

**OFFICE OF SELECTMEN
6 HOLLAND STREET
PO BOX 139
MOULTONBOROUGH, NH 03254**

Selectmen's Meeting

October 28, 2010

MINUTES

Present: Selectmen: Joel R. Mudgett, Chairman, Karel A. Crawford, Edward J. Charest, James F. Gray (absent with prior notice), Betsey L. Patten (arrived at 4:30 p.m.); Carter Terenzini, Town Administrator.

I. CALL TO ORDER: Joel called the meeting to Order at 4:00 P.M.

- 1. FY 2011 Budget Schedule:** The Administrator circulated a Draft FY 2011 Budget Hearing scheduled. All seemed okay and it may be released.

- 2. Scenic By-Ways & Letter of Interest (LRPC):** Mike Izard of the Lakes Region Planning Commission was present to review the overall effort to re-invigorate the Scenic By-ways program in the region and introduced Dean Eastman, Senior Planner, from the NHDOT Bureau of Planning & Community Assistance. Mr. Eastman described it as a grass roots efforts funded with FHWA monies. He said that like any federal money there are some strings attached, but the intent is for locals to design and administer their approach. He noted that the Town's experience in the past, it came up against the one "glitch" in the program which relates to off-premise signs. He said this still applies and described it as a "delicate" issue which otherwise doesn't really change anything. Karel asked if this requirement, that there not be any off-premise signs, did not supersede local control. Mr. Eastman said that it does not affect any existing signs as they are grandfathered. He spoke to bill boards as being unattractive along a scenic by-way and it being the only true program requirement to compete for this \$45 million nationwide. He said there are currently 17 by-ways in NH, but not all have active organizations and if they don't they will not be able to compete for the funding. Joel asked if the Town had been a part of this at one time and Mr. Eastman said it had. However, one business wanted an off-premise sign and the Town withdrew. He continued by saying that, "If you have an idea you want off-premise signs this (scenic by-way program) may not be the way to go." There is roughly \$500,000 statewide to divvy up. Karel asked what the advantages are for participating in the program. Mr. Eastman said you can work to pull communities together for events. The state does not look to dictate town programs, just administer the money. Other than the sign issue there are not many negatives, but you can't apply for the money if you aren't part of the system. Ed asked if this is recommended at the state level, does the state listen to you. Mr. Eastman said sure they listen, as it's a great platform to get their attention. Ed continued that we have some areas in Town that are beautiful and a lot of them are getting overgrown, but in the past the state worked against us in clearing trees and the like. Mr. Eastman said there must be some buy-in from local communities so we can't do any maintenance on built projects. Ed said it was more the decision process than the money he was referring to and cited a state ruling on clearing trees at Sutherland Park which someone pointed out was really related to the Comprehensive Shoreline Protection Act more than anything else. Joel asked if this was a tool for funding of local projects. Mr. Eastman said it was, depending upon the project. Funds had been used toward acquiring a conservation easement on a

farm in Meredith on Route 25 and to acquire and develop a pull-off at a set of falls on the Kancamagus Highway. There are a broad range of land acquisition and corridor management activities that are eligible as long as it can be shown to benefit the by-way. Carter said at the end of the day it all boils down to eighteen words from Mr. Eastman: "If you have an idea you want off-premise signs this may not be the way to go." Betsey said our businesses need all the help they can get and the off-premise signs can be important citing some businesses are way off the normal travel patterns. Mr. Eastman reminded the Board that businesses can still have the DOT blue and brown directional signs. Mr. Izard was asked and informed the Board that 4 of 13 towns do not participate (Ossipee, Ashland, Tuftonboro, and Moultonborough). The Board's consensus was this was ready to be acted upon under Old Business on November 4th.

3. **FY 2010 Tax Rate Setting:** The Town Administrator walked through the memo and recommended the rate of \$8.12 per thousand which leaves a reserve of 7.51%. At this rate about half of the people have a bill that is the same or lower than this year while about half have increased tax bills. He pointed out the staff had prepared examples of the effect of lesser amounts of cash and or reserve ratios and reminded the Board of how close we had come to not having sufficient cash on hand this past Spring. Ed said we made the decision last year to use all that cash (\$1 million) to reduce the rate and it is what put us in this box, adding that we really don't have an option. Karel said she was in between example 3 and 2. Betsey acknowledged we can't go all the way to the lowest rate possible and maintain sufficient cash reserves. She asked Susette Remson (Tax Collector) how collection ratios were running and learned that the Town is within ½ % of norms and described collections as very good. Ed said this meant we could look at cash flow models and Susette said it is not her role to do that. Susette understood that the Board was concerned with a .40 cent spike, but any lower the Town won't have any money to apply to the rate next year. Jean Beadle, Advisory Budget Committee Chair, said the Board needed to look at moving toward the 7.5% reserve ratio even if you can't go all the way at one time. Karel asked if the staff would be comfortable at example #3 (6.9% ratio for a rate of \$8.07). Carter said he promised the staff he would stick with the recommendation, but if the Board wanted to do something less at least that was going in the right direction (from FY 2009 6.74% up to 6.9%). He also pointed out we now have better management tools in place and perhaps we could concentrate more on those (i.e. requiring weekly turnover of cash). After discussion the consensus was to use \$180,000 of fund balance for a rate of \$8.12. This will now be submitted to DRA for certification.
4. **Cemetery Ordinance Discussion:** Scott Kinmond, DPW Director/Road Agent, spoke to the Board about some "challenges" we had with the current rules which only speak to the height of a monument (4') and a prohibition on "large" trees and shrubs. He spoke to a model ordinance that had been circulated for review and asked for comments. He said there were people who had spoken to him to offer assistance in working through this and Joel suggested that we could put together such a working group to advise us. Betsey suggested that the LGC and others can help us with a model ordinance as well. Scott said he received information from the Cemetery Association and looking forward it's our responsibility to provide sufficient cemetery lots by statute. He also spoke to the statute allowing for an independent Board of Cemetery Trustees. There was discussion as to who should appoint such a committee, with Betsey feeling it needed to be the Board so the group would have a "direct connection" to the governing body. Carter asked if it was

therefore the consensus that Scott could pull some people together and bring the Board a model or did the Board want to do this. The consensus was to let Scott pull together folks to work on this and then bring the Board a recommendation.

5. **FY 2011 Staff Memo(s) Re: 2011 Revenues:** The Administrator re-circulated a memo from late September and a follow-up memo on potential revenues to be generated. He noted the item of major importance was that related to the pricing of the Transfer Station/Beach stickers. These needed to be ordered and the staff needed direction on whether the Board was going to go to a one year or stay with a two year sticker and what the rate would be. The current cycle will expire on 12/30 and we need to start selling them. Also, if the rates are going up we would like to let people know so those who get them prior to January 1st do not see a rate increase. The consensus was that the Transfer Station/Beach sticker would be dealt with on 11/04 and the balance of the memo on the budget process.
6. **FY 2011 Staff Memo(s) Re: 2011 Expenses:** The Administrator re-circulated a memo from the staff on street-lights and a separate memo on potential expenses which could be reduced. He noted the item of major importance was that related to the streetlight study which recommended 20 lights be eliminated for a savings of \$2,500+/- . He said this should be preceded by a letter to Center Harbor on the lights on Bean Road (a dividing border roadway) and similar abutters in case they wanted to 'adopt' the streetlight by being billed by NHEC. He said there may also be lights the public wanted to "nominate" for removal. He acknowledged there was more work yet to be done and that additional lights might be suitable for removal, but asked that we proceed now with what we have. He pointed out that every month's delay on a decision costs the Town \$200+. The consensus was the street-light issue could be dealt with on November 4th and the balance of the memo on the budget process.
7. **Various Personnel Issues Re: Health, Dental Insurance et al:** The Town Administrator re-circulated a memo from late September and a follow-up prepared this week with the actual LGC and Primex rate quotes in hand. The LGC rates (except Dental) had actually declined modestly. The staff recommended the Town stay with its current benefit platform on health, move to Option #3C on dental (which required a \$50 first person and \$75 family increase in the deductible, but increased the per person annual maximum by \$500 with a minor drop in the premium) and move to adopt the 10% contribution rate on all benefits (phased in at 2% points a year). He distributed an example showing that if adopted together with the 1.5% COLA being recommended, staff would see a modest increase in net pay even after these costs. He also pointed out that any negative shock could be softened by implementing the changes on April 1st. He pointed out the staff hoped for a decision by 11/04 to set up the December open enrollment. The consensus was this item was ready for action on 11/04.

II. ADJOURNMENT: Betsey Made the Motion to Adjourn. Ed Seconded the Motion.
Motion Carried Unanimously.
Joel adjourned the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

Approved

Date
Respectfully Submitted
Carter Terenzini, Town Administrator

Draft