

## Town of New Boston

### Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

June 16, 1997

A regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Carlstrom.

PRESENT: Gordon A. Carlstrom, Selectman  
Harold C. Strong, Selectman  
Susan J. Clay, Selectman  
Todd I. Selig, Town Administrator

The Board did not have an opportunity to review the Selectmen's Meeting minutes from May 19 or June 2, 1997.

At 7:00 p.m., the Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator Selig entered into a serious discussion concerning the Planning Board Recording Secretary finalists, Nicola Strong and Lois Briere, both of New Boston. While both candidates were very qualified for the Recording Secretary position, Town Administrator Selig and Planning Coordinator Dodge ultimately recommended Nicola Strong for the position with a starting wage of \$10.00 per hour due to the specific nature of the position and the transcription background which Mrs. Strong would be able to bring to the position.

Selectman Clay stated up front that she was a personal friend of Mrs. Briere and that Mrs. Briere had served as her fiscal agent. Selectman Clay felt that it was inappropriate to begin the new employee at a starting wage greater than the one advertised with the position in the newspaper at \$8.50 - \$9.50 per hour, and that if the two candidates were equal in virtually every respect, especially in the eyes of the Planning Coordinator, then it did not make sense for the Board to hire an employee at \$10.00 per hour when Mrs. Briere would be willing to begin at \$8.50 per hour, a savings in weekly pay of approximately \$3,000.00 over a twelve month period. Selectman Clay felt that with people struggling in New Boston to make yearly tax payments, it would be wrong for the Board to spend the extra money on Mrs. Strong when there was an equally strong candidate such as Mrs. Briere who would work for less, and who Selectman Clay felt was more qualified for the position. Selectman Clay stated that when she next stands for election, she feels it is important to be able to tell the citizens of New Boston that the Board has fought against unnecessary increases in the Town Budget. Mrs. Briere also has a B.A. degree in Paralegal Studies.

Town Administrator Selig responded that the pay level advertised was never intended in his mind to lock the Board into the \$8.50 - \$9.50 per hour range; that the \$10.00 per hour starting wage was appropriate in his opinion given Mrs. Strong's educational background, work experience, and pay history; that a fourteen-town wage survey conducted by the Town Administrator in 1996

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indicated that the pay range for a secretarial position in the New Boston area labor market was between \$9.70 - \$11.97 per hour; and that in terms of the pay other secretarial positions in New Boston receive, \$10.00 per hour would be an appropriate beginning wage with Mrs. Strong's level of education, work experience, and pay history. Mr. Selig stated that he felt \$9.50 per hour would be the appropriate starting wage for Mrs. Briere if she were offered the position, not the \$8.50 per hour recommended by Selectman Clay. Mr. Selig explained that he felt Mrs. Strong was a stronger candidate for the job given the specific requirements of the Recording Secretary position, namely the preparation of detailed Planning Board minutes. He felt that had the requirements of the position been defined differently, Mrs. Briere may have been recommended for the position. Mr. Selig explained that an objective employment search had been conducted by he and the Planning Coordinator as per the Board's instructions and that Mrs. Strong was determined to be the stronger candidate as a result of this objective search. Mr. Selig stated that the Town had been through three secretarial employees in the Planning Office in the last three years, largely due to substandard pay and the inability of past help to successfully tackle the minutes. To pay less than \$10.00 per hour and in effect lose someone with Mrs. Strong's skills, work ethic, minute taking experience, and positive personality would be a penny wise and pound foolish decision, according to Mr. Selig.

Selectman Clay disagreed with Mr. Selig's rationale in nearly every respect stating that Lois Briere was a skilled candidate who, in addition to being an extremely hard working, dedicated, and talented person, had lived in New Boston for many years and would thoroughly enjoy working for the Town. She could not justify paying the extra money required at the \$10.00 per hour wage level and felt after looking at both candidates resumes that Lois Briere was the better candidate.

Chairman Carlstrom stated that the Board had tasked Town Administrator Selig and Planning Coordinator Dodge with the job of conducting an objective search and recommending a final candidate and wage level to the Board of Selectmen. Chairman Carlstrom felt very uncomfortable changing the game plan at this late juncture. Selectman Strong stated at the outset of the discussion that although his daughter-in-law Nicola Strong was one of the two candidates, he intended to support whichever candidate the Town Administrator and Planning Coordinator recommended, whether it be Mrs. Briere or Mrs. Strong.

At 7:30 p.m., Nicola Strong came before the Board of Selectmen to interview for the position of Planning Board Recording Secretary. Planning Coordinator Dodge was also in attendance. Mrs. Strong spoke with those present about her background and her desire to work for the Town of New Boston, as well as answered questions posed. Upon Mrs. Strong's departure, Chairman Carlstrom made a motion to accept Town Administrator Selig and Planning Coordinator Dodge's recommendation to appoint Mrs. Nicola Strong to the position of Planning Board Recording Secretary for a probationary period of 6 months at a wage of \$10.00 per hour. Selectman Clay did not wish to second the motion. There being no one else to second the motion, Selectman

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Strong seconded the motion to accept the Town Administrator and Planning Coordinator's recommendation. The vote was: Chairman Carlstrom - yes; Selectman Strong - yes; Selectman Clay - no. The motion passed.

At 8:00 p.m., Transfer Station Manager Bonnie Bethune came before the Board for her monthly meeting. Assistant Transfer Station Manager Deb Smith, Road Agent Lee Murray, and Fire Chief Jim Dodge were also in attendance. Manager Bethune discussed the status of the Transfer Station budget. A lengthy discussion concerning the Transfer Station burn pit was also held in which it was decided that Manager Bethune would draft a master plan of the entire Transfer Station area, taking into account a possible relocation of the existing fence around the burn pit, the location of a second burn pit, and finding someone to do the excavation work if the project is approved by the Selectmen. Mr. Selig will look into whether FEMA funds can be used to help make the burn pit safer once the master plan has been completed. The master plan will also show where possible expansion to the Transfer Station building may take place, as well as where pavement should be applied in 1998 and where a well and septic system & shower facility should be placed in the future. Other topics which were discussed with Manager Bethune included: Waste Oil Collection Program Upgrade and 1998 C.I.P. Projects.

Selectman Clay made a motion to enter non-public session to discuss a personnel matter at the Transfer Station pursuant to RSA 91-A:3II(a). Selectman Strong seconded the motion. The vote was: Chairman Carlstrom - yes; Selectman Strong - yes; Selectman Clay - yes. Also present were Transfer Station Manager Bethune, Assistant Transfer Station Manager Smith, and Town Administrator Selig.

The Board discussed a personnel issue at the New Boston Transfer Station. No formal decisions were made during the session.

Selectman Clay made a motion to exit non-public session. Selectman Strong seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Bethune informed the Board that Ginger Graves was planning to leave the regular part-time employ of the Town as an Attendant to find work in the private sector. The Board therefore instructed Town Administrator Selig to advertise the position and begin a search to fill the vacancy.

At 8:30 p.m., Road Committee members Dick Moody, Rick Riendeau, Gary Robbins, and Bruce Fillmore came before the Board. Road Agent Lee Murray was present as well as Fire Chief Jim Dodge. Resident Kim DiPietro was also present in the audience. Bruce Fillmore made a motion to appoint Dick Moody as Chairman of the Road Committee. Gary Robbins seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous except for the abstention of Dick Moody who preferred not to vote for himself.

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The following issues were discussed with the Road Committee: Two paving bids were received by Lee Murray (Pike \$29.75; Continental \$28.10) for paving work this summer. The Town will utilize Continental as per the lower quote. Old Coach Road will take the biggest share of the

paving money this year. A finish will also be placed on Meetinghouse Hill Road with paving done around the unfinished catch basins. Selectman Strong suggested having the Road Committee look at subdivision roads and make recommendations about long term maintenance. It was decided that Town Administrator Selig should send a letter to the owners of the basketball hoop which has been placed illegally on Mill Street across from the bakery to have it removed. Road Agent Murray plans to video tape subdivision roads in the future to ensure that a record has been created as a reference for the Town to look back on as abutters begin to develop within the Town's right-of-ways on these roads. Town Administrator Selig was asked to send a letter to the residents of Summit Drive telling them that the Highway Department would be grading the shoulders of the road toward the end of the summer and that they should remove any decorative features which may have been placed within the 4 foot shoulder of the roadway. The Highway Crew is cutting brush on the shoulders of Meadow Road and will begin grinding next week. It was decided that a portion of Middle Branch Road would likely be changed in name only to Twin Bridge Road as per a request by Clifton Wilson and the New Boston Fire Department due to E-911 response issues. Town Administrator Selig was asked to notify the abutters to determine whether they had any opposition to this change. Mr. Selig was also asked to notify the abutters along Helena Drive that the road may be renamed Newman Wilson Drive as this was the original name of the road and would correspond to name of the Weare end of the road. Helena Drive residents will also be given an opportunity to speak to the proposed name change.

Last Tuesday, Town Administrator Selig and Fire Ward Dick Moody attended a meeting of the Hilltop Mutual Fire Aid District to discuss insurance for the USAF Mini-Pumper which the three member Towns are attempting to secure for their mutual shared use as part of Hilltop. It looks as though it will cost each of the three participating towns \$433.33 per year more in insurance for the Mini-Pumper. Both Amherst and Bedford are going back to see if the money would be available from their respective communities. The New Boston Selectmen did not have an objection to this allocation.

Town Administrator Selig reported that Mr. Bill Barss of the Playground Association had stopped in to explain that the Association was in the process of slowly making repairs to the grandstand and playground equipment as per the Selectmen's request as funds and manpower become available.

Selectman Clay made a motion to award the bid to paint the New Boston Historical Building to Daniel Gravelle of Semper-Fi Painting for the quoted price of \$3,400.00. Selectman Strong seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Gravelle submitted the only quote.

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Selectman clay made a motion to award the bid to install the Central School Emergency Generator to David Cramb for the quoted price of \$7,850.00. Selectman Strong seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Cramb submitted the only quote.

The Board granted the Fourth of July Association permission to hold a parade and fireworks celebration in New Boston on July 4, 1997.

The Selectmen received the "delinquent dog owner list" from the Town Clerk as per RSA 466:14 and passed said names along to the New Boston Police Department via the Town Clerk.

The Board reviewed the 1996 Audit Report prepared by Plodzick and Sanderson. Based on the auditor's findings, it was decided to ask Plodzick and Sanderson to meet with the entire Board of Trustees of the Trust Funds so that they may be instructed on the proper way in which to report on the Town's various trust funds for their year end report.

A special meeting of the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Adjustment has been scheduled for next Tuesday, June 24, 1997, to watch three Office of State Planning video tapes for the benefit of the members of each of the three boards. The meeting will be held in the New Boston Fire Department.

The next regular Selectmen's Meeting is scheduled for June 30, 1997. At 7:00 p.m., the Board will travel to the New Boston Air Force Tracking Station for a tour of the facility with Lt. Col. Cavalli, Commander of the NBAF Tracking Station.

The Board signed Intent-to-Cut forms.

The Board reviewed and/or signed other miscellaneous correspondence and materials.

Selectman Clay made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:05 p.m. Selectman Strong seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Todd I. Selig  
Town Administrator

8/25/97