

APPROVED

**New Durham Board of Selectmen
Public Meeting Minutes
Town Hall, Fire Station Community Room
Friday, April 12, 2013**

Present: Terry Jarvis, Jeffrey Kratovil, David Swenson

Also Present: Jeremy Bourgeois-Town Administrator

Meeting called to order at 9:06 A.M.

Chair Jarvis motioned to enter nonpublic session at 9:53 A.M. under 91-A:3 II (a)- The dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee or the disciplining of such employee, or the investigation of any charges against him or her, unless the employee affected (1) has a right to a meeting and (2) requests that the meeting be open, in which case the request shall be granted **& (c)-** to discuss matters, which if discussed in public, would likely adversely affect the reputation of another person; **Second by Selectman Swenson. Roll Call: Chair Jarvis-Aye, Selectman Kratovil-Aye, Selectman Swenson-Aye. 3-0.**

Chair Jarvis motioned to leave nonpublic; second by Selectman Swenson. Rescinded by Selectman Swenson.

Selectman Swenson motioned to seal the nonpublic minutes; second by Selectman Kratovil. 2-1; Chair Jarvis opposed.

Chair Jarvis motioned to leave nonpublic; second by Selectman Swenson. 3-0.

The Board left nonpublic session at 11:15 A.M.

Selectman Kratovil motioned to approve the aforementioned 2013 merit raises as presented in nonpublic; second by Selectman Swenson. 3-0.

While in nonpublic session, the Board of Selectmen discussed 2013 merit raises and the Tax Collector's Memorandum of Agreement.

The Board reconvened in public session at 11:20 A.M. at the Fire Station Community Room with Chief Peter Varney.

The Board began discussions about the Fire Chief position posting again.

Chair Jarvis summarized the requirements of appointing a Fire Chief based on the 2008 warrant at Town Meeting. Selectman Swenson stated that he understood the current Chief is serving as an "acting" Chief in business terms and deserves thanks for that. He did state that the Board should decide where to go and find a regular appointment. The Board discussed that the Chief's current rate based on his certifications is \$16.82 per hour.

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Selectman Swenson stated his position on the Fire Chief position. He stated that through his meetings with Chief Varney, New Durham residents and by visiting a Fire Department meeting briefly, he believes that the Town is mostly getting what it needs from the Fire Department. He told Chief Varney that there may be some management control flaws should be addressed.

Selectman Swenson stated that to his knowledge there are no documented performance issues with the Chief or Department; no unresponsiveness comments or complaints from anyone in the Town.

Selectman Kratovil proposed a salaried exempt Fire Chief position at the rate of \$27,777.82 per year. This would be a \$1 an hour raise, an additional \$30 per week and \$129.90 per month. He believes that it is in the financial benefit of the Town.

Selectman Swenson stated his opposition to such a proposal and doesn't believe the Town needs the additional expense at this time. Selectman Swenson stated that the change and increase in salary for this position was not budgeted and that it is unnecessary to change the budget less than four weeks after Town Meeting. He finds this to be unfair to the Town citizens, as it has the potential to place an increased tax rate burden on the residents. Selectman Swenson added that there is no compelling business/lack of service reason to make the changes as proposed.

Chair Jarvis stated that the Town needs a presence at the Fire Department throughout the week from either the Chief or another officer. She stated that unlike Selectman Swenson, she has heard negative comments about the Fire Department. Chair Jarvis said she kept most of the feedback to herself based on the general belief that she is biased against the Fire Department, especially Chief Varney. She stated that the Chief does not have the minimum requirements for his position and hasn't held some of his employees accountable to minimum requirements of their positions.

The Board discussed requiring the Fire Chief to have specific daytime hours for the public to contact the Fire Department. Selectman Swenson stressed that he did not want to imply an additional tax burden for the position. Chief Varney said that most of the time they do not hear from the public.

Selectman Kratovil motioned to make the New Durham Fire Chief's position salaried at the annual rate of \$27,777.82, with the average workweek being 30 hours and that those hours would include trainings, calls, meetings, administrative and all other work; second by Chair Jarvis. Selectman Swenson stressed his opposition in the motion again due to it not being properly budgeted, no compelling reason to make the change and no reason to increase the tax burden to the residents of New Durham. **2-1, Selectman Swenson was opposed.** He stated that from a business standpoint he is adamantly opposed and couldn't understand why the Board would go in this direction given that it was not budgeted.

Selectman Kratovil asked about the posting of the position. Chair Jarvis stated that it would follow Town policies and reflect the position's job description.

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The Board reviewed the draft job posting that Chair Jarvis produced. The Board reviewed the dates regarding internal and external job postings.

Selectman Kratovil notified the Board that Rec Commission Chair Kristyn Bernier has requested a meeting regarding expectations.

Chair Jarvis reminded everyone that the April 15th meeting will start at 3 P.M., not 1 P.M.

Chair Jarvis and Selectman Kratovil will be attending the NH Police Academy graduation this afternoon for New Durham Police Officer Scott Mitchell.

Chair Jarvis motioned to adjourn; second by Selectman Swenson. 3-0.

Meeting adjourned at 12:07 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeremy Bourgeois, Town Administrator