

Minutes
Nottingham Selectmen's Meeting
July 14, 2014

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

Members Present: Mark Carpenter, Mary Bonser and Donna Danis

Others: Chris Sterndale – Town Administrator, Dawn Wirkkala – Secretary, John Morin

MANIFEST SIGNATURE:

Motion: by Ms. Bonser, second by Ms. Danis to approve the July 14, 2014 manifests.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

OUTSTANDING MINUTES:

Motion: Ms. Bonser, second by Ms. Danis to approve the minutes of the June 30, 2014 meeting as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Chair Carpenter stated there is a proposed amendment to the March 10, 2014 minutes. A correction is needed, changing the name from Ms. Anderson to Cheryl Smith.

Motion: by Ms. Danis, second by Ms. Bonser to correct the March 10, 2014 minutes.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Town Administrator/Department Reports, Mail/Correspondence and Signature Items:

Building Inspector: Mr. Colby is back to work and feeling better.

Marston Property: The building on the Marston property has been demolished without any issues.

Police: The Department had a busy weekend at the State Park during the July 4th weekend. The State Park has some newer employees who are still learning the process and procedures between the park employees and Nottingham Police Department.

It was determined a portable toilet is still needed at the Pawtuckaway hiking area.

Fire Department: The new boat is in active duty, and a small problem has been determined when driving at high speeds, which is being corrected.

Recycle Center: The center was closed Saturday, July 5th due to a power outage, and protocol regarding the closing was followed. However, a new phone was provided to the department because the old phone needed power to operate. In order to notify people of closings and other Town alerts, the Police Department Nixle system will be used for email and text messages.

Chair Carpenter stated notice should be given immediately to notify people of a loss of power or other potential permanent closings. Ms. Danis also suggested using the All Nottingham Facebook page for notifications as well as other email lists available through outside sources.

Information regarding the Nixle system is on the Town website/home page.

Discussion took place about the Recycle Center needing power to operate and purchasing a generator is not cost effective, requirement of staff remaining on site, establishing if power has been restored, and actions of the employees during the power outage.

The Selectmen agreed communicating the closing is the most important issue.

Chair Carpenter discussed the possibility of the Recycling Center having dumpsters picked up more than once per week, as well as having additional hours to schedule dumpster pickups on an as needed basis.

Highway: The Highway crew is busy working on road maintenance and repair work. Work continues on Berry Road, Lincoln Drive is mostly complete and everything is going as scheduled.

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Board of Selectmen Department/Board/Committee Reports:

Planning Board: The Board finished reviewing the proposed ordinance regarding lot disturbance and will now move forward to review the next proposed ordinance regarding steep slope issues. A few permit applications have been considered and passed.

MPEC: A member from NH Listens came to the July 1st meeting to discuss their services and the process they would use for the Marston project. A lot of good suggestions were made, including attending Nottingham Day to begin building awareness about the project and to start gathering feedback. NH Listens will help plan a community input session, develop a conversation guide, provide facilitator training, and produce a summary report.

The next MPEC meeting is on Monday, July 21 at 6:30 pm and the committee will make a decision about using the services of NH Listens. There is the possibility of receiving grant money to help pay for their services, with an estimated cost of \$1000.00 to the Town.

Chair Carpenter stated he appreciates the method being used by Ms. Danis, by creating a core group of people to work on the planning process. There is the hope that sponsorships and revenue generating options can be developed to help pay for the development as well as the on-going maintenance costs.

Ms. Danis stated part of the method suggested was holding the facilitation meeting with a potluck option and having a specific group for kids to participate.

Budget Committee: Ms. Danis reported the next Budget Committee meeting is at 7:00 pm on September 4, 2014 in Conference Room #1.

APPOINTMENTS: The Selectmen had no appointments.

Discussion Items:

Ethics Policy: Chair Carpenter and Ms. Bonser stated the sample from the Town of Rumney was the most applicable; Ms. Danis agreed.

The Selectmen agreed personal integrity is important and discussed whether or not the Selectmen want to have the ability to correct issues that might go on and/or if they have the ability to do so.

Ms. Bonser stated she is concerned by having to even consider the need of an ethics policy, because if you have to write down "ethics" you're already in trouble. Ms. Bonser explained that committee members assigned by the BOS are working on the the BOS behalf.

Discussion took place about how or if the Selectmen should consider an ethics policy telling Board and Committee members it is something they have to follow. Mr. Sterndale stated the Selectmen have the ability to recommend action but not necessarily the ability for enforcement of an ethics policy. It is important to remind people where they can find help when it is needed and provide them with tools to make their own decisions. Letting Board and Committee members know what type of Town we want Nottingham to be, encouraging discussion and presenting the information when there is a possible conflict. Ms. Danis highlighted that having guidance in areas such as potential conflict-of-interest would be valuable.

The Selectmen decided to continue review of the ethics information and will consider a decision about what, if anything they should do at the next BOS meeting.

Employee Performance Evaluations: The Selectmen and Mr. Sterndale discussed the process and procedures for employee evaluations. Mr. Sterndale stated the Employee Manual has a policy regarding periodic performance evaluation; however there does appear to be inconsistency with how often they have actually been completed.

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Ms. Danis and Chair Carpenter stated while the job duties might not change on an annual basis the performance objectives for each period are likely different, and it is important to make sure objectives are being met.

Ms. Danis stated Mr. Sterndale should complete evaluations of Department Heads in a manner similar to what is being expected of the employees the Department Heads will evaluate.

The Selectmen agreed there should be the ability to reward those employees who meet and exceed their objectives. Mr. Sterndale was requested to establish a method, procedure and forms needed for consistent employee evaluation for all departments. There was agreement a new evaluation process could take up to one year to complete, from establishing current objectives and relaying it to employees, giving employee a period of time for completion, and establishing a process about evaluating the progress.

The Selectmen stated annual cost of living increases have been included in budget planning, occasional merit increases or bonuses have been discussed, but are less promoted.

Ms. Danis asked about the strategy for employee reviews. Mr. Sterndale stated he is still in the process of gathering the personnel information in one location, has to meet with one more Department Head to determine the actual timeline for evaluations, and there is the possibility of recommending a form and process to the Department Head during a group meeting next week.

NHMA Legislative Policy Recommendation List: The Selectmen decided they would present their comments and recommendations regarding the NHMA legislative policy action to Mr. Sterndale. The results would be collated, position established based on the majority position and a final review by the Selectmen before submission to the NHMA.

2015 Budget Prep: Chair Carpenter stated he wanted to start talking about the larger budget issues, and reminding all that the objective is to filter out what is considered a "want" versus a "need".

Ms. Bonser stated the Town actually runs pretty lean with a good budget and expressed agreement there is much of the budget that doesn't involve the Town. Chair Carpenter stated the Selectmen have done a good job trying to keep a level budget.

Chair Carpenter stated the Selectmen should review if there are things or areas that they can cut from the budget. Ms. Bonser stated essential services are provided with a minimal number of employees. Ms. Danis stated she has requested information about getting statistics on programs and services provided from Mr. Sterndale. After discussion the Selectmen determined there may be services or items that can be considered in a warrant article instead of including the service or item in regular Town Budgets as this lends more transparency to the towns people.

Mr. Sterndale stated he will use a process similar to the existing format during his first year, considering changes as he becomes more familiar with the budget specifics for Nottingham. Early budget exercises will be to try and provide budget data over multiple years, updating the accounting and software processes to include more detailed budget information in addition to just completing the day to day operations, consideration of regular projects and routine processes will continue, and he looks forward to the process next year when more data will become available. The Department Heads will be requested to provide a percentage increase or decrease method and a consideration of services provided.

Mr. Sterndale stated he would be willing to start the budget discussion with the Selectmen by late August.

The Selectmen asked to see the 2014 Budget amounts and the second quarter expenses.

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2013 Audit Report: The Selectmen reviewed the management discussion and response portion of the audit and Mr. Sterndale would provide the comments from the Chair regarding the audit management discussion to the other Selectmen for review.

NH State Senate/Representative Candidates Night: Chair Carpenter stated there are many individuals running for State Senate or State Representative and asked if the Selectmen should host a Candidates night.

The Selectmen agreed and discussed options for what night would be best, as well as which positions and candidates would be invited. After discussion Chair Carpenter would work with Mr. Sterndale to develop a strawman proposal that can be reviewed prior to the next board meeting, with the intent to decide on the plan.

School Principal Search Committee:

Motion: by Ms. Bonser, second by Ms. Danis to nominate Chair Carpenter as the Selectmen representative on the School Board Principal Search Committee and Ms. Danis as the alternate.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Pawtuckaway State Park: Ms. Bonser stated the state park is the most important piece of property in the Town and asked if the Selectmen can task the Conservation Commission to work towards permanently preserving the park?

After discussion the Selectmen decided they would discuss the matter with the Conservation Commission during their next quarterly meeting.

USA Springs: Ms. Danis asked about if Ms. Thomson received a response to her questions about the Town taking the property by tax deed. Chair Carpenter stated he responded to Ms. Thomson almost immediately. Ms. Danis asked responses to be forwarded to all Selectmen and the Selectmen agreed.

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business,

7:57 PM Motion: by Ms. Bonser, second by Ms. Danis to adjourn.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Wirkkala