

Board of Selectmen
Minutes of 01/24/05
Approved 02/14/05

I. Call to Order.

Chairman Don Gould called the meeting to order at 7:00 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. State of New Hampshire Division of Parks and Recreation – Ms. Allison McLean, Supervisor of Park Operations and Ms. Johanna Lyons, Planning and Development Specialist.

Mr. Gould outlined the purpose for having invited Ms. McLean and Ms. Lyons to attend a Board meeting, referencing that the Town has concerns related to the maintenance of the beach, restroom facilities and parking enforcement as is expected of the State.

Ms. McLean spoke about “staffing issues” experienced by the State during the 2004 summer months and the fact that she is hopeful for greater staffing levels for the upcoming 2005 summer season.

Mr. Gould inquired about the 2005 cleaning schedule as it pertains to both the beach and the restrooms. Ms. McLean advised the Board that a staff member from North Beach monitors and restocks the North Hampton facility “several times per day” and is typically on-site between 0900 and 1500 hours on busy weekend days.

Ms. McLean advised the Board that beach cleaning equipment can now access the beach and that this function is contracted by the State and is performed at the beginning of the season and then on an “as needed” basis. It was clarified by the Board that this is not a daily function, with the Board expressing concern that the beach is littered with seaweed and many other undesirable items that could potentially pose a health concern. The Board referenced their belief that the North Hampton beach generates significant revenues but receives very little attention as related to maintenance and general cleaning. Mr. Rineman cited the concern that the State has personnel “hand picking” the seaweed on occasion, an effort that appears to generate sub-par results.

Mr. Rineman asked why the State is not routinely staffing the beach, thus ideally allowing for more frequent cleanings, especially in light of the fact that the “users” are funding services through the metered parking fees being collected by the State. Ms. McLean explained that New Hampshire beaches are “operationally self-funded”, meaning that the revenue generated supports the entire beach system throughout the State. She further explained that New Hampshire is the only operationally self-funded

system in the nation. The Board questioned the effectiveness of this approach, especially when considering the conditions being experienced at the North Hampton beach.

The Board brought up the subject of dogs on the beach. Ms. McLean explained that dogs are allowed on the beach unless there is a lifeguard present, acknowledging that lifeguard staffing is not consistent. Much discussion ensued concerning the time periods in which dogs are permitted on the beach. Discrepancies were noted when citing State policy as opposed to the posted signage found at the beach. Ms. McLean and Ms. Lyons stated that they would review both policy and signage to ensure consistency going forward.

Mr. Rineman expressed concern in regard to North Hampton having to utilize local police resources to enforce the parking regulations and dogs on the beach when the State was the recipient of all of the funds generated by the parking meters at the North Hampton beach. He stated that it did not seem appropriate that North Hampton tax dollars had to be expended to enforce laws that generate revenues earmarked solely for the State.

There was further discussion related to beach cleanliness and the State's need to "replenish the beach", due to events of erosion. Ms. McLean stated that she is participating in an upcoming meeting with State management staff to discuss "issues of this nature" and would see to it that the concerns of North Hampton are brought forward. She further pledged to improve communication with the Town and to work at improving the conditions of the beach and the surrounding State controlled area.

Ms. Creighton asked if the State had existing policies & procedures in place relative to beach management. Ms. McLean replied "no", but that there would be new policies and procedures implemented by the State soon to address the issues such as those discussed tonight. Ms. McLean stated she would be reviewing existing policies with an eye toward improvement and that she would be working toward "improving management strategies".

Ms. Joanne Lamprey, a resident of North Hampton, cited that there exist a sign at the beach stating "No Dogs". Ms. Lamprey asked for clarification on this sign, especially after having heard a different citation made during tonight's meeting. Ms. Lamprey also spoke of limited to no parking availability at the beach. She cited that there are frequently cars parked at the beach that do not display a "proper sticker" which would allow them to park in the designated spaces. Ms. Lamprey further stated that she does not feel it is the duty or responsibility of the North Hampton Police Department to enforce this situation as all parking proceeds are directed to the State.

Chief of Police Page explained the procedures used by local police to enforce beach parking. He further cited that in his opinion, current laws and regulations governing dogs on the beach are sufficient.

Mr. Peter Simmons, a resident of North Hampton, asked for clarification of the beach boundaries.

The Board thanked both Ms. McLean and Ms. Lyons for their attendance and asked that they keep in close contact with the Town Administrator as they address the issues brought forward at tonight's meeting.

B. Ms. Kim Kisner, Public, Educational and Government Cable Channel Mission Statement Discussion

Ms. Kisner provided an overview of the North Hampton Public, Educational and Governmental (PEG) channel status.

Ms. Kisner explained that a group comprised of her, Selectman Jon Rineman, North Hampton School Principal Peter Sweet, Mr. Brad Gregg, a teacher at the North Hampton School and Town Administrator Michael Pardue had met to discuss the steps necessary to "launch" the PEG channel, should voters agree to use CATV franchise fees for this effort.

Ms. Kisner presented a draft mission statement with accompanying discussion points. The proposed mission statement was reviewed and discussed by the Board. Mr. Gould presented a suggested minor revision to the mission statement. Ms. Kisner reviewed the minor revision, stating she felt it likely the School Board would be comfortable with the revised language. It was agreed that Mr. Rineman and Ms. Kisner would collectively review the proposed language for the mission statement and reach consensus on appropriate wording.

Ms. Kisner expressed that the earlier referenced "steering" group suggested the need to form a PEG Committee that would be responsible for developing policy and procedure and operational guidelines for the PEG channel, should the voters vote funds "in".

Mr. Gould asked about the envisioned committee composition. Ms. Kisner stated that the "steering" group suggested a 5-7-member committee comprised of representation from the Board of Selectmen, School Board, Town Administration, School Administration and citizenry.

Discussion ensued regarding the funding of this effort in ways additional to franchise fees. Advertising was discussed, as was the concept of "sponsorships". Ms. Creighton suggested that sponsorships might be a very successful means in which to generate funds, mirroring a concept used on Public TV.

Mr. Pardue advised that he would work on drafting a policy for the governance and use of the PEG channel.

Mr. Rineman noted to the Board and those in attendance that in addition to Ms. Kisner, Mr. Brad Gregg had done a great amount of work on this effort. Mr. Rineman explained that Mr. Gregg had interviewed various equipment vendors and consultants in an effort to position the Town to go forward in a graduated manner, should the voters approve funding for this effort.

C. Discussion of Police Presence at North Hampton School

Mr. Rineman advised those in attendance that, while attending the PEG “steering” group meeting at the North Hampton School this morning, it had been mentioned by Principal Sweet and School Board Chair Kim Kisner that the police were not present at the school during the last few weeks as children were arriving or departing, a practice typically exercised by the police department.

Ms. Kisner expressed her concern on this matter, citing the safety of the children was paramount.

Chief Page echoed Ms. Kisner comments regarding children and their safety. He continued on, citing that he had temporarily discontinued his department’s efforts in this area due to what he perceived as a lack of commitment by the North Hampton School in working with the police on child related safety issues. Chief Page also expressed his displeasure that Mr. Sweet would be publicly critical of him and the police department, to his bosses without having the courtesy to first call him, (Page). Chief Page discussed further his displeasure with learning of this concern in a public arena as opposed to on a “professional to professional level”.

A great deal of discussion ensued concerning the lack of regard and respect demonstrated by citizens (usually parents) picking-up their children at the school. Chief Page cited occurrences where officers had been threatened and motorist conduct, promoted due to anger at officers, had nearly resulted in a child being struck by a motor vehicle.

Chief Page explained that due to the many comments he had received from residents citing their unhappiness with a police presence at the school, as opposed to the one or two positive comments on this topic, he had elected to temporarily withdraw police personnel from this assignment.

Mr. Gould stated that he believes this is a matter that should draw the collective attention and efforts of the Board of Selectmen, Police Department, School Administration and School Board and that all parties should come together to address this matter.

Mr. Rineman suggested the school notify parents that they, the school administration, want the police present at times of student arrival and dismissal and that all visitors to

the school are expected to adhere to the direction of the police in a respectful and courteous manner.

D. Property Tax Abatements

Mr. Pardue provided the Board with four property tax abatements. Each of the abatement requests had a memorandum from the Assessor, Scott Marsh, attached. The Board agreed to approve the signing of the abatement forms following their individual review of the particulars associated with each of the abatements.

Motion / Vote: Mr. Gould made a motion to have each Board member individually review and sign-off their approval of each abatement application on or before 1/26/05. Ms. Creighton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

E. Municipality Sponsored Internet Registration Renewal Agreement

Ms. Delores Chase, Town Clerk, met with the Board to discuss the provisions associated with a contract between the State, InterWare Software and the Town, allowing for the on-line renewal of motor vehicle registrations. Ms. Chase explained that the proposal would allow for residents to renew their car registrations on-line as opposed to visiting the Town offices. Ms. Chase estimated that the costs associated with this effort would not exceed two hundred dollars.

Following review and discussion, the Board motioned the following:

Motion / Vote: Mr. Gould made a motion authorizing the Town Clerk and the Town Administrator to enter into agreement with the State and InterWare Software, for an amount not to exceed two hundred dollars, for the purpose of allowing the on-line renewal of motor vehicle registrations. Ms. Creighton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

F. Review of Draft PowerPoint Presentation on Municipal Budget and Warrant Articles

Ms. Laurel Pohl and Mr. Terrance Conklin presented a DRAFT PowerPoint presentation reflecting the 2005-2006 budget and warrant articles. Ms. Pohl and Mr. Conklin had undertaken this effort at the request of the Board.

The Board reviewed the presentation, offering feedback and clarification as needed.

The Board acknowledged the excellent work of Ms. Pohl and Mr. Conklin, citing that the presentation will be a great asset to all deliberative session presenters and the voters of North Hampton.

IV. Administration/Business

A. Town Administrator's Report

1. Mr. Pardue and the Board expressed their appreciation for the fine work performed by the Highway Department during the blizzard of the past few days.

B. Correspondence

Mr. Pardue provided the Board with four letters of correspondence related to the proposed Verizon cell tower. The letters were from Mr. David DellaPenta, Kathy & Mike Megna, Mr. Dick Ingram and Mr. & Ms. D. Williams.

The Board received the letters and expressed the need to respond to the authors of the letters in order to acknowledge their receipt. Mr. Pardue will draft a response on the behalf of the Board.

Mr. Alan Williams addressed the Board, expressing his concern about the proposed cell tower on Chapel Rd. Mr. Gould advised Mr. Williams that he should include his comments to the Planning Board as well.

C. Approval of Minutes

January 04, 2005 – Open Session

Motion / Vote: Ms. Creighton made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of 01/04/05 as written. Mr. Gould seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 2-0. * Mr. Rineman did not vote on this matter as he was not present for the 1/4/05 meeting, having been excused due to prior professional commitments.

January 10, 2005 – Open Session

Motion / Vote: Mr. Rineman to accept the meeting minutes of 01/10/05 as amended. Ms. Creighton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

D. Payroll

The Board signed off on payroll forms.

E. Manifest

The Board reviewed and signed off on manifest forms.

F. Signing of Default Budget

The Board reviewed and signed-off on default budget documents as prescribed by the State.

G. Other Business

The Board discussed the Adopt-A-Soldier project and how best to participate in such an effort.

Mr. Rineman agreed to follow-up on this effort and Ms. Creighton stated she would work to ensure its inclusion in the Community Newsletter.

IV. Adjournment

Being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Rineman made a motion to adjourn at 9:57 p.m. Ms. Creighton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Pardue
Town Administrator