

Board of Selectmen
Minutes of 12/20/04
Evening Session
Approved 01/10/05

I. Call to Order.

Chairman Don Gould called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. There were present, Emily Creighton, Selectwoman, Jon Rineman, Selectman and Michael Pardue, Town Administrator. Mr. Pardue served as the Recording Secretary for this session.

II. Selectmen Items

A. Mosquito Control Services – Bid Opening

Mr. Gould acknowledged that the Town had received two bids in response to the Town's Request for Proposal for mosquito Control Services. The bids were received from:

- Dragon Mosquito Control Inc. \$88,000
- Municipal Pest Management Services \$85,100

The Board asked Mr. Pardue to request the members of the Mosquito Commission to review each of the bids, interview the representatives of each firm as deemed appropriate and to submit the Commission's recommendation as to which firm they feel is most suited to provide said service. The Commission is asked to provide the Board with data that supports their recommendation.

B. Discussion of Proposed Sidewalk

The Board discussed the wonderful presentation the students of the "Sidewalk Kids" made a few weeks ago as they posed this project to the Board. The Board explained to those in attendance that this current budget process has been challenging as the Board has been faced with having to prioritize projects that can be funded during the upcoming fiscal year.

The Board noted that it had asked Chief of Police Page to review the proposed project and comment as to his perceptions as related to the safety of children. Chief Page expressed that he thought that the location of the proposed sidewalk would "funnel" children into a highly congested area where both retail and municipal buildings are housed. He cited that in the past 7-10 days, while monitoring traffic as research for this proposed effort, he had observed a number of "near misses" involving vehicles, including one between a police cruiser and a privately owned automobile – the privately owned vehicle apparently not seeing the police cruiser. Chief Page continued that this

research was “troubling”, especially when noting that it would be more difficult for motorist to see children as compared to other vehicles.

Chief Page advised the Board that he was opposed to this proposed project as presented but suggested that the “other side of the street” might be a possible alternative for the construction of a sidewalk.

C. Discussion of Recent Tax Increase

Mr. Gould provided an overview of the factors associated with the increase in property taxes. He further cited that the Board is committed to “holding the line” on taxes and that the Board would work to reduce taxes if at all possible while considering the service needs and levels of the Town.

Mr. Gould spoke of the 2003 Assessment Recertification effort as performed by Vision Appraisal Technologies. He stated that at the completion of this process, there was an “artificial value” that resulted in an artificial tax rate being established. That following the establishment of the tax rate, (\$12.72), 219 property tax abatements were filed equating to \$635,000 in abatements. He further cited that the Town’s value had reduced by 40 million dollars as the artificial rate was adjusted to more accurately reflect the value of the Town.

Mr. Gould also cited that the voters had approved nearly \$800,000 in warrant articles and that those approved expenditures were all paid for through the use of the Town’s fund balance. Mr. Gould pointed out that the use of fund balance dollars has a direct correlation to the available funds that can be used by the Board to offset tax increases.

Mr. Gould also pointed out that the voters last year also approved increasing the amounts allowed for elderly exemptions and Veteran’s credits.

Mr. Gould cited that it is his opinion that the Town, including the school, is simply spending too much money.

Mr. Gould spoke to the fact that the current Board inherited this situation and that the current Board is working to correct the tax impact currently being felt by those paying taxes in North Hampton.

Mr. Gould further cautioned those in attendance about the possible ramifications of voting “down” a proposed budget, citing that the default budget could well exceed the one being proposed for FY 2005-2006.

Mr. Gould spoke of the Board’s pursuit of building a public works facility and the likely impact on taxes, stating that the proposed public works facility is desperately needed, as the current facility is, in his opinion, very deficient in many ways.

Mr. Gould reminded citizens that the budget hearing is scheduled for January 11, 2005 and the Deliberative Session is scheduled for February 5, 2005.

Mr. Gould also spoke of the Board's desire to return to the "old style" of town meeting where debate and decisions took place on the floor and those voting were well informed on the topic being decided.

D. Public Hearing – To Discuss the Construction of a Public Works Facility and Salt & Sand Storage

Mr. Gould opened the hearing at 7:37 p.m.

Richard Mabey, North Hampton Building Inspector provided an overview of the project. The duties of the highway department were discussed, with the focus being on the anticipated number of trips to and from the proposed facility on a daily basis. It was stated by Town officials that the Highway Department is currently comprised of four (4) full-time personnel.

Mr. J.D. Forsberg spoke to the fact that his house is located immediately adjacent to the proposed site, stating that he does not want "it" next to him. Mr. Gould responded that the Town is prepared to construct appropriate screening to protect his (Forsberg's) and other's vision of the proposed buildings. Mr. Gould emphasized a number of times that the Board is very sensitive to the concerns of the residents and that they, the Board, would work to see that the highway garage did not negatively impact the property of the Cedar Rd. residents.

Mr. Dan Twombly of 12 Cedar Rd. spoke of his concern regarding property values and how a public garage might negatively impact them. He spoke of the fact that the airfield next to which he resides causes noise, that he has had oil from airplanes drop on him, that one plane lost an advertising banner which fell in the trees and has yet to be removed etc. He further cited that he routinely hears the loudspeaker of Blake Chevrolet and that he hears all sorts of activity associated with Home Depot etc.

Mr. Mabey advised that Cedar Rd. appears to be the best available location as the Town owns the land, the building would be in a commercial zone, and that the duties of the highway department are quiet in comparison to planes and loudspeakers. He emphasized that there are only four employees in the highway department and that they do not "come and go" all day. He acknowledged that during snow storms there would be the occasional filling of a dump truck with sand / salt as the roads are maintained.

Mr. Ike Twombly spoke that the entrance to the proposed project is at his driveway. He stated that highway operations in general are unsightly and that he was opposed to the project.

Mr. Rineman pointed out that the residents were citing the negatives associated with the North Hampton Airfield, Blake Chevrolet, Home Depot, and Seacoast Harley etc. Mr. Rineman stated that the proposed highway facility would be far less intrusive than any of the negative situations attributed to the above referenced businesses.

Mr. Jonathan Kimball asked if the project was going to come before the Planning Board. Mr. Gould advised that the project would come before the Planning Board so as to receive comment from said Board.

Ms. Alessandra Leis of 21 Cedar Rd. asked about the weight limit related to the Cedar Rd. Bridge. Mr. Gould stated that Mr. Bob Strout, Road Agent has assured the Board that the weight of the Highway department trucks are appropriate for the load limit associated with the bridge.

Ms. Creighton asked a question related to the Town's alternatives stating, "What's alternative if Cedar Road is not the location? If the Town does not build the Highway Department on Cedar Rd., then I would think the town would probably sell the land as commercial property so as to have additional funds to put towards the purchase of a new location for the building".

Mr. Jonathan Kimball asked the building inspector about the zoning of the Town owned parcel of land on Cedar Rd. Mr. Mabey stated that the parcel is approximately 70% commercially zoned.

Ms. Laurie Larocque of 11 Cedar Rd. expressed her displeasure with the proposal. She asked about tearing down the buildings at 205 Lafayette Rd. (where the Town is currently leasing space for the PWD operation). It was explained that the Town does not own the land or building at the referenced location. Ms. Larocque stated that she was under the impression the Town owned the 205 Lafayette Rd. parcel.

Mr. Jonathan Kimball spoke of the Town possibly purchasing 205 Lafayette Rd. and selling some of the rear acreage or perhaps buying land he, Kimball, owns on Lafayette Terrace.

Ms. Bobbi Stead of 10 Cedar Rd. asked about the Town looking for other land to purchase for the construction of a highway facility.

Mr. Dan Twombly asked about the price envisioned to construct a building(s) on the Town owned parcel on Cedar Rd. Mr. B. Strout stated the price is envisioned to be in the area of \$870,000 +/- depending on bids that will need to be solicited.

Ms. Rita Dow of 104 Woodland Rd. asked if the building had been put out to bid. Mr. Strout explained that the Town had received a few quotes but that if approved, the project would be "put out to bid".

Mr. Gould advised those in attendance that there would be a bond hearing on this proposed project. He advised that the bond hearing is to be held on January 10, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. in the Mary Herbert Conference Room.

Mr. Jonathan Kimball stated that in his opinion Cherry Rd. is a better site for this operation as the Town already has a recycling operation occurring there (Cherry Rd.).

Mr. Gould suggested the residents of Cedar Rd. form a committee to work in concert with the Town on this proposed project explaining that the Town wants to be the very best of neighbors.

Mr. Gould closed the public hearing at 8:30 p.m., thanking all those that attended for their interest and participation.

E. Appointment to North Hampton Forever

Citing a request received from Mr. Chris Ganotis, Vice Chairman of the Conservation Commission, the Board approved the appointment of Ms. Allison Robie to North Hampton Forever.

Motion / Vote: Ms. Creighton made a motion to appoint Ms. Allison Robie to North Hampton Forever. Mr. Rineman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

F. Questions and Comments Related To Above Topic Areas

NONE.

III. Administration/Business

A. Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Pardue stated that the Board was appraised of the latest activities of the Town Administration.

B. Correspondence

Mr. Pardue advised the Board that the latest items of correspondence had been distributed to the Board members mailboxes.

C. Approval of Minutes

December 6, 2004 - Public Session – Approved 3-0.

Motion / Vote: Mr. Rineman made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of 12/06/04 as written. Ms. Creighton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

December 6, 2004 – Non - Public Session – Approved 3-0

Motion / Vote: Ms. Creighton made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of the 12/06/04 Non-Public session as written. Mr. Rineman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

D. Payroll

Mr. Pardue advised the Board that the Administrative Assistant had been unexpectedly called out of the office without having sufficient time to print off the payroll documents.

Motion / Vote: Ms. Creighton made a motion to authorize the Board members to come to the Town Office and individually review and approve the payroll. Mr. Rineman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

E. Manifest

Mr. Pardue advised the Board that the Administrative Assistant had been unexpectedly called out of the office without having sufficient time to print off the manifest.

Motion / Vote: Ms. Creighton made a motion to authorize the Board members to come to the Town Office and individually review and approve the manifest. Mr. Rineman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

F. Other Business

NONE.

IV. Adjournment

Motion / Vote: Being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Rineman made a motion to adjourn at 8:36 p.m. Ms. Creighton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Pardue
Town Administrator