

# Approved

## Town of New Boston Selectmen's Meeting January 18, 2016

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

Willard Dodge, Kim and Ed DiPietro, Transfer Station Manager Gerry Cornett, Recreation Director Mike Sindoni, School Board Chairman Wendy Lambert, Police Chief James Brace and Finance Committee members Roch Larochelle and Bill Gould 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. Dwight seconded the motion. All were in favor. 2-0

### **B. PUBLIC FORUM:**

None.

### **C. APPOINTMENTS:**

**Item 1: Public Hearing: 2016 Budget: Presentation of Entire 2016 Budget consisting of Operating Budget and Warrant Articles:** A handout of the 2016 Warrant Articles was read aloud and reviewed beginning with Article 15 as follows:

**Article 15:** Ed DiPietro of Clark Hill Road was present and asked what is the main reason for the \$100,000 increase in the Operating Budget for 2016. Peter noted the major contributors to the increase were the Highway Department budget and increases in fixed costs. The Police Department budget increased slightly. The total increase was 1.91%, less than previous years. The Town Clerk budget increased as there are four elections this year and usually there is one election. The Fire Department budget increased \$8,000 as the Fire Chief salary was increased by the Fire Wards. The Fire Wards submit the Fire Department budget and the Selectmen approve it, as is done with the Library budget. Some departments remained level or decreased their budgets such as the Planning Department and the Finance Office...

**Article 17:** Ed noted that the way this article reads, the town has already made up its mind to build a new fire station. He said why not try to renovate the current station.

Joe said this will be discussed at the Thursday fire station design committee meeting to compare the cost and longevity of modifying the old station to the cost and longevity of building a new

station. The prevailing thought from the Fire Wards and the Fire Chief is a new station is needed. This Warrant Article allows them to begin work on a new station in 2016.

Ed said he understands a new station is needed but it seems expensive and he would like to see a comparison before the final decision is made. He is worried about the tax rate.

Peter said the CIP Committee saw a Powerpoint Presentation from the Fire Department with plans to build a new fire station. The CIP Committee said a better plan is needed and this is how this Warrant Article came about. A new station is expected to cost approximately \$2.6 million.

Willard Dodge of Tucker Mill Road said there are others who share Ed's concern, including some Fire Wards.

Kim DiPietro of Clark Hill Road was present and said she supports what Ed said. She is very concerned about having a new fire station without a corresponding rise in population and new roads. The Finance Committee didn't insist there be a study of the old building, but this needs to be considered along with when the town "has to" build a new fire station. She said let the people decide. The Fire Wards can recommend. The CIP Program is important but this bond will blow it out of the water. All involved need to be presented with the facts.

Dwight compared a new fire station to the new library building that was defeated at voting several times.

Kim said \$19,000 doesn't seem like a lot of money but it is. It also doesn't seem like enough to get an accurate cost estimate.

Joe said the design committee is aware of that. He also thanked Architect Roger Dignard for providing services to the committee pro bono.

**Article 18:** Joe noted the current communication equipment building at Ridgeview is very small, barely fits the equipment the town already has, the antenna is deteriorated, trees are overgrown and it is well past the time for this project. This project was presented at the last Selectmen's meeting. The equipment is expected to last a long time with a larger space and sitework. The proposed antenna will be high enough to support communications for all services in town.

Ed asked about the probability of getting the 50/50 matching grant for this project and was told it is very good. Ed asked if the grant is not awarded would this project go to the CIP and Peter said yes.

Kim asked why this project is not in the CIP as she has heard about the need for several years but town officials came forward saying it was a major capital improvement need. This project seems very important to her and that is what CIP is for.

Joe said he understands but this project came forward late.

**Article 21:** Ed asked what the difference between this article and Article 20 is. Peter said one Article is for the reval update which is happening this year and one Article is for the full revaluation which will happen in 2021.

**Article 23:** Regarding the Daugherty Lane Bridge and road portion Dwight noted the footings on the current bridge eroded so it had to be closed.

The Public Hearing closed at 6:32 PM.

#### **D. OLD BUSINESS:**

**Item 2: Adoption of Public Minutes of January 4, 2016:** The Selectmen reviewed the public minutes of January 4, 2016. Joe moved they be accepted as presented. Dwight seconded the motion. All were in favor. 2-0

#### **E. NEW BUSINESS:**

**Item 3: Land Use Planner Appointment and Contract Agreement:** Town Administrator Peter Flynn noted that over the past couple meetings he has been discussing the reorganization of the Planning Department. There will be a projected savings of \$39,000, due to the resignation of full time Planning Coordinator Nic Strong. Shannon Silver has already been promoted as the new Planning Coordinator.

Peter recommended hiring an experienced contract Planner. The incoming planner will work part time on a contract basis and will therefore receive no benefits.

An interview occurred Thursday night, January 14, with Peter, Planning Board member Mark Suennen and the only applicant Mark Fougere. Peter and Mark Suennen were impressed with Mark Fougere and recommend his hire. He is expected to work 24 hours per month with more or less hours as needed. A one year contract is proposed at \$75 per hour. Peter is familiar with him as he hired him in Henniker seven years ago. Mark Fougere has worked remains a contract planner in Henniker along with three other towns and has provided a valuable service to all. Peter recommended that Mr. Fougere's contract become effective on February 1, 2016. Mr. Fougere has worked on Master Plans in several towns as well, as will be as asset in assisting New Boston in updating their Master Plan among other duties.

Selectman Joe Constance moved to support Mr. Flynn's recommendation to hire Mark Fougere on a one year contract. Dwight seconded the motion. All were in favor. 2-0

#### **F. OTHER BUSINESS:**

##### **Item 4: Town Administrators Report:**

- The Foot Traffic Safety Committee met and estimates the cost of a footbridge at \$205,000. They are working hard raising money and working with the engineer. Joe noted they were denied a \$4,000 grant from the McInnich Foundation but if they want to try again, let him know, he might be able to help.
- Town Hall Basement: This project is almost complete and will probably be completed

underbudget. The stairs are almost done.

- Final Voting and Review by Finance Committee/Selectmen: The budget process went very well with great presentations. The Finance Committee and Selectmen did the final vote January 9 and brought the budget and Warrant Articles forward to tonight's Public Hearing as above.
- The next meeting is the Deliberative Session February 1.

**Item 5: Appointment with Chief Brace Re: Dispatch Service:** Police Chief James Brace was present to meet with the Selectmen to discuss the following:

- The current dispatch service provider, Town of Bow, e-mailed Jim recently that a citizen group wanted to defund the dispatch service. He then received another e-mail that this may occur and New Boston should start looking for another dispatch service. This could occur by June 30, 2016. Jim has reached out to viable dispatch services for quotes and data conversion costs. This charge is not budgeted for but Jim will try to negotiate for some of these costs with Bow as they are violating the contract. The current dispatch technology the department uses is top of the line and Jim hopes to have the same with the next service. He recommends New Boston send Bow a letter that this may have a significant impact on New Boston taxpayers. Joe recommended the letter include language that Bow violated the contract. Peter recommended New Boston contact town counsel about this. The Police Department budget can be amended at the Deliberative Session if necessary. Roch Larochelle of Beard Road asked what service Bow will now be using and the conversion costs they will incur. Jim said they will be using Merrimack County Dispatch and that is probably a significant step backward in technology. Bow is making this change due to cost of service and is probably not concerned about data conversion costs yet. Roch asked if New Boston would lose historical data with the change and Jim said no, New Boston might advance with historical data as would be joining multiple agencies with a new service.
- Jim is interested in attending one week training at the FBI Academy. Joe will review the syllabus. This will have a cost as the funding is available in the budget. The consensus of the Board was to support this request.

**Item 6: Selectmen's Reports:** None.

**Public Forum:**

Willard Dodge was present and noted there is controversy from the public about a new fire station. He asked if the Selectboard feels they can insist on a comparison study before bringing a new fire station before the town. The Selectmen said yes. Joe will bring this to the design committee to discuss Thursday. The Fire Wards said the current station is not adequate but Joe will get questions answered. Willard said the taxpayers have a right to make the decision. A renovated building is expected to last a few years; a new building is expected to last approximately thirty years. Dwight noted there would also be code requirements with a new building the old building would not have. Joe will update on this topic at the next Selectmen's meeting.

**Item 7: Possible Request for Non-Public per RSA 91-A:II, (c) and (e):** None.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Joe made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:06 PM. Dwight seconded the motion. All were in favor. 2-0

*Prepared by Maralyn Segien*

Adopted-January 18-Selectmen's meeting