

MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD
Tuesday, September 6, 2016 – 10:00AM

Present: David McGuckin, Chair, Bill Stewart, Selectman, Tom Maher Selectman, and Bette Jane Riordan, Secretary.

Also present: Pam Cullen, Assistant to the Select Board, Reg Whitehouse, Frances Erlebacher.

1. Approve Select Board Minutes.

Approval of August 23, 2016 minutes was deferred to the September 19, 2016 meeting.

2. Public Question & Answer. : None.

3. Items.

a. MS-1 report for Dept. of Revenue Administration.

Pam Cullen stated the report shows a 12.5% increase in property evaluation, and asked for the Select Board's signatures. Selectman Stewart stated the 12.5% was a good figure based on the housing market in the most recent five years. Pam reported on the process for citizen recourse with Avitar for their assessments. At this point, citizens must wait for their tax bill and file for an abatement. Letters were sent out initially indicating a specific period of time during which taxpayers could meet with Avitar representatives. Once the time period ends, recourse is to file an abatement with the Town. Selectman Maher asked that the Town prepare a handout for citizens regarding this process.

b. Avitar Associates: 5 year contract.

Pam Cullen reported there are no changes in cost from the prior contract and that the contract is set up to pay for services rendered each year rather than average costing. The Board is happy with Avitar's performance of the recent contract, but asked Pam Cullen to reach out to other vendors to see if the pricing was competitive. Pam Cullen will report back at the next Select Board meeting.

c. Poll coverage for September 13th Primary Election.

Selectman Maher: 9:00 to 12:30

Chair McGuckin: 12:30 to 3:30

Selectman Stewart: 3:30 to 7

d. Crosswalk at Morgan's Way.

This matter was tabled until the Board hears from the Wentworth Master Association.

e. HDC proposed changes to district and nomination process.

Selectman Maher explained that Rodney Rowland, Chair of the HDC has drafted some proposed changes to the ordinances, and an HDC representative will present these changes to the Planning Board for a full vetting. Mr. Rowland will be at the next meeting to report on this matter.

4. Old Business.

a. Ritson Street.

Selectman Stewart stated that a letter from the Select Board was sent to NH DES last week regarding the encroachments. Copies were sent to abutters, land owners, and the Army Corp of Engineers. The letter is on file.

b. Schedule for replacement of Town Accountant position.

Selectman Stewart reported that some interviews have taken place and he will send confirmatory Emails to the Board.

c. Employee Reviews.

Selectman Stewart stated preliminary reviews have been circulated, and final reviews need to be done as soon as possible.

d. Water & Sewer report update.

Selectman Stewart stated the draft Report from Underwood regarding water is expected September 16th. This report will include recommendations, which will be discussed by the Board. Selectman Stewart will check on the status of the sewer report and report back to the Board.

Chair McGuckin stated the Board will need to decide the issue regarding the transfer of assets to the City of Portsmouth. Selectman Stewart stated that a thorough review of both reports (Water and Sewer) should be done to fully understand the situation prior to conveyance talks with Portsmouth. Regarding the water report, the Fire Safety Task Force, Water\ Sewer Commission and Fire Chief need to be brought in regarding input on the draft report.

e. Comcast.

Selectman Maher has met with the SAU regarding Internet services and will report back to the Board.

5. New Business.

a. Tax rate process.

Selectman Stewart stated the MS434 has been reviewed and will be part of the tax rate process.

6. Committee Reports.

a. Fire Dept.

Selectman Stewart submitted the August Fire Dept. Report. See below.

7. Other Business.

a. Macomber Room Reservation Request.

Pam Cullen reported on the annual request from the Garden Club.

b. Avitar complaint.

Resident Reggie White expressed his problems dealing with Avitar, namely that Avitar won't answer his questions regarding his view easement. He questioned how they arrive at their decisions.

c. Water & Sewer Commission Appointment.

Chair McGuckin made a Motion to Appoint Richard White as a member of the Water & Sewer Commission for a three- year term (2019). Selectman Maher seconded and the Motion carried.

d. Avitar

Selectman Stewart revisited the Avitar process discussion and questioned our contract process with them. He noted many communities use Vision, and the Board should consider other providers. After discussion, the Board requested Pam Cullen to obtain information for Vision and to check with the DRA (Dept. of Revenue Administration).

There being no further business to come before the Board. Selectman Maher made a Motion to Adjourn, which was seconded by Selectman Stewart. Motion carried.

Meeting at adjourned at 10:40 PM. (put this at end of FD Monthly report.

New Castle Fire Department Monthly Report – August 2016

1. Calls for service in August: 21. Calls for service, year to Date: 146
2. Types of calls in August: 12 Medical Aid, 3 Fire Alarms, 1 Propane Leak, 1 Structure Fire, 1 Outside Fire, 1 Search for Missing Child, 1 Search for Missing Paddle Boarder, 1 In-flight Emergency.
3. Average response time in August: 5.81 minutes.
4. Average number of personnel per incident in August: 4.50
5. Apparatus responding to incidents:
Rescue 7 responded to 12 incidents in August and 89 YTD.
Forestry 1 responded to 5 incidents in August and 31 YTD.
Engine 1 responded to 0 incidents in August and 9 YTD.
Engine 4 responded to 3 incidents in August and 29 YTD.
Hose 1 responded to 1 incident in August and 7 YTD.
Marine 1 responded to 1 incident in August and 1 YTD.
Marine 2 responded to 2 incidents in August and 6 YTD.
6. Training in August: 284 Man Hours of department in-house training.
7. Public Outreach Activities in August: Supported Portsmouth Rotary during cleanup of the back channel islands. Participated in the Tall Ship Parade.
8. Mutual Aid Given in August: Structure Fire in Eliot. Mutual Aid to U.S. Coast Guard. Mutual Aid to Pease Air National Guard Base.
9. Mutual Aid Received in August: None

10. Budget remaining on 8/31/16:

Fire Department: N/A

Emergency Management: N/A

11. Staffing: 2 Career members and 25 Volunteer members.

12. Other Activities: Took possession of the Portsmouth Fireboat and placed it in service as New Castle Marine 1. Held annual department picnic.

13. Areas of Concern: None.