

Board of Selectmen
Minutes of 11/14/05
Approved 12/27/05

I. Call to Order

Chairman Don Gould called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. There were also 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. Recognition of Fire Fighters for Service / Heroism

Chief Tom Lambert addressed the Board. Chief Lambert advised the Board that two North Hampton Fire Fighters had recently been recipients of State recognition for acts of heroism they performed while on-duty. Chief Lambert read aloud a summation of the facts and circumstances that served as the basis for such recognition. Lieutenant Brad Hutchings and Fire Fighter Steve Henry were applauded by those in the audience and were personally congratulated by the Board members and Mr. Pardue for their courageous actions.

Mr. Gould then advised those in attendance that Fire Chief Lambert was also acknowledged at the State awards ceremony for his management and command oversight at this same incident. Chief Lambert received a round of applause from the audience and was personally congratulated by the Board and Mr. Pardue.

B. Ambulance Billing Service Policy Discussion

Mr. Gould provided an overview of the discussions of the Board concerning this topic as conducted at previous Board meetings. Mr. Gould provided those in attendance an overview of the collection rate for billed ambulance services as experienced in 2003 and 2004. Mr. Gould cited that the collection rate for the year 2004 was at approximately 87%.

Mr. Rineman and Ms. Creighton expressed their support for the existing draft policy as had previously been presented by Chief Lambert. Ms. Creighton stated that she believes the Town should pursue out-of-town co-pay payments due the Town.

Mr. Rineman cited that he feels it all comes down to responsible behavior by users of the service and that the user, if they fail to be responsible, should be held responsible by the Town.

Ms. Creighton echoed Mr. Rineman's comments. Mr. Gould stated that he agrees with the previous comments citing that he believes there must be a consistent policy in pursuing the collection of ambulance fees.

The consensus of the Board is that the proposed policy before them in fact does meet the criteria they believe to be appropriate when collecting ambulance service user fees.

Motion/Vote: Mr. Gould made a motion to amend the current policy to reflect that the ambulance billing service continue to pursue all claims after a third letter requesting payment, by using collection agencies to collect outstanding balances and; that the ambulance billing service inform the Town prior to referring any North Hampton resident to a credit reporting agency and; that the Town make contact with the non-paying North Hampton resident prior to authorizing the matter to be forwarded to a credit reporting bureau. Mr. Rineman seconded the motion.

Discussion – A resident in the audience asked Chief Lambert to estimate the average cost of an ambulance service “run”. Chief Lambert responded stating the average cost for a single “run” is approximately \$600.00.

A question was posed as to who make the decision to request Advanced Life Support service or intercept. Chief Lambert advised that this decision lies with the North Hampton Fire Department when they are the lead agency on a call.

The motion was moved. The vote was unanimous. 3-0.

C. Highway Facility Discussion

Mr. Gould advised those in attendance that there is some sentiment by members of the Board to move the highway building project forward during the upcoming 2006-2007 fiscal year. Mr. Rineman posed the idea of building a new highway facility on the existing site. Ms. Creighton stated that she thought that the voters should be given the opportunity to decide on whether the Town should build on the present highway department site and that there should probably have an article for starting a Capital Reserve fund for Municipal building projects.

Mr. Rineman cited the healthy fund balance the Town currently enjoys and the fact that the current building bond the Town is paying on is due to be paid in full in January 2006. Mr. Rineman also stated that the current neighbors to the existing highway facility are accustomed to the highway department functions and hours of operation etc.

The Board also advised those in attendance that the new tax rate is to remain stable at \$15.05.

The Board discussed the many positives associated with constructing a new facility on the existing site.

Mr. Phil Wilson, who was in attendance and speaking as the Chair of the Planning Board, speculated that the current site may in fact be recommended by the Long Range Planning Committee and embraced by voters.

Mr. Wilson stated that in his opinion if the Board pursued the idea of placing the highway facility on the current site, they would not be infringing on the work of the Long Range Planning Commission.

Mr. Robert Landman, a audience member and a North Hampton representative to the Rockingham Planning Commission, suggested moving the Old Town Hall building from it's current location to 239 Atlantic Ave., a parcel owned by the Town situated adjacent to the library.

Mr. Richard Maybe, the Town's Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Officer showed those in attendance a diagram of the existing municipal "campus" on Atlantic Ave. Mr. Maybe used "scaled" building cutouts to illustrate the placement of the proposed highway facility building (scaled down to a 50'x50' sand / salt storage building and a 60'x100' garage) on the existing municipal complex "footprint". Mr. Maybe stated that there would be a loss of 12 parking spaces and several underground utilities would require moving and that the septic system would need to be revised to allow for locating it under the pavement. Mr. Maybe further stated that due to the needs of the highway department, and the scaled back building size, some storage of highway materials would still be required on Cherry Rd. When asked by the Board about the proposed scaled back building size, Mr. Strout stated that he was confident that the proposed building would serve the highway department for the next 15 years.

Ms. Jenifer Landman voiced her support for moving the Old Town Hall building to 239 Atlantic Ave and building the highway facility building on the current municipal campus.

Mr. Richard Goeselt, a member of the planning board and past Chair of the library trustees, stated that he believes to place the highway facility on the current footprint is "very short sighted". He inquired as to where the Town office staff would relocate to when it was determined that the police department was in need of the space above their current (PD) offices. He reiterated that he thought the idea of building the highway garage on the current footprint is a "bad idea".

Mr. Larry Miller, a member of the budget committee, stated that he believes this approach (building a highway garage on the current footprint) is the most costly of ideas as it is short sighted and impedes future growth of other municipal service facility needs. Mr. Miller stated that he believes that the police and fire services are housed in inferior facilities and that to build the highway garage "where it is now" limits the future growth and expansion of police and fire services, likely resulting in the expenditure of very large

sums of money. Mr. Miller suggested placing the highway facility on the 239 Atlantic Ave. parcel.

The Board discussed the need for placing a warrant article on the Town warrant seeking voter support to demolish the building currently situated on 239 Atlantic Ave., thus allowing the Town some options when considering building the highway facility there or placing the Old Town Hall on this site.

A considerable amount of discussion ensued about how best to build a highway facility without hindering the future needs of other departments and services.

Mr. Gould stated that after listening to all the discussion, it is his opinion that it is premature to bring the concept of building a new highway facility on the current municipal (233 Atlantic Ave.) footprint to voters. Mr. Gould stated that he believes it is most important to hear the findings and recommendations of the Long Range Planning Committee before endorsing any building approach. Mr. Gould stated that the Board has been advised that the report of the Long Range Planning Committee will be presented next month (December).

Mr. Rineman stated that he was in agreement with Mr. Gould but cautioned that construction costs continue to rise at a rate of 30% +/- per year and that he hopes delays are not too long as delays will ultimately become very costly to the Town.

Ms. Creighton stated that considering the excellent suggestions and feedback given by residents, she agreed that it would be premature to make a decision before the Long Range Planning Committee's report is completed.

D. Appointment of Shirley Carter to Conservation Commission

Mr. Pardue presented the Board with a copy of a correspondence he had received from Conservation Commission Co-Chair Chris Ganotis requesting that the Board appoint Ms. Shirley Carter to the Conservation Commission.

Motion / Vote: Mr. Gould made a motion to appoint Ms. Shirley Carter to the Conservation Commission as requested by Conservation Commission Co-Chair Ganotis. Ms. Creighton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

E. Appointment to Recreation Commission

Mr. Pardue provided the Board with letters of interest from Mr. Sandy Dewing and Ms. Sharon Hart indicating their desire to be appointed as alternates on the Recreation Commission. Both candidates expressed a great desire to serve on said commission.

Motion / Vote: Mr. Gould made a motion to appoint Mr. Sandy Dewing and Ms. Sharon Hart as alternates to the Recreation Commission. Ms. Creighton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

F. Appointment to the Technical Advisory Committee of Rocking Planning Commission

Motion / Vote: Ms. Creighton made a motion to appoint Mr. Robert Landman to serve as North Hampton's representative to the Technical Advisory Committee of the Rockingham Planning Commission. Mr. Rineman seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

G. Coalition Communities Office Funding

The Board discussed a request from the Coalition Communities Executive Director, Pat Remick requesting funding assistance during the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

The Board discussed the importance of the work done by the Coalition. Consensus of the Board was to include funding for this effort in the 2006-2007 proposed budget.

H. Vehicle Use Policy

Mr. Pardue distributed to the Board a draft policy regarding the use of Town vehicles by Town employees. Mr. Pardue asked that the Board take a week or two to review the draft and discuss it further at their 11/28/05 meeting. The Board agreed to do so.

I. Proposed Sign Ordinance Discussion

Mr. Gould reviewed some of the concerns expressed to the Board by North Hampton Building Inspector Richard Maybe regarding the proposed sign ordinance. Mr. Gould asked Mr. Wilson, Planning Board Chair to offer comment on the stated concerns.

Mr. Wilson spoke of his belief that the "baseline" (the process of cataloging the shapes, sizes and styles in place at the time the ordinance is enacted), would not be terribly expensive, at least not to the extent cited by the building inspector.

Mr. Wilson addressed concerns voiced about the possibility of costly legal expenses due to the proposed appeal process outlined in the draft ordinance requiring applicants to appeal to the courts (as opposed to the ZBA). Mr. Wilson stated that he could not predict what legal costs might be.

Mr. Gould asked about the experience of this ordinance in other communities. Mr. Wilson stated that ordinances of this composition have been "highly successful" in other communities.

Mr. Gould asked Mr. Wilson why the ZBA was not included in the appeal process. Mr. Wilson stated that past experience has demonstrated that the planning board is more likely to uphold the architectural standards of the Town much more than the ZBA.

Mr. Wilson stated that the planning board is merely trying to uphold the will of the people and uphold the regulations of the Town.

Mr. Larry Miller read writings authored by Ms. Judy Day (entered with official copy of minutes on file) citing her support for the proposed ordinance and her belief that there needs to be tighter controls on the signage in Town.

Ms. Creighton stated that at the budget hearing she informed the Code Enforcer that videoing signs would be more cost effective than his proposal of two people needed to measure every existing sign in town. Her stated concern for the proposed ordinance was the potential of increased legal expenses.

Mr. Rineman stated that the three members of the business community that attended the planning board meeting when the draft sign ordinance was discussed did not seem concerned with the proposed ordinance.

J. Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan Adoption

The Board signed the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and thanked the Town Administrator, Department Heads and Ms. Theresa Walker of the Rockingham Planning Commission for their work on this project.

K. Dry Goods Storage Trailer

Road Agent Robert Strout advised the Board that the highway department personnel had completed clearing out materials stored underneath the Old Town Hall as some structural repairs were soon to be performed on said building. As a result, the highway department finds that they are without storage facilities. Mr. Strout advised that he has been exploring the concept of renting a 50'x10' storage trailer that can be placed on the Cherry Rd. site. The trailer would allow for the cold storage of various highway department machinery and goods. Mr. Strout advised that the rental payment is \$125.00 monthly.

Mr. Rineman inquired as to the price to purchase a used storage trailer as opposed to a long-term lease. Mr. Strout advised that he was unsure of a purchase price but would contact the provider to determine if this was a feasible approach.

The Board asked Mr. Strout to pursue pricing for the purchase of a storage trailer and at the same time agreed that Mr. Strout should move forward with the rental of a unit until purchase pricing was available.

L. Questions and Comments on Above Topics

Mr. Gould presented a draft letter he had written regarding the new tax rate. He stated that he is hopeful this letter can go out to residents soon. Mr. Rineman and Ms. Creighton stated that they would review the final draft and offer comment.

Mr. Landman spoke in reference to a cross-walk at the new Rite-Aid site. He also spoke of assorted other transportation matters.

Motion / Vote: Mr. Rineman made a motion to temporarily adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. for the purpose of entering into non-public session under the provisions of RSA 91-A:3 II (a) for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter. Ms. Creighton seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously 3-0.

III. Non-Public Session RSA 91-A: 3 II (a, e)

Motion / Vote: Mr. Rineman made a motion to reconvene the public portion of the meeting at 10:37 p.m. Ms. Creighton seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.

IV. Administration/Business

A. Town Administrator's Report

1. FD – Engine 3 out of service a portion of last week due to transmission problems. This engine is a 1987 and due to be replaced in 2007 as per replacement schedule.
2. FD – Flu season is upon us (them).
3. PD - \$6,000 increase to be placed in proposed budget due to an officer moving toward a family plan.
4. PD – Reporting the flu too!!
5. PWD – Buckskin Lane nearing completion. Paving completed aside from driveway edges and shoulders.
6. On 11/16 Bob & Romeo to be in training regarding new DOT regulations.
7. PWD / CEO – Working on Chapel Rd. drainage.
8. CEO – Red reports that K&N engineering will have structure report to Town on 11/16/05.
9. CEO – Chapel Rd. tower before ZBA on 11/22. Woodland Rd. tower discussion postponed to 1/06.
10. CEO – TGIF granted approval with 14 conditions.
11. AA – Tax warrant to be run 11/15/05.
12. AA – Flu shots have been delayed – TBA.

13. REC – Santa will be visiting on 12/3 at the UCC from 6-7:30 p.m.

B. Correspondence

None.

C. Property Tax Abatements

The Board signed-off on two property tax abatement requests and asked Mr. Pardue to review another request with the assessor.

D. Veteran Tax Credit

The Board signed off on a Veteran Tax Credit request.

E. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Rineman made a motion to approve the following Board of Selectmen meeting minutes as written:

**October 5, 2005 - Non-Public Session
October 24, 2005 - Public Session
October 24, 2005 - Non-Public Session**

Ms. Creighton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous 2-0-1 with Mr. Gould abstaining as he had been excused from these meetings.

Mr. Rineman made a motion to approve the following Board of Selectmen meeting minutes as written:

**October 31, 2005 - Public Session
November 7, 2005- Public Session**

Ms. Creighton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous 3-0.

F. Payroll

The Board reviewed and signed two weeks of payroll forms.

G. Manifest

The Board reviewed and signed two manifests.

H. Other Business

None.

V. Adjournment

Being no further business to come before the Board, Mr. Gould made a motion to adjourn at 11:07 p.m. Ms. Creighton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous and so moved. 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Pardue
Town Administrator