

**NEW DURHAM BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
New Durham Town Hall  
July 20, 2015, 7:00 P.M.**

**Present**

Chair David Bickford  
Selectman David Swenson  
Selectman Gregory Anthes

**Also Present**

Jeremy Bourgeois, Town Administrator	Eileen Berry, resident
Corky Mork, Videographer	Scott Drummey, resident
Cathy Allyn, 1772 Meetinghouse Committee	Mike Clarke, Road Agent
Dot Veisel, resident	Jeff Earls, Cross Country Appraisal Group
Cecile Chase, resident	Robert Chase, resident
Janis Anthes, resident	Ellen Phillips, resident
Jen Nyman, resident	Mark Foynes, reporter/ <i>The Baysider</i>
Joan Swenson, resident	Carole Ingham, Town Clerk/Tax Collector
Alicia Hernandez, resident	Richard Leonard, resident
Nicole Hinchey, resident	

**Call to Order**

Chair Bickford called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m.

**Appointments/Announcements**

**1772 Meetinghouse**

Chair Bickford stated Mr. Sturgis was expected to be at this meeting to go over some things. The Board of Selectmen received a letter stating that at this point Mr. Sturgis has decided he won't be able to go forward with the project this year. Chair Bickford stated Mr. Sturgis feels it will be ok to let the project sit for another year. The letter from Mr. Sturgis will be made available for public review.

Cathy Allyn, 1772 Meetinghouse Committee, stated she has been talking with Mr. Sturgis. Ms. Allyn explained she received some further clarification from Mr. Sturgis after his withdrawal of the bid and stated it was due to indecision on various aspects of the project and questioning of his recommendations. Ms. Allyn stated she is disappointed and Mr. Sturgis should have been treated with more respect.

**Cross Country Appraisal Group**

Chair Bickford stated the Board of Selectmen is concerned with the number of hours used so far by Cross Country and with projects being put off.

Jeff Earls, contracted assessor for the Town from Cross Country, stated there were issues with coming in after the prior assessor and sorting out problems. Mr. Earls stated he investigated and found a lot of disorganization and work was left incomplete. He

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explained the work they had to do to make corrections. Mr. Earls stated there were also problems with the remote access end of things.

Selectman Swenson stated Cross Country should have known some of these issues when the bid was made. Mr. Earls replied it may not have been clear how much was wanted completed prior to the first tax bill. He stated they worked nights and weekends to make sure it got done.

Selectman Swenson asked if the RFP was unclear about the full assessing activities being done. Mr. Earls stated he knew what was being asked for but the deadlines were not clear. Selectman Swenson asked if the RFP fairly represented the number of properties and the properties needing yearly review. Mr. Earls stated the RFP was clear and fair on this. He noted he doesn't expect a lot of work for the rest of the year as far as assessing goes.

Selectman Swenson stated it was his understanding of the bid was the full reevaluation was to be part of the first-year bid. Mr. Earls recalled having advised additional hours would be needed for that.

Chair Bickford stated his concern is whether they will be able to stay within the contract hours. Mr. Earls reiterated he doesn't expect a lot more work during the rest of the year but if they think he worked too slowly the first time around, he would add a few more days of work.

Carol Ingham, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, stated some of the things that should have been done for the April pickups were incomplete. She stated with Vision Appraisal they had someone that understood the software but when they switched to Cross Country that was not happening. Selectman Swenson noted that was part of the contract. Mr. Earls replied there is always a learning curve with a new town.

Town Administrator Bourgeois suggested they also need to improve communications and advised Mr. Earls to first work with Laura and then come to him.

After further discussion, it was agreed to add hours to the contract and those would be used for looking at reevaluations.

**Public Input**

Dot Veisel, resident, gave a response to her meeting with Selectman Anthes on July 10. She stated Selectman Anthes attended a meeting about the closing of the daycare program by the Parks and Recreation Commission. Ms. Veisel explained Selectman Anthes gave his reasons for not reappointing her to the Ethics Committee which included her participation in the Candidates Night meeting. She stated Selectman Anthes also had a concern because of rescheduled library meetings. Ms. Veisel stated her biggest concern was Selectman Anthes' suggestion that Ms. Veisel has been dishonest. Ms. Veisel stated she disagrees with this.

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Jen Nyman, resident, stated she had a meeting with Selectman Anthes as well and was given the response that he didn't nominate her for all the same reasons. Ms. Nyman stated Selectman Anthes statements were less than accurate.

Cecile Chase, resident, stated in regards to the Police Chief situation, statements were given by the Board of Selectmen indicating there were not immediate plans to change the department. She stated since that time there have been non-public meetings to discuss reorganization and stated that is something that should be discussed in public. Ms. Chase stated Selectman Swenson made motions that would be cost-savings to the Town but the other members of the Board of Selectmen chose not to pursue those. Ms. Chase stated if they aren't going in the direction of cost savings then it must be due to personal reasons with the Police Chief. She noted September 1 is approximately 40 days away and there is no plan for the reorganization of the Police Department. Ms. Chase questioned why Police Chief Bernier is not given the same latitude and professional respect being given to the Fire Chief.

Janis Anthes, resident, stated she looked at the May 18 Board of Selectmen meeting videotape. Ms. Anthes noted Selectman Anthes stated the reason he brought the issue before the Board of Selectmen was because of his conversation with Police Chief Bernier at the New Durham General Store. Police Chief Bernier told Selectman Anthes that he is looking at retiring with possibilities of coming back part time. She stated that as a businessman, Selectman Anthes wanted to look at all the options if that was a possible situation.

Scott Drummey, resident, stated he supports what Ms. Chase said and if there is a problem with the current Police Chief they need to deal with it. He stated it needs to be done in public and the Board of Selectmen needs to make a decision and go forward.

Selectman Swenson confirmed the Merrymeeting Lake Association supports Police Chief Bernier as well as having five full time police officers. The Association is also in support of Selectman Swenson's motions.

Ms. Veisel asked if anything has been received in writing from Police Chief Bernier regarding any intentions of retirement. Chair Bickford replied they have not.

Ms. Chase asked the Board of Selectmen to leave the Police Department issue alone. She stated it has been coming in under budget for many years and there are other issues that need more attention right now. Ms. Chase stated the incident did not warrant a letter going out regarding termination as of September 1 and should not have been put in play.

Selectman Swenson stated he expects there to be ongoing discussions with Police Chief Bernier and asked when the meeting is. Chair Bickford replied the next meeting is Wednesday, July 22, 2015 and he asked Town Counsel to be present.

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**New Durham Day**

Chair Bickford asked about upcoming New Durham Day on July 25<sup>th</sup>. He asked if there are going to be fireworks. Members of the Parks and Recreation Commission replied the Fire Department is in charge of that.

Ms. Veisel stated there would be a 5K race and an open house at the Meetinghouse on Saturday.

Official postings of events are posted on the Town website.

**Agenda Review**

Selectman Swenson added under Old Business: ZBA appointments; Hiring Policy Edits; Under New Business: update on the Police Administrator position.

Selectman Swenson stated applications have been received for the Police Administrative Assistant position and asked if they were ready to schedule interviews. Chair Bickford replied not yet. Selectman Swenson stated it is unclear why. Chair Bickford stated he has decided to wait for information regarding the amount of time needed for the position.

Joan Swenson, resident, noted her report is finished but she is waiting for independent opinions from two professional consultants to whom she submitted copies of job descriptions. Ms. Swenson stated she expects responses for the next Board of Selectmen meeting.

**Department Reports/Issues**

**Highway Department**

Road Agent Clarke stated the RSMS paving bids were received and reviewed by himself and Town Administrator Bourgeois. Road Agent Clarke stated he is not ready at this point to award it as the bids range from \$333,000 down to \$223,000. He is in the process of contacting the six vendors to ensure the bids are based on the same criteria. He distributed a chart outlining the tonnage of hot-top and the price per ton along with the linear foot of shoulder work. Road Agent Clarke stated he would come back to the Board of Selectmen on August 3 with his recommendation.

Chair Bickford asked about the chip seal on North Shore Road. Road Agent Clarke replied as it stands now there will not be any money to do it. He noted that by paving it there would be no more dirt roads in the Kings Highway area.

Selectman Anthes stated he was approached by a citizen regarding putting over-lay on Ragged Mountain Road who was concerned about cracking and stated it would be a waste of money. Road Agent Clarke replied the overlay would fix the cracking.

Selectman Anthes asked if Road Agent Clarke had heard about getting any money back from FEMA. Road Agent Clarke replied the paperwork has been submitted, approved and they will get between \$22-26,000 for the winter event. He is waiting to hear when it will be received.

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Road Agent Clarke distributed copies of the sand bids. These were reviewed and discussed. Selectman Anthes confirmed the sand in the dome and back of the Highway Department is not enough to get them through the winter. Road Agent Clarke stated that is correct. He stated he will be taking a look at the quality of the sand and will report back to the Board of Selectmen. Road Agent Clarke noted local vendors did not want to bid.

Road Agent Clarke stated in regards to the privatizing of the snowplowing, he would like to have a workshop with the Board of Selectmen to discuss the options. He outlined various items that need further clarification in the RFP. The RFP was reviewed and discussed.

Chair Selectman Bickford asked if Road Agent Clarke had seen the current State rates. Road Agent Clarke replied he doesn't believe those are the current numbers. These were reviewed and discussed.

Chair Bickford asked how it was going in Gilmanton with their contracting. Road Agent Clarke replied they are \$50,000 over budget for 2015 and they haven't started plowing this season. He noted they go over budget many years. Chair Bickford asked Road Agent Clarke to sit down with Town Administrator Bourgeois and work out what he wants. After that, the Board of Selectmen will have a workshop with him.

Road Agent Clarke stated at the employees meeting there was concern about not having received \$25 per pay period that was discussed previously with the changes in health insurance. He stated the Finance Officer knows nothing about it. Road Agent Clarke stated they had been told they would receive this by the Board of Selectmen.

Chair Bickford replied he is aware of this. Town Administrator Bourgeois and the Finance Officer are looking into it.

Road Agent Clarke stated interviews were held for the seasonal highway position and noted a decision was made and the position was offered to Anthony Bennett. A physical exam has been completed and the background check is pending.

There was discussion regarding the policy on hiring family members. It was agreed it does not apply to this case.

**Selectman Anthes made a motion to hire Anthony Bennett for the seasonal part time job at the Highway Department at the rate of \$12.53 per hour, pending the background check. Chair Bickford seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.**

Road Agent Clarke stated the Attorney General's office gave a list of demands for the Town regarding the reclaiming of the pit on Stockbridge Corner Road. He stated he has rented a bulldozer and received three verbal quotes. Road Agent Clarke stated he has contacted the forester and they have most of the materials they will need to reclaim the

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pit. There was further discussion regarding the actions of the Town Attorney with the probate court on appropriate closure of the pit.

**Chair Bickford made a motion to approve Purchase Order #2318 to Nortrax/John Deere of Pembroke, NH for a 650-bulldozer rental from 7/6/2015 until 8/2/2015 at a rate of \$5,200. Selectman Swenson seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.**

Road Agent Clarke stated he received a message from Selectman Anthes regarding the Dodge 5500. He clarified it is 4x4 1-ton pickup and will have a plow wing and dump body. Road Agent Clarke stated there are currently two prices for \$39,000 and the other for \$37,000 is from a company that he and the Equipment Mechanic are not familiar with. He stated they would go see what the setup of the company is before a decision is made.

Chair Bickford stated a request for abatement was received for the gravel pit in Town. Road Agent Clarke stated he does use gravel from the pit.

**Selectman Swenson made a motion to abate the Map 214, Lot 012 of the Kings Highway Gravel Pit in the amount \$272.12. Chair Bickford seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.**

**Town Administrator's Report**

**NH DES Well Sampling**

Town Administrator Bourgeois stated he received a notice from the Department of Environmental Services regarding well testing for MtBE. He has met with DES representatives and they have a new program that is looking into contamination by gasoline in private wells. There is currently funding available to offer free well testing to residents possibly affected as well as assistance in remedying any problems. Town Administrator Bourgeois stated letters would be going out from DES to homeowners.

**Old Business**

**Chair Bickford made a motion to approve Jen Correia to have access on the credit card accounts. Selectman Swenson seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.**

**Appointments- Capital Improvement Plan Committee**

**Chair Bickford made a motion to appoint Terry Jarvis to the Capital Improvement Plan Committee. Selectman Swenson seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.**

**Chair Bickford made a motion to appoint Dennis Martin to the Capital Improvement Plan Committee. Selectman Anthes seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.**

**Selectman Anthes made a motion to appoint Joan Martin to the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Chair Bickford seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.**

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**New Business**

**Hiring Policy**

The policy was reviewed along with Ms. Swenson's recommendations. There was discussion regarding the edits made as well the understanding of definitions.

Selectman Anthes suggested looking at what other towns have for hiring policies.

There was further discussion of the policy and definitions of terms used. Edits will be made and reviewed at a future date.

**Other**

**Chair Bickford made a motion to increase Cameron Libby's pay from \$11.50 to \$12.00 per hour as a firefighter/EMTB. Selectman Swenson seconded the motion. Motion passed, 3-0.** It was noted the increase is the result of new certification achieved by Cameron Libby.

**Public Input**

Ms. Swenson confirmed that Town Administrator Bourgeois is going to make the changes discussed to the hiring policy. She stated she wants to be sure she is working on the updated version.

Ms. Swenson asked if the Board of Selectmen wants her to work on a reappointment policy. Selectman Anthes suggested she wait. He stated if they can get stuff from other towns she could look at those too, not just for that but all the other policies as well.

Ms. Veisel stated she heard there is a meeting between the Board of Selectmen and Town Counsel concerning the Police Chief. She asked if Police Chief Bernier has been invited to that meeting. Chair Bickford replied he has not been invited at this point.

**Approval of Minutes**

May 18, 2015 – Public Meeting: Further edits were made and will be reviewed at a future meeting.

**Future Meetings**

August 3, 2015, Board of Selectmen Meeting, Town Hall, 7:00p.m.

**Adjourn**

**Selectman Swenson made a motion to adjourn. Selectman Anthes seconded the motion.**

**Motion passed, 3-0.**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:39 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Riel, Recording Secretary