

**Minutes
Nottingham Selectmen's Meeting
November 18, 2013**

6:30 PM Chair Rafter opened the meeting and asked all those present to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Hal Rafter, Mark Carpenter and Mary Bonser

Others: Charles A. Brown – Town Administrator, Dawn Wirkkala – Secretary, Gunnar Foss, Rhoda Capron, Susan Medeiros, Jaye Vilchuck, Paul Colby, Heidi Carlson, Sam Demeritt, Cheryl Smith, Celia Abrams

Police Department: Chief Foss stated he has an unexpected extended leave request from the Administrative Assistant and is seeking permission to hire a temporary assistant for coverage while she is out, as this position cannot be unmanned for an excessive amount of time. The request includes needed funds for the 2013 and 2014 budget for the temporary assistant who will cover the current unexpected leave and time during 2014 for vacations and other requested leave. The Administrative Assistant absences are causing a backlog to required follow up paperwork during regular daily officer activity and the officers are unable to sit at the front desk when the Administration Assistant is out. The financial impact is an estimated amount for approximately 30 hours in 2013. Further information is expected by December 18th, and it may include a few additional unexpected days of coverage.

After discussion the Selectmen determined the additional funds for 2013 would be found and the addition of help should be included in the 2014 Police Department budget request.

Motion: by Ms. Bonser, second by Mr. Carpenter agree to provide additional help for the coverage of Administrative Assistant in the Nottingham Police Department.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

MANIFEST SIGNATURE:

Motion: by Mr. Carpenter, second by Ms. Bonser to approve the 11/18/2013 manifest.

Vote: 3-0 in favor.

OUTSTANDING MINUTES:

Motion: Ms. Bonser, second Mr. Carpenter to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2013 meeting as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Motion: Mr. Carpenter, second Ms. Bonser to approve the minutes of the October 29, 2013 meeting as written.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Motion: Mr. Carpenter, second Ms. Bonser to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2013 meeting as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Motion: Ms. Bonser, second Mr. Carpenter to approve the minutes of the November 12, 2013 meeting as amended.

Vote: 3 – 1 in favor. Chair Rafter abstained.

Library 2014 Budget: Ms. Capron and Ms. Medeiros presented material regarding the Library budget, including a breakdown of the requested salary increases. Ms. Medeiros stated salaries are increasing with the 3% COLA, but is also increased with a new Children's Librarian position. The trustees feel now is the time to introduce the 15 hours a week/one weekend a month part-time position. The position will be staffed in 2014 from April to December.

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Ms. Capron stated the Children's Librarian will provide specific services and programs for children ages 6 and up, this includes maintaining the book selection and work with the children.

Mr. Carpenter asked about the overage in the Substitute salary line. Ms. Capron stated the budget was over spent, but the coverage is at a lower hourly rate than the positions being covered; between the two positions salary amounts balances out.

Ms. Capron reviewed the library budget line by line. There were higher increases in Landscaping and Programming and minimal increases in Furniture, Magazines/Newspapers, Professional Dues, and Videos/DVD's.

Mr. Carpenter asked if the increase in Landscaping was part of the previously requested additional landscape funds to maintain elimination of the invasive weeds. Ms. Capron replied it is an additional amount. As invasive species are eradicated corrective plants should be planted, mulch spread, and regular landscaping maintenance completed to prevent re-growth.

Ms. Capron stated there is a higher increase in Programming with the new Children's Librarian position but it also includes a partnership with the Friends Program to purchase Science Museum passes.

The Selectmen thanked Ms. Capron and Ms. Medeiros for coming.

Fire Department: Chief Vilchok reviewed that salary increases include the 3% COLA for two fire fighters and 6.2% for the new fire fighter who is moving beyond the probationary period in addition to the third position being funded for the full year. There is a decrease in part-time salary with the hiring of the third full time staff member.

Service contracts increased for new software to host fire fighting inventory (call) reporting processing; providing additional security, required quarterly reports, and remove redundancy with having to re-enter information.

Chief Vilchok requested additional funds for the fire fighter stipend, which was last increased in 2008. Ms. Bonser stated the Budget Committee has requested supporting documentation for the increase. Mr. Carpenter stated there is additional information requested supporting the increase in full time salary with more coverage, but why also the increase with stipend volunteer calls; how does the on-call system and points work. Chief Vilchok stated he would be able to provide the information and reviewed the point system process. A stipend is provided to those members who answer and provide a specific number of hours to answer emergency calls, a fixed number of points is provided for meetings as well, but in order to qualify for a stipend payment you must also answer emergency calls. It is harder to keep volunteer staff with increased requirements to maintain certification, life circumstances and an increase is warranted. Mr. Carpenter suggested providing a comparison of call volume and explaining the need for increase in stipend payments.

Chief Vilchok continued the line by line review of his budget. Chief Vilchok stated Medical Supplies are purchased through the Ambulance Maintenance warrant article account. There has been an increase in the Breathing Apparatus line there is an increased per bottle use fee amount, additional regular testing for the equipment and it also includes required 5 year testing. Dues are increased because of a new membership to the International Association of Fire Chiefs and increase in other membership amounts. Publications is increased to receive new periodicals for training, annual code reference updates at an increased cost and to provide handouts during school/student visits and open house hours. Training and Protective gear lines are level funded.

Chief Vilchok stated despite going over his 2013 training budget the 2014 line does not have a change as 2013 included additional staff training that will not be required in 2014.

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Vaccinations and Testing is a significant increase for the final year in the department plan to provide vaccinations for all department members. The amount will provide 20 members with a full round of Hepatitis B shots and 15 boosters; the last round of Hepatitis B tests was in 1998. The 2015 budget will be drastically reduced with the 2014 updates and moving forward only regular maintenance will be required. Chief Vilchok stated it isn't morally right to select some members for vaccinations and request others to wait.

The Uniforms/Cleaning, Office Supplies, Office Equipment, Supplies Equipment and Gasoline lines all remain level funded.

Vehicle Maintenance includes testing of hoses; vehicle pump systems, annual ladder testing and new signage on the tanker, including regular operating expenses. In order to reduce the length of time the vehicle is out of service, the Chief requested coordinating with the towns of Lee, Madbury and Strafford to hire a company to complete the testing more efficiently.

Hydrant Maintenance is significantly increased in order to replace the Deerfield Road Hydrant, which has seen a recent higher amount of hydrant damage. Chief Vilchok stated he received an initial proposal amount of \$15,000.00 from a private company. New signage is also needed for the hydrants. Ms. Bonser asked if the Highway Department can replace the pipe for a lower amount. Discussion took place about the cost of the new pipe, equipment needed to complete the repair work and if the Highway Department can do the work.

It was stated the Budget Committee asked about the annual Cistern/Hydrant Fund in addition to the hydrant repair and discussion took place to determine if the initial \$1000.00 amount suggested is enough or if more is needed. Mr. Brown asked how quickly a hydrant would need to be repaired if one failed, would it need to be immediately or could it wait to the next budget cycle. General discussion took place about hydrant and cistern maintenance amounts and possible schedule, is there possible insurance coverage for repair if a failure was to happen?

The Radio/Maintenance line remains level funded and the Telephone line is increased with the addition of the Chief's smart phone, providing better communication.

Chief Vilchok Forest Fire remains level funded and the NH reimbursement grant will pay only 50% of the fire fighting expenses, but the full 100% must be in the budget.

Chief Vilchok stated the overall increase in the Fire Department budget is an approximate \$56,000.00, but many of the significant increases are a one time expense for this year and will not be present again for a while.

Chief Vilchok reviewed the Ambulance Warrant article lines and reminded the Selectmen these amounts are off set from the revenue raised from ambulance billing. The next Ambulance replacement will be in 2017.

Discussion took place about the significant increase in electric usage at the new Fire Department, with what appears to be unknown reasons; more efficient bulbs have been installed, equipment tested for efficiency and a PSNH review to determine a reason, but nothing is standing out as a specific cause.

Information Discussion/Request for Special Meeting with Rymes and Counsel: The Selectmen stated Town Counsel has requested to receive supporting documentation regarding the additional information needed by the Fire Chief for the Fire Safety Analysis regarding the proposed Rymes/Fernald Propane Facility. The information explaining the specific code detail should be returned to the Selectmen by Wednesday. Chair Rafter stated Rymes feels they have provided the

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answers requested. The Selectmen and Chief Vilchok will have consultation with counsel on Monday, November 25 at 6:00 pm and a meeting with Rymes and their attorney at 7:00 pm.

Updating Maps for Master Plan/Planning Use: Mr. Colby presented the Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC) proposal to update the maps located in the Town Office hallway. The proposal also includes an electronic copy of the maps for additional uses. After discussion it was determined the 2013 SRPC funds had not been spent and could be used to order the maps this year, for delivery in 2014.

Motion: by Ms. Bonser, second by Mr. Carpenter to expend funds from the SRPC account in agreement to the proposed amount of \$2,322.60 for new maps.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

LUCT/Current Use Review: Members of the Conservation Commission were in attendance to answer any questions the Selectmen might have. The Selectmen indicated they were going to review the material in preparation of a future meeting with Conservation. Ms. Wirkkala explained the Selectmen requested information regarding the number of acres in current use, but it isn't fully completed. The Selectmen asked if the land for Pawtuckaway State Park and if parcels with an existing conservation easement were identified in the assessing software; Ms. Wirkkala would clarify what is identified. Mr. Carpenter explained he wanted to have a better understanding of what LUCT funds might be available to provide the Conservation Commission for the funds for conservation purposes.

General discussion took place about quantity of lands that might be available in current use, lands that are already in conservation easement and what information the Conservation Commission might have about the same issues. It was stated the regional planning commissions will have more information about individually held easements that the Conservation Commission might not have.

Discussion took place about what information is made available on the property record cards. Deeds of all types are received by the town but information regarding property easements is not tracked but could be with a note on the property record card. Some information is available regarding easements from SRPC which can be compared to the parcels in the current use program to determine which properties could be considered for conservation easement.

The Selectmen requested to meet with the Conservation Commission members on December 16th to review the projects they are actually considering, the possible cost of each property or easement purchase being considered, determine an estimate of LUCT that might be collected to use in the proposed purchases, consideration of seeking additional funds, and consideration of a possible cap of the amount put into the Conservation Commission fund.

General Business:

Mr. Brown presented a permit application to the Selectmen to replace a retaining wall located at #15 Barrington Road, near Routes 202 and 9. The application is notification to and seeks approval from the abutters to complete the work for the owner Julius Stock. Mr. Brown stated the application is a standard formality.

Motion: by Mr. Carpenter, second by Ms. Bonser to approve the request for the owner Julius Stock to replace the retaining wall located at 15 Barrington Road.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Back Building Renovation: Mr. Brown stated he would like to review the engineer's drawings that are available with Mr. Carlson, a member of the Building Committee, to determine if the

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information available was enough to seek an RFP for the repairs. It was stated clarification is needed to determine if the roof must be removed to complete the recommended structural repairs. Discussion took place about what steps should take place and when the construction work might be completed. Mr. Brown stated he will need to seek recommendations for construction companies who might complete the work. After discussion it was decided that the roof replacement would take place in 2015, and information gathering will continue.

COLA/Insurance Budget Information: Mr. Brown presented information regarding the new health insurance proposal, an approximate savings of \$11,300.00. However, changing from the LGC Healthtrust insurance will prevent the Town from collecting on the rebate the LGC is required to provide. Davis and Towle provided the bid and their coverage would be provided by New Hampshire Interlocal Trust (NHIT).

Mr. Brown stated it is an undertaking to swap from one health insurance company to another with completion and processing new applications for all employees covered and would it be worth the potential \$4,500.00 savings to swap from one company to another. Changing plans will eliminate being grandfathered with the co-pay reimbursement offer and information is coming regarding prescription plan co-pay amounts.

After discussion the Selectmen decided to stay with the currently provided health insurance coverage with Healthtrust. However, they want to discuss and review alternative health insurance options early in 2014 for the 2015 budget cycle; despite the amount of work to review costs and changing plans, the cost savings might be worth the effort.

Mr. Brown stated the Selectmen can choose to remove \$4000.00 from the budget and eliminate the co-pay reimbursement option. The Selectmen decided to leave the co-pay assistance.

It was stated there are additional items waiting to be added to the budget, which can't be calculated until the COLA is established. The Selectmen requested to establish a 2% COLA and merit on an individual basis. The Selectmen would meet on Monday, December 9 at 6:30 pm to review the 2014 Administrative Budget lines.

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business,

9:46 PM **Motion:** by Mr. Carpenter, second by Ms. Bonser to adjourn.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Wirkkala