

Town of New Boston

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

December 22, 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 Selectmen had no appointments.

Selectman Strong made a motion to approve the Selectmen's Meeting minutes from November 3, 1997, November 10, 1997, and November 17, 1997. Selectman Clay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board of Selectmen briefly discussed the effect the petition article requesting the election of Planning Board members will have at 1998 Town Meeting. The Board discussed whether it should take an official position "for" or "against" the petition article. It was decided by consensus that the Board would not take an official position on the petition article for elected Planning Board members. It was also stated that unlike in the past, the article would be placed on the Official Ballot, as opposed to being discussed on the floor of Town Meeting, due to changes in State law. The Selectmen felt that a time period would be allocated during the public hearing on the proposed 1998 Town Budget for discussion concerning this issue. The Budget Hearing is currently scheduled for February 9, 1998.

Selectman Strong made a motion to increase the number of hours needed to qualify as a full time employee of the Town from 30 to 35 hours per week. Present full time personnel currently working fewer than 35 hours per week will be grandfathered and shall be considered full time personnel under this new policy. Selectman Clay seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. It was felt that the old 30 hour benchmark was outdated considering the expanded scope of New Boston's various departments. The old benchmark prevented the Selectmen from providing adequate staffing to departments without adding costly and unnecessary benefit packages, frequently unwanted by the affected employees themselves. The change will take effect immediately.

The Selectmen considered Town Clerk Margit Hooper's request to be made full time to receive health and dental benefits, or she would likely be forced to leave the employ of the Town due to changes in her personal situation. The Selectmen and Town Administrator Selig discussed this issue at great length and ultimately devised a proposal for Mrs. Hooper to consider whereby her hours would be increased to 35 per week, with weekly pay being reduced from \$13.65 per hour

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to approximately \$10.85 per hour. Taking into account the cost of benefits totaling more than \$5,100.00 which would be afforded, although Mrs. Hooper would incur a reduction in hourly pay, taking into account the benefits which are not currently being provided, Mrs. Hooper in real terms would gain approximately \$.04 per hour for each hour worked. Town Administrator Selig was asked to present this plan to Mrs. Hooper. The Selectmen felt that this package was more than fair to Mrs. Hooper and would ensure her longevity with the Town as a valued employee.

The Selectmen and Town Administrator Selig reviewed revised wage survey data for nearly all employees for approximately two hours.

Town Administrator Selig and Don Chapman are in the process of planning an emergency preparedness workshop for April of 1998.

Fire Inspector David Poole is planning to resign from the Fire Department upon the hiring of his replacement or by June of 1998, whichever comes first.

Year end budget expenditures are looking good as of this date.

The Board signed Intent-to-Cut forms.

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

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Selig', with a large, sweeping flourish above it. To the right of the signature, the date '12/22/97' is handwritten.

Todd I. Selig
Town Administrator