

NEW DURHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Work Session

New Durham Town Hall

Monday, March 24, 2014, 7:00 p.m.

Present:

Chairman David Swenson
Selectman David Bickford
Selectman Theresa Jarvis

Also Present:

Jeremy Bourgeois, Town Administrator
Jennifer Riel, Minute Taker
Jim Ladd, Videographer
Fire Chief Kevin MacCaffrie
Jeff Kratovil, Resident
Bob Kroepel, Resident
Kevin Ruel, Resident
Ann Ruel, Resident

Chair Swenson called the meeting to order at 7:02p.m. Chair Swenson stated there are two items on the agenda, one being the Board of Selectmen Goals and the other being the Interim Fire Chief Goals. Selectman Jarvis proposed reviewing the Interim Fire Chief Goals first.

Chair Swenson explained the intentions of this meeting and discussion. Chair Swenson stated that there are a variety of scenarios in developing strategies and tactics, and perhaps one of the most difficult concepts for all on both sides is to understand the difference between goals and tactics. Chair Swenson outlined the framework for what those are. Chair Swenson stated that goals are broader statements for strategic intent, not the action item but a broader statement of intent and strategy. Chair Swenson stated that tactics on the other hand are the specific how-to's in achieving those goals and intents. Chair Swenson stated that it is important as we go through the discussion to remember the distinct differences between goals and tactics. Copies of drafts were distributed to all in attendance.

Interim Fire Chief Goals

Chair Swenson asked for discussion and comments regarding the Interim Fire Chief Goals. Selectman Jarvis stated that she had some questions directed towards Chair Swenson for clarifications on his draft. Selectman Jarvis stated that she has identified a few issues that she wants to see included: what is the recommended level of staffing for one year, five years; reviewing the current pay system which is based on number and type of certificates; to see a review of where the Department is at in comparison to local communities with regards to costs of ambulances services and what are the recommendations; are SOP and SOG being implemented, if not, what are the

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recommendations for implementations or changes in SOP and SOG. Selectman Jarvis also requested from Chief MacCaffrie that an accurate roster be submitted by the next BOS meeting of April 7, 2014. She stated that her most recent roster is dated more than 18 months ago. Chair Swenson clarified that in his organizational chart, the roster is included as it shows the roles and who is filling those roles but agreed to add a roster. Chair Swenson stated that the recommended numbers of staffing in assessing the infrastructure of the department was also included under draft item #7(*Provide a full review of the New Durham Fire Department*). Chair Swenson stated that the pay system review is included under draft item #7 but agrees it could be specifically stated. Chair Swenson stated that he views the ambulance rates as more of a tactic type of issue. Selectman Jarvis asked for clarification on Chair Swenson's draft item #4 (*Develop short term and longer term plans/goals for the Department*), and what is the specific definition of long and short-term goals, as she wants to make sure everyone is on the same wavelength with definitions. Chair Swenson replied that this is something open to discussion but more specifically, he views short term is about one year and long term is typically three to five years.

Selectman Bickford asked Chief MacCaffrie to find out and recognize what the needs for the Town are, particularly with the number on the roster being down and dependency on other surrounding towns. Selectman Bickford referred specifically to the Copple Crown area on the north end of Town, and suggested that it may be possible for the Department to be cutting back on when they respond if other towns are able to cover the scene. Selectman Bickford asked for Chief MacCaffrie's recommendations as to where to go from here. Chief MacCaffrie agrees that this needs to be addressed including an organizational plan as well as a complete needs assessment of the Department. Chair Swenson stated that it would be covered under draft point #7. Chair Swenson stated that he is willing to modify the terminology and add to point #7.

Jeff Kratovil, resident, presented a suggestion in regards to Chair Swenson's draft. Mr. Kratovil stated that considering the responses given to Mr. Quimby and Mr. Drummey at the last meeting, to include and establish a minimum threshold, that if the Department were to go below a certain level, i.e. number of failed responses or reduced response times, it would require the BOS to take action in making sure that the public is made aware when this level is met. Mr. Kratovil stated that the public has a lot of concerns, and he believes they are under the impression that the Fire Department is not up to snuff. Mr. Kratovil suggested that having something like a critical minimum in place, it may relieve a lot of concerns, i.e. a public address made to keep the public informed or if there is a failure to respond to calls, such transparency would be reassuring to the public, and it would assure the public that the Board is engaged. Chair Swenson responded to the comments by Mr. Kratovil, and stated that part of what was asked in his draft goals was a comparison of the New Durham Fire Department with other surrounding town fire departments in terms as to what the Fire Department structure should look like, and the needs of the Fire Department. Selectman Jarvis stated that there are national standards regarding staffing. She stated that research shows that most departments cannot guarantee to meet those national standards due to being volunteer departments. Selectman Jarvis stated that there have been times when the full department has been able to respond and

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there have also been instances where the mutual aid system has been called upon. Selectman Jarvis stated that even in fulltime paid departments, it can be difficult for them to cover all calls, and stated that she expects the Fire Chief to come to the Board when he feels there is an issue of concern for the safety of the community. Chief MacCaffrie confirmed that there are national standards that even fulltime departments do not meet, and the standards are created based on an ideal world, which we do not live in. Mr. Kratovil stated that residents are used to standard of service, and this is a circumstance that residents have not been used to, where a majority of the staff have left or are not responding. Chair Swenson replied that the general structure of the department, equipment and skill sets would be covered as part of the goals.

Bob Kroepel, resident, asked what the national standards are and the basic command structure should be. Chair Swenson referred the question to Chief MacClaffrie. Chief MacClaffrie stated that the National Fire Protection Association has set standards, going on to explain that some of these include 1 firefighter per 7,000 residents on duty, and 10 call firefighters per 1,000 residents. However these do not include EMS, which is covered under other standards. Mr. Kroepel asked how many are on the roster currently. Chair Swenson stated that one must take a look at the roster numbers over 3 to 5 years to get a good picture. Chief MacClaffrie replied that there are about 14 currently on the roster but it depends how active they are, for example Alton has 45 on their roster but only half are active responders.

Selectman Jarvis made a motion to approve the goals and objectives for the Interim Fire Chief as discussed this evening and as clarified through discussion. Chair Swenson seconded the motion. Discussion: Chair Swenson stated that he would take the goals that were drafted and specifically add under #3 (*Develop a New Durham Fire Department organization chart recommended for appropriate level of service...*) *the New Durham Fire Department roster and include appropriate responses, level of staffing, etc.*; under #7 (*Provide a full review of the New Durham Fire Department*) part (a): *add equipment, etc.*; add a point (e): *review all pay structures including Fire Chief*. Selectman Jarvis confirmed that those changes were inline with the changes she addressed. Selectman Bickford asked if Chief MacCaffrie is able to accomplish these requests. **All in favor. Motion passed unanimously.**

Board of Selectmen Goals

Chair Swenson reiterated that it is important for everyone to have the same understanding, stating that goals are the broader type of actions and objectives that in this case the BOS should have. Chair Swenson differentiated goals from tactics, which would be some activities that the Board, department heads or community members, might do to achieve those goals. Chair Swenson distributed a copy of draft goals for review. Chair Swenson asked for comments and suggestions. Selectman Jarvis also distributed a copy of draft goals and noted that it does have some changes from the copy initially distributed in January. Copies of draft goals by Selectman Bickford were also distributed and reviewed.

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Selectman Bickford stated that he is concerned about committee accountability. Selectman Bickford suggested that the Town Administrator needs to follow-up on these committees to ensure they are providing an account for what they are doing. Selectman Bickford believes that the BOS needs to do a better job in assisting committees for accuracy. Selectman Jarvis asked how this is a BOS goal. Chair Swenson stated that he views this as what the Town Administrator should be doing as part of his job, and stated that he also views this as more of something that should be addressed when developing tactics during various discussions during the year. Chair Swenson clarified that this meeting is to identify goals for the BOS, and the tactics to achieve these goals will be discussed at various times throughout the year.

Selectman Bickford addressed the refusal of the Parks and Recreation chair to post a meeting agenda on the Town website and he states that the by-laws are not legal. Selectman Jarvis asked for clarification as to why and how they are illegal. Selectman Bickford explained that the committee by-laws require people to go before them to get approval before going to the BOS, but the state statutes don't accommodate them to do so. Chair Swenson clarified that it does not "prohibit" them from doing so. Selectman Bickford replied that they can only do what the statute allows them to do and stated that is how the New Hampshire law works, i.e. if you aren't given the right to do something, you don't have the right to do it. Selectman Jarvis asked when these by-laws were passed and stated that she had been looking for them and raised this issue in 2010. Selectman Bickford replied he has researched it but that it is unclear.

Selectman Bickford stated that he wants to expand video recording availability to more committees. Chair Swenson stated that could be included under greater improved communications in his draft point #3, (*Create improved communication to residents...*). Chair Swenson stated that he added #11, *Assure accountability within each department and committee and that all guidelines and by-laws are legal*. Selectman Bickford wants to take an extra step and clarify that in detail. Selectman Jarvis stated that laws do not require agendas to be posted but only notice of the meeting and the time is required.

Selectman Bickford stated that he wants to determine the reserve level by utilizing a new DRA worksheet being developed. Chair Swenson agrees that this needs to be detailed and has included it in his draft, however he will advocate it to be a guideline rather than policy. Selectman Jarvis stated her draft includes this issue as well.

Selectman Bickford stated that the hawkers and the peddlers ordinances need to be updated.

Selectman Bickford stated they need to improve budget explanations relevant to each department and improve the wage system, as it needs review as evidenced by comments by a department head. Chair Swenson stated that there would be additional discussion with what the department head was referencing.

Chair Swenson reiterated to make sure to have merged goals. Chair Swenson that figuring out which ones to review is more of a tactic.

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Selectman Bickford asked that in regards to the Annual Report Committee is that something for the BOS to keep a handle on. Selectman Jarvis replied that there was a lot of information going around this year and had discussed new tactics before she left as Chair, for putting together the Town Report, including shorter deadlines so the predicament of this year does not occur again. Selectman Bickford notes there seems to be some things going in to it, particularly in the department head reports, that in his opinion should not be in there. Chair Swenson stated that there would be further discussion and tactics discussed at future meetings and these concerns addressed.

Selectman Bickford stated that Bill Malay of the Conservation Committee recently brought a mapping error to his attention. The error is on Map 254, lot 3; the boundary lines goes over into Middleton, bringing a Middleton house into New Durham. Chair Swenson asked TA Bourgeois to look into this and make sure the records are accurate and appropriate as to what the boundaries should be.

Selectman Bickford stated that he would like to see the Police Department secretary go down to four days a week immediately, since her work was taken over by the Sheriffs' Department over a year ago. Chair Swenson stated that the prior BOS looked at this during the budget review in October, and it was passed at Town Meeting. It can be brought up with a motion and reviewed at future discussions. Selectman Bickford also states that there needs to be an assessment of the clerical needs for Solid Waste Facility. Chair Swenson stated the posting has already gone out for the position.

Selectman Bickford stated that cement coating may need to be done on March Pond Dam, but he doesn't know if this has already been done. Selectman Jarvis asked if the Highway Department would be doing it or would they be putting out an RFP to have it done. Chair Swenson asked TA Bourgeois to follow up to with the Highway Department to (a): review the history to make sure that it was a recommendation (b): that it has not been done and (c): proceed to confirm the engineering studies that were done at that time and work with the Highway Department to determine the next steps, which may include an RFP, etc.

Selectman Jarvis outlined the items from her draft of goals, including assuring employee protection and security, and review security of Town assets and properties including installation of security cameras, which was discussed in the past. She stated that there is an employee within the Town Hall who does deal with clients one-on-one who are not always happy with decisions, but that employee does not have an emergency button in her office.

Selectman Jarvis stated there needs to be a formal written policy on Employee Performance Evaluations. She stated that there is currently a policy that states evaluations are to be done annually, however a policy needs to include an evaluation format, rating scale, due date, what the role of the Town Administrator will be in writing Department Head evaluations, etc.

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Selectman Jarvis stated that she would like to see a quarterly BOS and/or TA report to the general public that can be placed on the website, similar to what was done at Town Meeting. Chair Swenson agreed and stated that he views that as a tactic under the communication goal, but it is an important tactic. Selectman Jarvis stated that she would like to see the BOS identifying and applying for grant monies for energy efficiency. Selectman Jarvis stated that energy audits of the Town Hall and the Fire Station were done a few years ago and that some minor improvements were made, but need to do some additional improvements that would give a decent return on value.

Selectman Jarvis stated that there is a need to approve a Fund Balance Policy, specifically a “policy” as that is what the auditors have cited the Town on every year. Selectman Jarvis stated that she does not have a problem with a guideline if it will make the auditors stop citing it. Selectman Jarvis stated that there were draft policies in the past but no resolution was achieved as to what the goals should be. Selectman Bickford stated an auditor wrote a policy at one point. Selectman Jarvis replied that a variety of copies were obtained from different communities and DRA, etc., and a lot of work was done but a policy was never finished and accepted.

Selectman Jarvis stated that her final goal was inline with Chair Swenson’s goals of #1, 4, 7, 8 & 9 but she did not include #3, as she wasn’t sure as to his specifics regarding the town reports. Selectman Jarvis stated that she does not agree with #4, (*Actively pursuing the sale of all properties...*), but will agree if the wording states “most all” properties.

Selectman Jarvis stated she also has other potential topics for goals including looking at a space needs assessment down the road and looking at pursuing economic development with low impact businesses.

Chair Swenson stated that after reviewing Selectman Bickford and Selectman Jarvis’ drafts, he added additional points to his draft based on their comments: *assure employee protection and that of Town assets; review of employee performance evaluation guidelines and policies; review energy use and patterns to look for improvements in energy management*; and added #16, which he states must be done, *Meet all requirements in order to convert to SB-2 form of government*. Selectman Jarvis stated that the last one will have an impact on the performance of all departments as everything will have to be moved up four to six weeks earlier than usual.

Selectman Bickford stated that one of the biggest goals in meeting the SB-2 requirements would be in coming up with a default budget. Chair Swenson agreed and proposed that he add all of the goals together in to a single draft for review at the next meeting. Selectman Jarvis stated that they could then prioritize the goals. Chair Swenson stated that discussion would be on the agenda at the April 7, 2014 meeting.

Chair Swenson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Selectman Jarvis seconded the motion. The vote was 2 in favor, (Swenson, Jarvis) and 1 opposed (Bickford).

Selectman Bickford explained he was opposed to the motion to adjourn as a hand went up, and wanted to open to public input. Chair Swenson stated that there is no discussion

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with a motion to adjourn and that he felt there had been adequate time for public input. Chair Swenson stated that public input and comments will be welcomed at the April 7, 2014 BOS meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Riel, *Minute Taker*