

**New Durham Board of Selectmen  
Minutes of Meeting ~ October 15, 2012  
Fire Station Community Room**

Members Present: David Bickford, Theresa Jarvis, Jeff Kratovil

Also Present: Interim Town Administrator (TA) Jeremy Bourgeois, Fire Chief Peter Varney, Road Agent Michael Clarke, Equipment Mechanic David Valladares, Transfer Station Foreman Joe Bloskey, videographer Jim Ladd

**1. Call to Order** – Chairperson David Bickford called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. and Selectman Jeffrey Kratovil led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Citizens' Forum** – There was no public input.

**3. Agenda Review** – Selectman Terry Jarvis requested a non-public session at the end of the meeting.

**4. Department Reports**

*Transfer Station* – Foreman Joe Bloskey reported a roll-off container damaged a wall at the Transfer Station. He said he documented the damage with pictures, and that the manager of Bestway will fix it. He said he could not estimate the cost involved, but added that the damage was not extensive and posed no safety hazard.

He told the Board the brush pile is to be chipped next month at a cost of \$2,900. He said last year's cost was \$1,000, but that diesel prices have risen and the contractor did the Town a favor last year. He reported another quote of \$3,500, and said Alton uses that contractor.

*Highway* – Regarding the addition for the Highway Department shed, Road Agent (RA) Mike Clarke said he had three quotes on the roof and concrete, and one price so far on the framing. He requested being put on the agenda for the next meeting when he would have all the prices for all phases of the project, including the furnace. He said he would submit the total package to Interim Town Administrator (TA) Jeremy Bourgeois.

He described the project as re-roofing the entire building and addition with a metal roof, and installing insulation for the 2x6 walls of the addition. He said when the roof is repaired, his hope is to blow in insulation in the parts that have none currently. He said it was impossible to insulate the outside walls of the work bays without stripping the inside or outside wall. Equipment Mechanic David Valladares said blown in insulation would make the biggest difference. Fire Chief Peter Varney offered some suggestions.

RA Clarke said the loader is fixed and back. He said he was getting quotes for a loader and pick-up and would get them to the Board for the budget process.

*Fire* - Chief Varney said the price on a steel building for the Copple Crown area was high. He favored steel, but said it was hard to heat. He told the Board spray foam seems to work well for insulating steel buildings. He said a second building would also be used by the highway and police departments. He said the cost quoted for a 40' x 80' building, including a holding tank for waste water, was \$250,000.

Selectman Jarvis asked about making offices from the front meeting room of the fire station. Chief Varney said the area has mold issues due to a leak in the back outside wall. He said he has adequate office room now, and he is letting the front meeting room area dry out. He said a Copple Crown area station was more urgent.

He explained that old trucks and ambulances could continue to be utilized up there. Selectman Kratovil asked if maintenance costs would increase if those vehicles' lives were extended, and Mr. Valladares said they would. Chief Varney noted the vehicles would get less use in that area.

Selectman Jarvis said she would like to see the statistics on calls in Copple Crown. Chief Varney said that was possible. He said his concern was that the Wolfeboro department's time would be used up if Mitt Romney is elected, and their department would therefore not be available to New Durham. He pointed out that Wolfeboro arrives before he does at Copple Crown calls.

Chair Bickford said, in its discussions on the Master Plan, the Planning board wanted to discuss contracting with Wolfeboro rather than building New Durham infrastructure.

*Equipment Mechanic* – Chair Bickford said five bids came in for the 1983 Dodge truck. Selectman Jarvis read them: Paul Whitehouse, \$527; Edward Robinson, \$1,218; Tom Perillo, \$1,200, Jeremy Lambert, \$600; and Blaney Auto Crushing, LLC of Farmington, \$750.

Mr. Valladares said it would be prudent to confirm the bidders are aware of the condition of the vehicle. He suggested the vehicle be removed within 10 calendar days.

**Motion by Selectman Jarvis to award the bid for the 1983 Dodge W350 truck to Edward Robinson of North Hampton in the amount of \$1,218, conditional upon removing the vehicle within 10 calendar days, and the Equipment Mechanic verifying the bidder is aware of the condition of the vehicle; second by Selectman Kratovil. 3-0.**

**Motion by Selectman Jarvis that the Equipment Mechanic be authorized to go to the next highest bidder and so forth down in order, should the awardee not accept the vehicle; second by Selectman Kratovil. 3-0.**

Selectman Jarvis said if a bidder declines the truck, it should be documented. Mr. Valladares said it seemed like a generous bid. Chair Bickford said there is an interest in old trucks.

## **5. Old Business**

*Fuel Bids* – Chair Bickford said the Town is on the same contract it has been until the end of this month. He said Chris Brooks is to get back to him on the matter, and that TA Bourgeois put together the Town's yearly usage.

RA Clarke said his budget figures would be down due to Governor Wentworth Regional School District no longer using the Town's fuel. He explained that change coming about due to a memo he sent out in May to the head of transportation, indicating he could not account for 400 gallons of diesel fuel. He said the school district will use New Durham fuel only for emergencies now.

*Department Head Evaluations* – Chair Bickford said the Board had the evaluations, and once it was satisfied, it could meet with department heads. Selectman Jarvis said any unsigned documents should be marked "Draft." Mr. Valladares said he preferred to meet with the Board once the evaluations were

signed.

Selectman Jarvis said she would go through them and forward them to TA Bourgeois. Chair Bickford said if the Board needed to discuss them again, it could meet in non-public following the budget meeting at 7:00 p.m. on October 22, 2012.

*Promotion and Transfer Policy* – Selectman Jarvis said she effected the discussed changes in the policy, which were minor edits and relocation of statements. She said she carried over the relevant changes to the hiring policy.

**Motion by Selectman Jarvis to adopt the changes to the hiring policy, last modified July 5, 2012, as presented at the October 15, 2012 meeting; second by Selectman Kratovil. 3-0.**

Selectman Jarvis said the changes to the hiring policy made on July 5, 2012 affected the transfer policy. She noted using the phrase “effective October 15, 2012,” so it's clear which document is being referenced.

**Motion by Selectman Jarvis to approve the Employee Promotional and Transferring process as presented to the Board of Selectmen on October 15, 2012; second by Selectman Kratovil.** Selectman Kratovil said he did not recall eliminating the two-week vetting period in the transfer process. Selectman Jarvis said Step 7 of the hiring policy notes a two-week vetting period. **3-0.**

*Town Hall Windows* – Chair Bickford said the low bidder on the project indicated he was concerned that he had been left out. Selectman Jarvis said the contractor questioned the process and he stated it was unfair the Board went with a higher bid. At a previous meeting, the Board awarded the bid in the amount of \$3,030 and this contractor bid \$2,050. Chair Bickford said it was quite a difference in price.

The Board indicated it had no contract yet with Home Depot, the higher bidder. Selectman Kratovil said his concern was that the contractor seemed to understand he was promised the bid. Selectman Jarvis said there had been too many hands in the pie. She said the decision on the windows would not have even come to the Board, except Home Depot's bid was \$30 over the \$3,000 threshold. Chair Bickford said the confusion stemmed from the frame being needed, rather than just window replacement. He said Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer Art Capello became involved and he got the bid. Selectman Jarvis said the Board could rescind the previous vote and leave the matter in BI/CEO Capello's hands to get full windows and full frames meeting the historic standards.

Selectman Kratovil said a lot of work has been going to this Wakefield contractor. He asked why this same company keeps coming up. Selectman Jarvis said no one else bid, and suggested leaving the matter to BI/CEO Capello and TA Bourgeois.

**Motion by Selectman Jarvis to rescind the vote of October 1, 2012 relative to the purchase of Town Hall basement windows; second by Selectman Kratovil.** Selectman Kratovil asked what other information regarding the windows was being sought. Selectman Jarvis said the Board needed to know the E-rating of the windows, the frame material, and the total cost including blocking up the windows that were not to be replaced. Selectman Kratovil said BI/CEO would come back to the Board if the price was over \$3,000. Selectman Jarvis said she would like to compare apples to apples. **3-0.**

*Town Hall Facade* – Selectman Kratovil said he spoke with an individual who swayed him to advocate Hardy board, rather than the traditional spruce clapboard,

because it was fire-proof. He suggested forsaking the building's LCHIP status, as that was a ball and chain. He said Hardy board protected the inside of the building.

Selectman Jarvis said use of that material might also affect Town Hall's National Register of Historic Buildings status. Selectman Kratovil said the building couldn't be burned down. Chair Bickford said the exterior couldn't burn. Chair Bickford said the cost of spruce was the same, but needed to be painted periodically. He said the Board was told it would lose LCHIP eligibility if it put Hardy board on Town Hall. He said the cement board would be good in the area that receives rain splatter from the roof over the driveway due to a design flaw, but more information was needed.

Selectman Kratovil said even if the Town received the grant, the building needed to be painted every few years. He said the Town would be throwing good money after bad. Discussion ensued on paint prepping techniques and the bid. Selectman Jarvis said Steve Bedard specified the primer and final coat. Chair Bickford said he and BI/CEO Capello favor stain. He said he agreed with BI/CEO Capello's methodology of repairs. He suggested putting the project out to bid with both spruce and Hardy board quoted.

Selectman Jarvis asked if window frame repair would be part of the bid. Selectman Kratovil raised a concern regarding staining or painting in cold weather. Chair Bickford said the material could be shipped stained. Selectman Kratovil asked if all repairs should be done at once, rather than just the facade, so everything matched. Chair Bickford said he didn't want to have too big of a project and that other areas could be done separately.

Selectman Kratovil suggested requiring a warranty on workmanship to help weed out contractors. He said an insurance agent could provide the proper language. Chair Bickford said the bid needed to go out right away, and that the work would have to be done to code. Following further discussion, the Board agreed to include two quotes for the bid, for spruce clapboard and cement board; that window frame repair, as needed, be part of the project; and that the contractors spell out a warranty.

*Town Hall Regrading* – Chair Bickford asked TA Bourgeois to check with RA Clarke about dropping the ground to the level of the window bottoms on the parking lot side of the building.

*Wages* – Selectman Jarvis said selectmen took material on steps and grade levels and gave their comments to Don Jutton of MRI to revise them. Chair Bickford said the Board needed something together to present to the Budget Committee. He said he'd suggested taking two per cent of salaries to be placed in a line to be drawn from. Selectman Jarvis said putting in a lump sum would allow the Board to go forward with its budgeting process.

Chair Bickford said he believed COLA was two per cent this year. Selectman Jarvis said former TA Alison Webb had noted that the cost of living rose six per cent over a three year period and the Town gave employees two per cent during that time.

Selectman Kratovil said if some employees were given a COLA increase, other employees might say they are affected by the cost of living increase, also. He said the Board could compare three similar towns.

Chair Bickford said he preferred looking at each individual regarding wage increases. Selectman Jarvis said giving a COLA increase is separate from raising a person a step. Selectman Kratovil asked if those decisions were to be put in the

department heads' hands. Chair Bickford said he preferred the Board did it. Selectman Jarvis said she thought it should be done in collaboration with the department heads. Chair Bickford pointed out that the Board makes the decision in the end.

*Budget Presentation Form* – Chair Bickford brought up changing the form in which the budget is presented to make it more understandable to the public. He said he favored reflecting compensation within each department's budget. He said Financial Assistant Vickie Blackden told him it would take a day and a half for her to change over to that form of presentation. He provided an example of the way Barnstead presents its budget.

Selectman Jarvis said the Board discussed moving oil costs and everything else to each department's budget last year, and decided there was not enough time. She said it would take a day and a half to shift compensation, but to shift everything Ms. Blackden had previously asked for a lead time beginning in May. Selectman Jarvis said some figures come in as late as mid-November, so budgets can't be finalized. She suggested shifting everything except those that come in late, for Ms. Blackden's sake.

Selectman Kratovil read from a report he compiled comparing New Durham to Strafford (see attached) with an eye to scaling back. Strafford's local government tax of \$2.23 per \$100,000 is substantially lower than New Durham's \$6.88. Selectman Kratovil cited Chair Bickford's earlier research on lowering costs in the police department.

Chair Bickford pointed out that Selectman Kratovil's comparisons in some areas were not strictly apples to apples, but that Strafford served more people with fewer staff than New Durham. Selectman Kratovil said he recommended looking at areas besides the police, and noted the executive line, planning and zoning, general town operations, library, and Parks and Recreation. He said Strafford had a part-time town clerk and tax collector.

Selectman Kratovil stated Strafford's town administrator had been there for decades, and that made it difficult to compare towns because she does so much. He told the Board Strafford owns no highway equipment, and pays its road agent on a per job basis.

Selectman Jarvis said the expectation for service from the citizens of Strafford was lacking in Selectman Kratovil's equation. She said residents here would not be happy with offices being part-time. She said there were different levels of activities in the towns, also.

Chair Bickford said it is possible to quantify citizens' expectations. He asked if anyone in Strafford complains about their roads. He said the Town demands a million dollars more than Strafford does to run a smaller town. He said he thought New Durham residents were saying they did not need that much service.

Chair Bickford said Barnstead has cut back and that the Town needs to lower taxes by looking at what other communities are doing. He said the Town could have a new energy-efficient municipal building.

Selectman Kratovil said it would require a drastic overhaul to mimic Strafford. He said the Town would have to lay-off the highway department. Chair Bickford said the Town could work its way there, and not get there immediately. He said RA Clarke had come in at one point and said he needed a contract to hire contractors for extra plowing, and former TA Webb had put a contract together for that.

Selectman Kratovil said the addition and repairs on the highway department building would give the Board a chance to say "no." Selectman Jarvis cited an attempt to privatize the Transfer Station a few years ago and residents voted it down at Town Meeting. Chair Bickford said a lot of people are looking for work and therefore the Town can contract work. He said Mr. Jutton had made suggestions along those lines. He said the Board should be discussing how to cut taxes.

Selectman Kratovil said one way would be to severely shrink police capacity on the local level as conservatives do on a national level with the military. Chair Bickford said other communities have four full-time officers. Selectman Kratovil said Strafford's Town Hall staff take on various tasks. Selectman Jarvis asked how many hours is that town hall available to the public. Selectman Kratovil said he was not suggesting cutting Ms. Blackden's, Carole Ingham's, or Stephanie MacKenzie's hours.

Selectman Jarvis said the Board re-evaluated the Parks and Recreation Director and Town Administrator positions, so it was gradually cutting back. Chair Bickford said the Board had done nothing since then. Selectman Jarvis said Strafford was encouraging waterfront development. Chair Bickford said Strafford accomplishes more with less people than we do for more than a million dollars less.

Selectman Kratovil brought up the expansion on the highway department building again. He said it would be problematic to fix the Meetinghouse. He asked how much of the original building would remain after repair work. He said even though people are attached to the building, we have to call a loss, a loss. Selectman Jarvis said she loves historical buildings but she would rather see money go into Town Hall.

Chair Bickford asked TA Bourgeois to circulate copies of Barnstead's budget so everyone can see how it is presented. Selectman Kratovil asked what the Board wanted to do about the expansion on the highway building. Selectman Jarvis said she wanted to see the prices on the addition, and determine if there are unsafe elements there. Chair Bickford said the Board needed to ask RA Clarke about cutting costs in his budget. He said New Durham has seven full-time employees and some part-time in the winter, while Strafford has only four part-time employees in its highway department and both towns have about 50 miles of road.

Chair Bickford said the Town could pay some other contractors to do smaller jobs. He explained that big equipment depreciates when not used. He said the buildings there could be leased. Selectman Kratovil asked if the thinking was that rather than replacing equipment as it fails, the Town should lease it only when needed. Chair Bickford said the Board should determine how many hours are on each piece of equipment.

Selectman Kratovil clarified that his research was meant to be educational. Chair Bickford said not all Selectman Kratovil's facts were accurate. He said he, himself, broke things down by department to determine the real number. He said he added in Capital Reserve Funds.

## **6. Approval of Minutes**

The Board tabled the minutes of October 1, 2012.

## **7. Non-Public Session**

**Motion by Selectman Jarvis at 3:52 p.m. to enter into non-public session**

**pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a ) and (c ); second by Selectman Kratovil. A roll call vote was taken: Bickford – aye, Jarvis - aye, Kratovil -aye.**

**Motion by Selectman Jarvis to come out of non-public session; second by Selectman Kratovil. 3-0.**

### **8. Return to Public Session**

The Board returned to public session at 4:58 p.m.

Selectman Jarvis stated that as a result of Land Use Administrator David Allen's resignation, the Board should look at reducing the Land Use position to part-time. She recommended relying on MRI's research and analysis from a few years ago to determine how many hours are needed. She believes the position should be available some night hours, with Tuesdays being a logical night so the hours could coincide with board meetings that occur on Tuesday night.

The Board discussed reducing the support the position gives to various boards and the possibility of cutting down meetings. Selectman Jarvis spoke about moving the salary to the executive department. The Board wants to clarify how much assessing is done by various employees and see if the new part-time Land Use position could include those duties.

### **9. Adjournment**

**Motion by Selectman Jarvis at 5:10 p.m. to adjourn; second by Selectman Kratovil. 3-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Cathy L. Allyn*

An electronic record of the meeting is on file with the Office of Town Clerk, and some meetings can be viewed on the Town's web site on demand.