asks why the building inspector line item was reduced on the ABC's proposed budget. ABC Chairman Scott Bugbee states that there is not that much building going on this coming year; therefore, this amount should be sufficient. Bob Smith says that this is a big concern because there is a large amount of building planned especially commercial in 2014. This budget will not be enough. Planning and Zoning Administrator Caren Rossi proceeds to read off a list of proposed building projects coming up this next year. She asks the Board to reconsider the ABC's recommendation.

TA Glover advises the Board of the next step in the budget hearing process. Tonight is the 1st public hearing. The next public hearing is scheduled for December 16th and then if necessary there is one scheduled for January 21st. Petition Warrant Articles are due January 14th. Different this year was that the ABC and the BOS held several public budget workshops to discuss each departments proposed budget. The final joint workshop between ABC and BOS was December 5th. The final deliberation workshop for the ABC was Sunday, December 8th where they finalized their budget recommendations to the BOS. Chairman LaCourse asks the room if there are any further questions or comments. There are none. The FY 2015 1st Budget Public Hearing is closed at 6:15 pm.

3. Public Comment for the Select Board Meeting.

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Leslie Martin wants to see a significant reduction in the town's surplus. There is too much in the undesignated fund balance. Property values are down while other towns are going up. They can't seem to sell their homes for what they are worth. The taxes are high and the value of the land is low. According to Chairman LaCourse there is now \$2.7 million in this fund which is over 17% of the overall budget. The Board is sensitive to this issue and thanks Ms. Martin for her comment.

4. Cynthia Giguere-Unrein opens for the Library presentation and introduces the NH Municipal Bond Bank Executive Director Sheila St. Germain. The NH Bond Bank was established by the State by Statute in 1977. It is a pooling of communities to issue one bond to the market twice a year. There has never been a default in the State. They encourage towns to use a bond counsel. Towns can borrow up to 30 years as long as the life of what you are borrowing on is at least 30 years. They now require audits by CPA firms. No pre-payments are allowed. There is a one-time \$15,000 fee. Selectman Cedarholm asks if we are proposing to borrow now to get a certain interest rate and then bond in 2016. Ms. St. Germain says no. Cynthia says the Library is only looking for authorization to bond now and it remains in effect until the legislative body rescinds it. Selectwoman Dennis asks if the Town needs to get audited again to meet their requirement. Ms. St. Germain says no. They would accept our most recent last 3 CPA audits. Cary Brown wants to understand the process. How are they going to float a bond with only estimates and preliminary numbers? He asks if the Town should be looking at a solution for long term needs. More specifically, the Town has more buildings that need help. He sees the preliminary plans and estimates. He sees the 501(C)3 requirement to raise a certain amount of money. Is the Library there yet? Paul Gasowski states that they met with architect and construction team last week and they are on target for a March vote. Final drawings happen after the bond issue. There is some confusion as to what the final figure is for the total project cost. After a few minutes of deliberation it is determined that is it approximately \$3.7 million. The Library Community Committee say they are not moving from the old Library because the building is uninhabitable. It is just a lack of space issue and it's not handicapped accessible. Bill Henze does not see that a bond should be issued for more than \$2.5 million. He compares South Berwick (7500 people) and Durham (10,500 people) to Lee. Based on this our Library should cost us \$2 million. Valuation wise compared to South Berwick and Lee we should be at \$2 million. Ms. St. Germain points out that the BOS do not have to issue what they are authorized to issue. Selectman Cedarholm asks what bond amount they are looking to authorize. Cynthia says \$3 million. Selectman Cedarholm wants them to be more careful about the accuracy of the information they are releasing. He points out there would have to be another bond floated to move and fix a building for Town Hall. He adds that the tax rate that was just reduced will most likely be increased again with an increase in operating expenses. Cary Brown would rather not authorize a higher amount than what is actually needed. Bill Henze asks what will the operating cost of the new Library be and how will that affect the tax rate? TA Glover points out that we do not know what the effect will be on the tax rate. Those numbers would have to be re-calculated. And finally the Bond Hearing is scheduled for January 6, 2014 at 6:00 pm in this room.

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5. Roger Rice along with TA Glover present the revised Solid Waste ordinance for final review. Selectwoman Dennis wants to add employees to the 2nd paragraph titled Purpose and Intent. TA Glover points out that the biggest change is that the ordinance adds language pertaining to summer residents. There is a discussion on the fact that this ordinance does not cover the situation when a property owner who does not live in Lee needs a Transfer Station permit for debris or trash that has been created at his/her property in Lee. There is a temporary construction permit available to people who do not live in Lee, but who own property and are remodeling or building. TA Glover reminds the Board that the statute says the town 'shall' so the town (or legislative body) must vote on the revision of an ordinance. The stickers are also now good for 2 years rather than 1 year. The Board asks Roger and TA Glover to add a section pertaining to non-resident property owners, allowing them to obtain a temporary permit for trash, bulky waste and debris that is generated at a property in Lee. The permit would expire after 10 days. Chairman LaCourse tables this until the next meeting date.
6. Randy Stevens presents to the Board that the 2003 Ford F-450 is severely rusted and there is not enough metal left to weld to. This truck is due to be traded this current fiscal year per the CIP. Randy passes out 3 photos and presents 3 options. Option 1 is the highway department can try to complete a patch job. Option 2 is to purchase a new dump body of the same brand name minus the subframe and hoist for \$4154.00 plus \$750 for installation and \$1000 to prep and paint for a total of \$5904.00. Option 3 is to trade the truck in as per the CIP. State bid would be for a new Ford 450 with plow and dump body for \$44850.00 for diesel and \$40921.00 for gas. These prices will go up by a few thousand for strobe lights, limited slip differential and cab steps. Chairman LaCourse asks if it is in the budget to replace. Randy says yes in the CIP. Chairman LaCourse wants to put it out to bid to see what is out there. We can always go back to State bid.

Randy informs the Board that a few months ago the Highway Department purchased a 2003 Sterling Plow/Dump truck and sander. To date the truck has had new tires, new windshield wiper linkage, new clutch, new antennae and a load cover assembly installed, the dump body sandblasted/painted and the sander reinstalled. Selectman Cedarholm moves to authorize the Highway Supervisor to purchase a wing and arm assembly not to exceed \$7000 and expending from the Highway Equipment Expendable Trust Fund. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

Randy wants to purchase a jackhammer to use with a donated air compressor. Chairman LaCourse says to proceed. Randy does not need the Board's permission to purchase an item such as this. The Highway Department has money in the budget for this.

Randy informs the Board that the cut-off saw blew up. They can fix it. The parts would cost about \$800. A new one would cost \$915. Chairman LaCourse moves to authorize the Highway Supervisor to purchase a new cut-off saw. Selectman Cedarholm seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

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Randy wants to know if the Town wants to keep its Inspection Station License. After a recent inspection it was discovered that a headlight aimer needs to be purchased before the Town can inspect any more vehicles. The question now is whether or not it is worth it for the Town to have the inspection station for 6 trucks and 1 trailer. It is difficult to get a license back once it is taken away for non-compliance. Chairman LaCourse thinks it may be better to forfeit the license at this time and moves to let the inspection station license go and outsource inspections. Selectman Cedarholm seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

A few months ago the Highway Department had requested a quote from a local Wetlands scientist in reference to wetland permits for the replacement of 2 culverts, 1 on Thompson Mill Road and 1 on Birch Hill Road. The quote came back at \$9300.00 not including unexpected circumstances and permit fees. According to Dave Price from the DES this work is necessary. DES says these culverts are class II. Randy needs to get names of firms from Selectman Cedarholm and send out a RFP.

Randy asks if he is supposed to be plowing LRP this winter. The Board says yes, at least half of it.

7. Larry Kindberg requests reimbursement to Mark Kustra for a larger ice skating rink liner in the amount of \$410.01 as opposed to the previous request of \$325.00. Chairman LaCourse moves to approve the revised expense for the skating rink from \$325.00 to \$410.01. Selectman Cedarholm seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

Larry asks the Board to approve the repair of the light pole at the tennis courts. TA Glover informs the Board that the Town owns the pole. According to Mr. Stevens the damage is extensive and could cost between \$500 - \$1000. Chairman LaCourse moves to spend up to \$1000 to repair the light pole at the town tennis courts. TA Glover to find appropriate place to expend those funds. Selectwoman Dennis seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

The Recreation Commission requests to host a hot chocolate and skating evening on January 12, 2014 to include a wood fired barrel with approval from the Fire Department through Mark Kustra. Chairman LaCourse moves to approve Community Skating on 1/12/14. Selectman Cedarholm seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.** Selectman Cedarholm asks about whether there is an outlet on the pole or not. There is an outlet. Chairman LaCourse adds that while they are fixing the light they may add a plug as long as it is within the \$1000 maximum.

The Recreation Commission would also like to put up a temporary banner on sticks in the ground saying open to the public. No expense to the Town. The Board agrees that would be fine.

8. TA Glover will be on vacation from December 25th until January 2nd.

TA Glover requests that the Board approve closing the Town Offices to include the Planning Office on December 26th. The employees would use a floating

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holiday or vacation day for this day off. In addition, the TA states that others have been asking to close Town offices early on Christmas Eve, as has been approved in past years. Chairman LaCourse moves to close Town Hall at noon on December 24th and that Town Hall remain closed on December 26th. TA Glover asks for a friendly amendment to make the noon time closing Town wide. Selectman Cedarholm seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

TA Glover reminds the Board of the need to review the revised Welfare Guidelines. Chairman LaCourse says to put this on the calendar as an agenda item after the 1st of the year.

TA Glover adds the Default Budget to the list of documents to be signed under the Consent Agenda.

9. Chairman LaCourse moves to accept the Consent Agenda as presented. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

Larry Kindberg requests that his tax abatement for his veteran's tax credit that was approved in 2009 be made retroactive to 2009 due to an error made by the Clerk's office. It was never recorded or applied to his tax bill in or since 2009. TA Glover has been in touch with the NHMA attorney and was told that there is no provision in the state statute that would allow the town to go back beyond the current tax year. All abatements must be requested by March 30th for the previous tax year. Larry points out that this was done in this case, but the Clerk's office did not apply the credit to his bill for the last 4 years. Chairman LaCourse believes that this warrants another look and asks the TA Glover to research this again. The Board will have an answer by the next meeting. Larry indicates that his tax bill goes to his mortgage company so he really doesn't see them. Chairman LaCourse reiterates that the TA will look into this.

10. Chairman LaCourse moves to accept the Minutes from the November 25th meeting both public and non-public. Selectwoman Dennis seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**
11. Chairman LaCourse moves to accept the Manifest #11 and Weeks Payroll ending December 8, 2013. Selectman Cedarholm seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**
12. Chairman LaCourse asks for any miscellaneous or unfinished business. There is none.
13. Chairman LaCourse moves to enter Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3 II (c) police department issue and emergency management issue and RSA 91-A:3 II (a) fire department personnel issue and town administrator issue at 8:00 pm. Selectman Cedarholm seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**
14. Chief Chet Murch enters the Non-Public session at 8:05 pm and exits at 8:20 pm.
15. TA Glover enters into Non-Public with the Board at 8:20 pm and exits at 8:30 pm.

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16. Scott Nemet enters into Non-Public session with the Board at 8:30 pm and exits at 8:55 pm.
17. TA Glover enters into Non-Public session with the Board at 8:55 pm and exits at 9:20 pm.
18. The Board returns to public session at 9:20 pm and Chairman LaCourse announces that the non-public minutes are to be sealed.
19. The Board announces the appointment of Scott Nemet as full-time Fire Chief as of 1/1/2014. The Captain's position will remain vacant for now.
20. Selectwoman Dennis would like to see a promotion ceremony and thinks that would be a time to do pins for years of service awards.
21. Chairman LaCourse motions to adjourn at 9:25 pm. Selectman Cedarholm seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

Minutes transcribed by:

Denise Duval, Town Secretary

Minutes accepted by The Lee Select Board:

John R LaCourse, Chairman

Carole Dennis

David Cedarholm