

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
April 20, 2009

The Town Council meeting was held in the Moose Hill Council Chambers, Town Hall, 268B Mammoth Road, Londonderry.

Notice: Power outage experienced at this meeting no cable/video/recorded meeting minutes.

PRESENT: Town Council: Chairman Mike Brown: Vice Chairperson, Kathy Wagner; Councilors: Paul DiMarco, Sean O’Keefe, Brian Farmer; Town Manager Dave Caron; Executive Assistant, Margo Lapietro.

CALL TO ORDER – PUBLIC SESSION

Chairman Brown opened the meeting at 7:02 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance. This was followed by a moment of silence for the men and women fighting for our country, firefighters and police officers serving this community and around the country.

PUBLIC COMMENT

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Request for CDBG funding – Joe DeCarolis – Attorney John Michels and Developer Joe DeCarolis were in attendance. Town Manager Caron explained the Town is eligible to apply for up to \$500,000 in CDBG funds annually. Staff has reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan and the Master Plan and does not see a need for these funds at this time. There is no cost sharing requirement. Joe DeCarolis plans to build 196 units of workforce housing along Stonehenge Road. He has discussed his project conceptually with the Planning Board. Mr. DeCarolis needs approval from the Council to apply for the application grant. Discussion ensued. **Councilor Wagner made a motion, seconded by Councilor DiMarco to conditionally approve the grant application upon the following:**

- 1. Any completed application would still be subject to final approval after required public hearings;**
- 2. Council authorization should not be considered an endorsement of the project, nor does it bind the Town’s land use boards to approve any subsequent applications placed before those Boards. Council’s vote 5-0-0.**

Town Council FY10 Goals and Objectives – Chairman Brown said he would like to consider a manageable number of goals tonight and discussion ensued.

He stated that four Councilors had similar goals for the FY11 budget. Councilor O’Keefe stated that he would like the operating budget to be level funded with no increases. This was initially echoed by Councilors Brown and Farmer. Councilor DiMarco suggested not increasing the budget more than 2%. Town Manager Caron cautioned Councilors that we have many “unknowns” particularly the state is anticipating increasing the town’s portion of the NH Retirement contribution and also that several union contracts remain open for negotiation. All agreed to no more than a 2% increase in the operating budget for FY11. Councilor O’Keefe stated he wanted the Councilors to be aggressive with the goal.

Chairman Brown, Councilor’s DiMarco and O’Keefe all had opinions on redesigning the Council meetings. It was agreed to end meetings by 10:00 PM. If an item is of importance and could take up considerable time it was agreed to change the agenda before publicizing it. It was also agreed to have regular meetings scheduled in June and August, with possibly only one meeting in July; all concurred to have more meetings in the summer if necessary to handle all of the business at hand.

Economic Development was the number one goal last year and the implementation plan is not yet complete. Councilors Brown and Wagner listed it as a goal again for this year. Councilor Wagner suggested that Community Development Director Andre Garron give a brief update at a Town Council Meeting each month. The Council concurred to receive an update at its 2nd meeting of each month.

Councilor Wagner suggested that the Chiefs of the police and fire departments have a long term plan in place to look at departmental needs in light of numerous economic development projects planned for the community. All Councilors agreed and Town Manager Caron said he would try to submit a draft plan in by late August.

Councilors Farmer and Brown wanted a defined goal to restructure the Londonderry Police Department by reducing a management level position. Town Manager Caron observed that the new Police Chief should have input and be given consideration in this process. Consensus was to include the new Police Chief in these discussions.

Chairman Brown suggested implementing the School District’s energy savings model. Town Manager Caron stated that the Energy Committee is proceeding with this project, but cautioned that the Town will not experience the magnitude of savings as the school district due to the differences in facility space and age of structures. The Council concurred, and Chairman Brown requested that it be implemented no later than October 31, 1009.

Action items consisted of having a budget information on the Town’s website; scheduling joint meetings with the School Board and Budget Committee; reviewing a plan for the future issuance of long-term debt; implementing a competitive bid process for the future construction of North Fire Station, to replace the construction management method; and emphasis on generating additional revenues for the Town.

Charter Discussion – SB2 - Chairman Brown stated that two Councilors wanted to discuss how the Budgetary Town Meeting process operates, and whether it ought to be changed. Town Manager Caron advised that under state statutes for a charter community, the question to transition to an Official Ballot system would have to be studied by a Charter Commission, which means that any changes would not be voted on until the 2011 ballot. Councilor O’Keefe cited the declining numbers attending the annual Town Meeting and said that he has heard from a number of taxpayers in Town who expressed no interest in attending the Saturday session. He brought up the issue of a petition that was submitted in a prior year. Councilor Farmer stated the petition was not allowed because it was illegally written. He also said we have a dwindling number of people coming to the Annual Town Meeting, we might see an uptake on Tuesday if we eliminate the Saturday meeting. Councilor Wagner said she supports the Annual Town Meeting and if there is a true passion to change Town government it should be initiated through a citizen’s petition. Chairman Brown suggested asking the community if they are OK with the way town government operates; let the voters make the decision. Town Manager Caron explained the time line to avoid the expense of a Special Town Meeting; the Council can decide to proceed with a Committee at any time between approximately 9/11/09 and 1/8/10; a citizens’ petition drive can begin earlier, and would require the signatures of 357 registered voters. At next year’s Town Meeting the voters could authorize the creation of a committee, and vote for committee members at the same time. He stated he will have a final time line for both the petition and Council-initiated processes at the May 4 Council meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of Council’s Organizational Meeting of March 14 and Council Public Meeting of 4/6/09. **Councilor DiMarco made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of 3/14/09, seconded by O’Keefe Councilor, Council’s vote 5-0-0.**

Councilor DiMarco made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of 4/6/09, seconded by Councilor O’Keefe, Council’s vote 4-0-1 with Councilor Farmer abstaining.

OTHER BUSINESS

Liaison Reports –

Councilor Wagner attended the Old Home Day Meeting and announced that this year’s Grand Marshall is Jim Elefante. She stated that fundraising is down and they will have to cut some activities. She said that the \$7K budget allocated this year is not enough and she would like to talk to Council at some point in time about bringing it back up to \$10K.

Chairman Brown met with the Solid Waste Advisory Committee and they discussed the “Request for Proposals” that were received from a number of companies. They have a variety of options and plan to present their suggestions to Council on May 4. Councilor Wagner suggested Councilors receive the information prior to the meeting so they can have a chance to review the information that will be presented.

Councilor Farmer said the Economic Development Task Force is meeting tomorrow at the Londonderry High School Cafeteria at 7:00 PM. They are accepting input for marketing plans and the public is invited. The meeting is being lead by Community Development Director Andre Garron and the marketing firm hired by the Town.

Town Manager Reports –

Town Manager Caron said the Energy Taskforce will have its report by the end of May; Carolyn O'Connor is working with PSNH to determine if retrofitting street lights would be an appropriate use of the grant funds.

Board/Committee Appointments/Reappointments - MAA Applicant Review

Chairman Brown stated that John Robinson had withdrawn his application. He also stated that he will review the names in public tonight and the candidates selected for interviews will occur in public at the May 4 meeting, with the Council appointment made on either May 4 or 18. Councilors expressed their criteria in choosing a candidate and 4 individuals were selected for interviews:

Earle Rosse; Warren Jennings; Larry Stenger and Chuck Tilgner

Councilor Wagner thanked all 13 applicants for applying.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor DiMarco made a motion to adjourn at 9:50 PM, seconded by Councilor O'Keefe, Council's vote 5-0-0.

Notes and Tapes by: **Margo Lapietro** Date: **04/20/09**

Minutes Typed by: **Margo Lapietro** Date: **04/22/09**

Approved; **Town Council** Date: **05/04/09**