

The Chair, Lloyd Sullivan at 7:00pm called the regularly scheduled Selectmen's meeting to order. Those present included Jenifer Landman, George Lagassa (Selectmen) and Russell McAllister (Town Administrator).

Corrective Property Deed

Sandy Roberts

Mr. Roberts addressed the Board regarding the necessity of issuing a corrective deed for property within the Mill Place subdivision. Due to an inadvertent error in the language used in the Conservation Easement deed to the Town recorded in Book 3308, Page 2395 the description of the property erroneously included about one acre that was part of subdivision Lot #15. The error was corrected in September of 1998 by recording a corrective Conservation Easement deed in Book 3327, Page 0481. Mr. Roberts explained that because the corrective document removed property from the original easement, it was necessary to have the Town join in the new description to relinquish any rights to the one acre that belongs to Lot #15. Mr. Roberts asked if the Board would sign the rejoinder agreement that would result in a corrective deed. Mr. Lagassa made the motion to sign the rejoinder agreement. Ms. Landman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved.

Budget Review

Highway Budget

Mr. Strout briefed the Board on the highway budget noting that increases within the budget were primarily in salary increases associated with the collective bargaining agreement. Wages and salaries increased from \$141,732 to \$152,244, which represents a 7% increase. (It is important to note that this increase appears large because the collective bargaining agreement approved by voters was a warrant article and therefore was not in last year's operating budget.) The total highway budget increased 8% from \$346,906 to \$373,696.

Warrant articles

Accrued Benefits Liability

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate \$25,000 to be added to the Accrued Benefits Liability Expendable Trust Fund and to be funded from the fund balance as of June 30, 2002. The current estimated total amount of unfunded vacation and sick leave is \$75,000. Current Trust Fund total will be \$32,504 in June 2002.

The TA explained that the target cap for the fund is \$75,000, which will cover the costs associated with employee separation and retirement. As a general practice the Town deposits approved money into the trust funds at the end of the fiscal year in order to preserve cash flow during the fiscal year.

Police Cruiser

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate twenty three thousand dollars (\$23,000.00) for the purchase of one police cruiser for the Police Department and to be funded from the fund balance as of June 30, 2002?

The TA explained that the purchase of the police cruiser is part of the cruiser replacement program.

Mosquito Control

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate \$40,000 to fund the Mosquito Control Expendable Trust Fund and to be funded from the fund balance as of June 30, 2002.

The TA noted that the bills for this past year's mosquito program have not yet been received. Should the costs be less than \$40,000, then the requested appropriation may be less.

FD Capital Reserve

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate \$35,000 for the Fire Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund #4 and to be funded from the fund balance as of June 30, 2002.

The TA explained that during the year fees received for ambulance service were deposited into the above trust fund for the purpose of equipment replacement in the fire department.

Tennis Court Reconstruction

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty-seven thousand dollars (\$27,000.00) to be added to the Tennis Courts Capital Reserve fund? As of September 2001 the amount in the fund is \$74,518. This year the tennis courts will be reconstructed. Work to be done includes new gravel base, new drainage and new playing surface.

The TA explained that this year the Recreation Director was requesting that the remaining amount of money necessary for the completion of the tennis courts be raised. The \$15,000 dollars approved by voters last year would be deposited in the reserve fund in June of 2002.

Highway Truck (one ton) Replacement

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate forty five thousand two hundred dollars (\$45,200.00) for the purchase of a one ton (4x4) pickup truck with plow for the Highway Department to replace the ¾ ton pickup truck and to be funded from the fund balance as of June 30, 2002.

The TA noted that this warrant article was at the request of Mr. Bob Strout. The proposed new truck was better suited to street plowing because it was a one-ton vehicle versus the current ¾ ton vehicle. The proposed new vehicle would also come equipped with a larger plow. The current ¾ ton vehicle was over 6 years old and was requiring more maintenance to keep it running.

Planner Position

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of \$62,490 to fund and establish the full-time position of Planner. The position will be responsible for providing planning and land use expertise and professional assistance to the Town of North Hampton's Planning Board. The Planner will work with applicants; supervise Building and Code Enforcement activities. The full-time Planner will replace the current part-time Circuit Rider (\$6,000 per annum) from the Rockingham Planning Commission. Approval of this article will establish a full-time position of Planner.

\$45,500	to cover the full-time Planner salary of \$45,500
\$ 5,360	to cover FICA & retirement
\$11,630	to cover health benefits (two-person plan).

The TA noted that the planner position would provide professional planning assistance to the planning board, supervise code enforcement activities, and work with applicants and coordinate planning board activities. Ms. Landman was uncertain about the need for a planner and believed that it was important to keep ties with the Rockingham Planning Commission. Mr. Sullivan was uncertain whether or not the Town was ready for a planner. The Board decided that they may well omit this article from the warrant.

Police Radios

Shall the town vote to raise and appropriate \$16,200 for the purchase of digital radio equipment for the Police Department to ensure continued communications with the primary dispatch center at the Rockingham County Sheriff's Department and to be funded from the fund balance as of June 30, 2002?

The TA noted that the County Sheriff was converting its analog radios to digital. Because the County dispatched the North Hampton Police, it made sense to begin conversion of the department radios.

Voting Booths

Shall the town vote to raise and appropriate \$4,000 for the purchase of 20 new voting booths to replace the old voting booths and to be funded from the fund balance as of June 30, 2002?

The TA noted that the current handmade booths were in dire need of replacement. The Board noted that additional money warrant articles might be forthcoming.

Questions & Comments

Ms. Landman noted that Ms. Susan MacDonald had expressed concern about the water level in her pond at 87 Lovering Road. Ms. MacDonald was of the opinion that the low water level was due to the pumping of wells by the Hampton Water Works, which had the effect of draining her pond. Mr. Ted Turchan noted that this was the third year of a drought and that may have something to do with the low water levels in Ms. MacDonald's pond as well as other ponds along the Seacoast.

Mr. Sullivan noted that the Board of Selectmen were asking the Attorney General to look into the issue of police procedure regarding recent criminal trespass charges brought against a planning board member. Mr. Sullivan also noted that nothing would be decided until the review is complete.

Ms. Landman questioned the scheduled non-public session and noted that an individual or agency should be present if they were to be discussed at the non-public session. Ms. Landman was concerned that if a letter to the AG was to be discussed in non-public session then the subject of the letter should be present. Mr. Sullivan noted that since the accusation had been made in public he would read the letter he had drafted to the Attorney General and he did so. Ms. Landman stated that she wanted the AG to look into the matter, but disagreed with the last sentence of the letter drafted by Mr. Sullivan and said that she would not sign until the last sentence was deleted. Mr. Lagassa noted that whether the Board reviewed the document in public or non-public session was not as important as doing the right thing. Mr. Lagassa believed the Board was doing the right thing by asking the AG to look into the issue. Mr. Wilson addressed two issues. The first issue dealt with the accusation of wrongdoing by the Police Department. He noted that he had made no such allegations, but that the series of events raises questions about the issue, but that it is not an issue about the police department. The second issue had to do with the reimbursement of legal costs for Ms. Judy Day. Ms. Day noted that the draft letter in discussion was not an accurate reflection of the previous debate. Mr. Sullivan noted that there was a suggestion of wrongdoing and so the Board was asking for an investigative review. Ms. Landman reiterated her dislike for the last sentence and requested that it be deleted because it was inappropriate. Mr. Lagassa noted that whether or not the last sentence was included didn't change the issue. Mr. Lagassa made the motion to send the letter to the AG with the final sentence deleted. Mr. Sullivan seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved.

Ms. Landman inquired whether the Board was going to address the issue of reimbursement of legal fees. Mr. Lagassa noted that he would wait to look at all of the facts after the AG's review. Mr. Sullivan noted that he too, would wait to review the AG's findings.

Mr. Wilson addressed the Board concerning the issuance of BAN's (bond anticipation notes) for North Hampton *Forever*. Mr. Wilson noted that the group was getting ready to engage the services of an attorney and he requested that the Board would move ahead with the BAN process. The Board agreed to get things moving.

Mr. John Simmons asked that more detailed agenda items be developed and suggested that notice requirements be more thorough. Mr. Simmons noted that it appeared that folks were flying by the seat of their pants. Mr. Lagassa responded by saying that the meeting was an open forum approach and that it was

not always possible to know what issues were likely to come up at meetings. Ms. Landman noted that the BoS meetings were not the same types of meetings as planning and zoning board meetings. The BoS meetings were really working sessions. The current format allowed for greater public participation, but the law did not compel the BoS to allow public participation. Mr. Joe Arena commented that there was a necessity of having two-way conversations between constituents and their elected officials.

Mr. Bob Strout asked if the Board would be OK with the idea of his putting a letter in the paper to let people in Town know that they should not place posts and rocks at the side of the road in an attempt to prevent the snow plow from pushing snow to the side of the road. The rocks and posts damaged the plows and created all sorts of problems during snow removal.

Administration/Business

Ms. Landman made the motion to accept the regular minutes of November 19th, 2001 as amended. Mr. Lagassa seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved.

The selectmen reviewed correspondence and/or signed:

- a. Minutes - November 19th, 2001
- b. Payroll
- c. Manifest
- d. Abatement – Richard Gohlke (100) missing veteran's exemption
- e. Abatement approval application – May Stoney
- f. NHDOT – Driveway Permits (various)

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:55pm. The scheduled non-public session was cancelled.

Respectfully,

Russell McAllister
Town Administrator