

Adopted

Town of New Boston Selectmen's Meeting September 8, 2015

PRESENT: Joe Constance Selectman
Dwight Lovejoy Selectman
Christine Quirk Selectman
Peter Flynn Town Administrator

Fire Chief Dan MacDonald, Fire Wards Wayne Blassberg and Cliff Plourde, Road Agent Dick Perusse, Recreation Director Mike Sindoni, SAU Superintendent Brian Balke and Rodney Towne of the public were present.

A. CALL TO ORDER: A regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order by Dwight Lovejoy at 6:00PM beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consent Agenda-The Selectmen signed the consent agenda. Joe moved to approve the consent agenda. Christine seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

B. PUBLIC FORUM:

None.

C. APPOINTMENTS:

Item 1: Administration Officials from SAU 19-Discussion of 2014-2015 Year End NBCS Surplus and New Boston Central School Snow Plowing and Other Issues: Superintendent Brian Balke was present to meet with the Selectmen to discuss school updates as follows:

- ❖ Generator Update: A 50/50 matching FEMA grant is available that the School Board would like to apply for toward a new generator at NBCS that also serves New Boston as the emergency shelter. The SAU has been working with New Boston Emergency Management Director Dan MacDonald on several options:
 - A whole school generator with automatic transfer switch for \$100,000-116,000 seems to be the best option.
 - Add a second generator to power the heat in the section of the school that is not currently covered by a generator to prevent freezing and to allow school to be held during extended power outages as long as roads are passable. This option is not eligible for the FEMA grant as it would not cover the emergency shelter and does not seem to make sense for that reason.
 - Replace the current generator that has been at NBCS for many years and is now unreliable despite regular maintenance. This option is estimated at \$32,000, the emergency management portion.

Dan was present and said he and Brian met with Electrician Rudy Fuchs at the school Friday to assess the best option. They found the best option overall is a generator that

would power the entire school or a propane generator similar to what the school has now with the capacity for additional important components such as the well and septic. This would be a 60,000 kw propane generator but better quality and more reliable. The Selectmen complimented Rudy's work and experience. Another component that may be needed is a portable generator for the portable classroom. The current generator powers the gym, kitchen and four upstairs classrooms.

Brian asked for the Selectmen's support and town contributions toward the project. The grant may also be available next year. The School Board set aside money toward a new generator. The town paid for the current generator. The emergency shelter is at NBCS and this is the main reason there is a generator at NBCS. NBCS is one of the largest assets to the town and community. The School Board thought a town contribution would be a good use of taxpayer money. There are options of how the town could do this such as a Warrant Article.

Joe said he spoke to SAU Business Administrator Ray Labore who said the school has \$130,000 available in its Building and Renovation CRF. Joe asked why the town should contribute money when this money is available and this project is a good use of that CRF. He said the Highway Department contribution of material would probably be substantial and should be enough and the town should not contribute money to the project. Brian noted there is currently \$88,000 in the CRF with an additional \$60,000 state reimbursement deposit expected.

Joe asked how long it would be before the pipes started freezing during a power outage and if they could be drained to prevent this. Dan estimated it would be 3-4 days before the pipes started freezing and a plumber would need to be consulted to drain them as it would be an intense undertaking.

Christine said residents don't use the emergency shelter much. She doesn't expect school to be held during extended power outages because it has never happened and roads may not be passable. Brian said school has not been held during extended power outages because the school does not have the capability without a whole school generator.

Dwight said he is not sure there is enough need for a whole school generator to use town money toward it. He noted PSNH recently improved the electric grid in town and hopefully this will prevent extended power outages.

Rodney Towne was present and said the town has paid for three generators at NBCS in the past and the school has not contributed money toward any. He said if the school wants to replace the current generator it may be time for the school to contribute money toward it.

- ❖ A group from the community visited the school on August 22 for a comprehensive walk through of NBCS to identify and prioritize maintenance items that will need attention and items that would make NBCS more energy efficient and protect this building that is a valuable town asset.
- ❖ The School Board is considering video recording all meetings and make them available online or on cable television for public viewing for government transparency and asked if the town would like to participate. Christine said she is not interested, Joe said he is not against it as many local governments do this but there are issues that result and Dwight would like to think about it more before making a decision.
- ❖ The Road Agent has indicated to the Town Administrator that it is a hardship to the Highway Department to plow the school parking lot. The Highway Department has always done this in the past. The school has not budgeted money for plowing.

Road Agent Dick Perusse was present and said he has hoped since he began working for New Boston that the school would participate in plowing its parking lot as the Highway Department's main concern is roads. Parking lots and other areas such as Fire Department cisterns are a secondary concern to the Highway Department. The town does not have a plow truck dedicated to the school, it takes a lot for the Highway Department to plow the school and he does not want the Highway Department to plow the school parking lot. Dick researched what is done in surrounding towns and found that some towns subcontract school plowing and some towns plow the school parking lots.

Christine and Dwight defer this decision to the Road Agent. Joe would like more information before making a decision and asked about the plowing workload, if there were more Fire Department cisterns than in the past and also if the quality of plowing now compared to in the past was part of the reason the Highway Department is unable to continue with this task. Dick said a couple cisterns have been added and the Highway Department is paying more attention to the roads since he began working here.

Fire Chief Dan MacDonald was present and said that after Dick contacted the Fire Department with issues plowing the cisterns the Fire Wards recognized and accepted the fact that plowing cisterns is a Fire Department responsibility. The Fire Wards worked it out with the Road Agent that the Highway Department would plow cisterns the day after a snow event and the Fire Department would plow cisterns in emergency situations. This decision was made after the Fire Wards researched the cost to subcontract plowing and found it was \$100 per hour per unit.

Brian said it is late for the school to try to plan to add the expense of subcontracting plowing to the 2015-2016 school year budget. Rodney agreed and suggested the town continue plowing the school for now and allow the school to research including plowing in the 2016-2017 school year budget. The Selectmen agreed.

Brian asked if there were any options the town could plan to allow the town to continue plowing the school parking lot such as adding part time employees. Dick said this would

not be possible as the person would expect a certain amount of hours and weather is unpredictable. There would also be equipment needs to consider.

Dick said communication from the school about whether the school is open or closed after snow events has been poor. Brian said this can be improved and noted that he calls the Road Agent to learn the condition of the roads as part of his procedure to make the decision whether or not to close school after snow events. Dick also said that the school was very demanding at times when they called him last year asking him to clean up the parking lot.

Peter recommended the Selectmen discuss this issue with Dick at their next meeting and the Selectmen agreed.

- ❖ The school unreserved fund balance to be returned to the town was then discussed. The total unreserved fund balance from the 2014-2015 school year is \$680,551. From this \$50,000 will be deposited into the Special Education CRF as the voters decided at the March Town Meeting. This CRF is now capped with a balance of \$150,022.11. The school has not needed to use any money it has set aside in this CRF since it was created. The school is returning the remaining \$630,551 to the town for tax relief at this time.
- ❖ The Selectmen complimented the SAU, School Board and NBCS for the outstanding job they do for New Boston. Brian noted NBCS is ranked one of the best elementary schools in the state and achieves this at one of the lowest per pupil costs in the state.

Item 2: Mike Sindoni-Recreation Director: Request For Use Of Town Hall Parking Lot For Halloween Event: Recreation Director Mike Sindoni was present to discuss a request to use the Town Hall parking lot for a Halloween Event. A new event is being considered this year, “Trunk or Treat.” The Recreation Department has been holding the same event every year that families enjoy but since Halloween is on a Saturday this year it is anticipated the regular program won’t be a priority for families and staff won’t be available. This year the Recreation Department wants to bring the Halloween event downtown where residents can bring their cars to the Town Hall parking lot, decorate them for a contest and hand out candy from the trunk as many residents don’t get trick or treaters at their homes and miss that. This may be limited to approximately 15 vehicles and is expected to go from 4:30-8:30 PM. Mike spoke to the Fire Chief who approved and will speak to the Police Chief about the event tomorrow. The event could be moved to the school in subsequent years or even this year if there is a lot of interest. The Recreation Concession Stand is planned to open this year for hot dogs and refreshments. Dan complimented Mike and the Recreation Department for doing a great job and coming up with new ideas to keep residents excited about activities. Joe moved to approve the Trunk or Treat plan and the use of the Town Hall parking lot. Christine seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

Item 3: Dan MacDonald and Other Fire Wards: Discussion Re: Use of Land on Mont Vernon Road for Fire Station: Fire Chief Dan MacDonald and the Fire Wards were present to meet with the Selectmen for final confirmation that the land can be used by the Fire Department as other town departments are considering how they could use the land as well. The Warrant Article authorizing purchase of the land did not specifically say it was for the Fire Department

but that was the intent and it was presented to the town and the former landowners as such. The Selectmen asked if the new location would change Fire Department response time to calls and the Fire Wards said it is not expected to have a huge impact as it is still in the downtown area. There could be a possible delay depending on where volunteers are coming from. Turning left onto Old Coach Road could affect response time to that area but improvement to the base of Old Coach Road is planned and hoped to be done next year. Christine moved to approve the Fire Department proceeding with building a new fire station on the Mont Vernon Road property. Joe seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

Dan noted Fire Ward Wayne Blassberg has been doing a great job planning for a new station. Wayne recently attended a workshop in Baltimore about building fire stations and has been working with Surveyor Bob Todd and Architect Roger Dignard on a plan for New Boston. A planning committee will be formed and a Selectman will be asked to serve on the committee. Wayne then reviewed a Powerpoint presentation as follows:

- ❖ Deficiencies in the current station were reviewed.
- ❖ Projected 2015 costs to prepare the project estimate to be paid from the Fire Department budget were reviewed:
 - Surveyor/Bob Todd \$8-10,000. Three bids may be required for this with final Selectmen approval due to the amount needed.
 - Architect Roger Dignard for 2015 services: Pro bono.
 - Professional project estimator: \$1,500-2,000.
 - Future architect and engineering: \$100,000
 - An architect from Virginia Wayne met at the seminar is helping pro bono.
- ❖ The timeline for the project was reviewed. The Fire Wards hope to have the design quote ready by the end of 2015 and bring it to Town Meeting vote in March 2016 for approval and funding.
- ❖ The Fire Department will keep residents informed throughout the process.
- ❖ The Fire Department is trying to be frugal in planning the new fire station. Joe was concerned they might be too frugal with the plan and wants them to make sure the new fire station will meet the town needs.
- ❖ The Fire Wards noted the New Boston Fire Service is a team effort. They now have 59 volunteers allowing them to respond appropriately to calls.
- ❖ The Selectmen thanked the Fire Department for their service to the town.

D. OLD BUSINESS:

Item 4: Adoption of Public and Non-Public Minutes of August 17, 2015: The Selectmen reviewed the public and non-public minutes of August 17, 2015. Joe moved that the minutes be accepted as presented. Christine seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

E. NEW BUSINESS:

Item 5: Acceptance of Resignations-Police Clerk and Selectmen's Assistant: Peter reported the Selectmen's Assistant gave her letter of resignation for this 16 hour/week position. This was a combination position with the Tax Collector. She is remaining as the Tax Collector but unable to continue with the Selectmen's Assistant duties as she is also the Tax Collector in Hancock.

Kathleen MacDonald the part time Police clerk sent her letter of resignation as she took a full time position at Rose Meadow. Joe moved to accept both resignations with regret. Christine seconded the motion. The Police interviewed for the Clerk position Friday and an interview was held for the Selectmen's Assistant position today (Sept. 8th). The recommendation to hire is expected to be made at the next Selectmen's meeting as part of the consent agenda. However, Mr. Flynn asked that the Board authorize him to conditionally make an appointment in the meantime (before the next meeting) through the consent agenda process should he have a qualified and recommended candidate. The Board agreed via consensus to allow this process as Mr. Flynn explained and requested.

F. OTHER BUSINESS:

Item 6: Town Administrator's Report:

- Foot Traffic Safety Committee: The Committee just received \$3-4,000 in additional donations and has almost \$80,000 in commitments so far. Surveyor Bob Todd and E. D. Swett Co. are working on preliminary Footbridge project design and engineering. The results will be presented to the Selectmen when available.
- Town Hall Basement: Preliminary work started today.
- Peter to investigate the most practical method of code enforcement re: Winslow's property on River Road: Peter will visit Attorney Bart Mayer to discuss.
- Stairchair: Proper construction steps are being taken.
- Riverdale Road Bridge: The bridge will open Friday.
- Employee Recognition: This was rescheduled to September 23.
- Solid Waste Contract: Awaiting proposals.
- Town Administrator to prepare CIP requests on behalf of the Selectmen's office: Reval data was prepared.
- New Boston Internet Service Proposal: Peter prepared a letter to the company on the Selectmen's behalf and it will be sent tomorrow.
- Tree Cut v. Flagpole Removal: Awaiting a tree cutting consult Friday.
- Selectmen's Secretary Laura Bernard's father passed away this morning. She had to travel to Georgia on an emergency basis. She had planned a vacation this week but had to change plans. Bereavement benefits will be planned.

Item 7: Selectmen's Reports:

- The Hillsborough County Fair is this weekend at the fairgrounds.
- There was a Planning Board sitewalk recently.
- The Junk Yard ordinance will continue to be discussed and appropriate action will be taken but no resident's names will be mentioned during this process.

Public Forum:

None.

ADJOURNMENT: Joe made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:23 PM. Christine seconded the motion. All were in favor. 3-0

Prepared by Maralyn Segien