Minutes
Nottingham Selectmen's Meeting
Monday, December 15, 2014 at 6:30 PM

6:41 PM Chair Carpenter opened the meeting and asked all those present to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Mark Carpenter, Mary Bonser, Donna Danis

Others: Chris Sterndale – Town Administrator, Sue Serino – Secretary

MANIFEST SIGNATURE:

Motion: Motion by Ms. Bonser, second by Ms. Danis to approve the December 15, 2014 manifest.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

OUTSTANDING MINUTES:

Motion: Motion by Chair Carpenter, second by Ms. Danis to approve the minutes of the October 30, 2014 meeting as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Motion: Motion by Chair Carpenter, second by Ms. Danis to approve the minutes of the November 5, 2014 meeting as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor

Motion: Motion by Chair Carpenter, second by Ms. Danis to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2014 meeting as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor

Motion: Motion by Chair Carpenter, second by Ms. Danis to approve the Non-Public minutes of the November 10, 2014 meeting as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor

Motion: Motion by Chair Carpenter, second by Ms. Danis to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2014 meeting as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor

Motion: Motion by Chair Carpenter, second by Ms. Danis to approve the Non-Public minutes of the November 17, 2014 meeting as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Town Office: Mr. Sterndale stated people should verify open and closed holiday office hours, as some offices are closed during their regular hours for vacation. The Tax Collector has extended hours to accept tax payments prior to December 20th. The Recycling Center will be closed Christmas Day & New Years Day. After discussion it was decided the Administrative/Selectmen's Office will close at noon on Christmas Eve.

Police Department: Chief Foss is close to hiring a part-time officer, with existing experience. The new full time hire will attend the Police Academy in 2015.

MPEC: The draft report from the community discussion evening were reviewed and discussed with NH Listens and the final report will be ready in the next couple of weeks. The committee requested that each member review their ideas for both long term and short term plans moving forward with the property development. The next meeting date has not yet been determined. Ms. Danis requested Mr. Sterndale and a school board member or school employee attend to review the school field plan.

The Selectmen reviewed they had agreed to hire a company to review possible field locations for 2015, reducing some of the planning pressure from the committee. The Selectmen agreed they would not move forward with definitive plans for the property until the field review has been completed and a stronger plan designed. The Selectmen discussed with the School Board about hiring a company to help with an overall plan – not specific to fields only.

Chair Carpenter stated the Selectmen as a group want the Marston project to be a community work project, with the committee establishing a plan on how to move forward.

Mr. Sterndale stated he will hold another meeting with school officials to continue review of the school field study. Ms. Danis stated she would also attend.

Chair Carpenter and Ms. Bonser thanked Ms. Danis for taking the lead on the project planning and committee.

Planning Board: Ms. Bonser reported a second hearing regarding setback requirements would take place on January 14, 2015. The proposed Steep Slope ordinance change was voted down and the Land Disturbance ordinance change was tabled for later review; and will not go to the voters in March.

The Selectmen discussed how changing demographics might affect Nottingham long term with concern about education, business and the elderly. Selectman Bonser is studying this issue.

Budget Committee: Ms. Danis asked about the prior Budget Committee meetings.

Chair Carpenter stated Mr. Don Cinfo did a great job explaining his plan and needs for the Recycling Center. Ms. Bonser stated the Library presented their budget. Chair Carpenter explained that Town Adminstrator Chris Sterndale and Janet Holvath reviewed the Recreation budget.

Commendations: Chair Carpenter read a letter from Police Chief Gunnar Foss asking for commendation on the actions of Sergeant Spagna and Lieutenant Sandra Vilchock for their work in the recent Fire Department tragedy. Sergeant Spagna and Lieutenant Vilchock administered aid to the victim at great risk to themselves with the high levels of carbon monoxide in the building.

Motion: by Ms. Bonser, second by Chair Carpenter to commend both individuals for their actions.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Ms. Bonser recommended a possible personal letter or letter for the Town Report acknowledging their actions, in addition to a possible tangible gift. The Selectmen agreed to review their options and would complete a more formal presentation during Town Meeting.

Health Report/Recommendation: Mr. Colby submitted notice of a condemned building within Cedar Waters Village, M23-2-13, as the building collapsed and may be a danger to others in the park.

Ms. Bonser recused herself from the Board of Selectmen to review the situation. Ms. Bonser explained the property is not owned by the Bonser's, was abandoned by the owner and had been taken by the Town by tax deed. Ms. Bonser stated Mr. Bonser would be willing to purchase the building from the Town for a minimal fee, as the land is already owned by the Bonser's, and would address the issue for destruction on their own at no cost to the Town.

Mr. Sterndale stated he wanted to review the situation before requesting a decision from the Board of Selectmen.

Code Enforcement: Mr. Colby requested to refund $50.00 for the Galloway Building permit as they have abandoned the project.

Motion: by Ms. Bonser, second by Ms. Danis to refund the $50.00 to the Galloway's.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Tax Collector: A memo from the Tax Collector was received about his action to deed properties based on non-payment of taxes; the BOS can advise the tax collector not to deed specific properties as they determine.

GENERAL BUSINESS/REVIEW:

2015 Operating Budget & Warrant Articles Review: Mr. Sterndale reviewed the status of recommended changes to raise employee health care premiums and raising wages and salaries. This change will bring salaries and benefit payments closer to those of surrounding towns, all while making an effort to try and minimize benefit costs to employees. This change is in an effort to try and increase retention of full time Police and Fire Department employees.

Mr. Sterndale reviewed the specific proposed options to changes to health insurance premium plans in comparison to other towns. After discussion the Selectmen and Mr. Sterndale agreed the changes are not as different in salary as they had hoped, but it helps the town become more comparable to surrounding towns. The approximate increase in wages for 2015 would equal about 3%, but there will be an increase in the benefit costs.

Motion: by Chair Carpenter, second by Ms. Danis to accept the proposed to wages and benefits, to include an additional increase in wages, for a new Option C.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Ms. Danis and Mr. Sterndale would work on a presentation to explain the changes to the Budget Committee and the Selectmen agreed to create a packet for employees.

Mr. Sterndale reviewed the specific proposed options salary changes. The options includes a small 1% standard cost of living adjustment (COLA) for 2015 and eliminates the use of COLA starting in 2016, and the addition of a merit pool to be divided up by employees based on their performance reviews offering salary increases in the range of 1% up to 5% for each employee. The proposed merit pool salary increase would be given to the designated employees on their anniversary date with the percentage based on performance review results.

The Selectmen supported the change in transition from a COLA to a merit pool for employee raises. The Selectmen supported the use of a 1% COLA for 2015 and an additional raise amount based on performance review. There will be no COLA for the 2016 year and for years beyond that.

Motion: by Ms. Danis, second by Ms. Bonser to approve the new salary model for COLA and market pool; for 2015 a 1% COLA and a $40,000.00 town wide merit pool...

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Chair Carpenter requested the Selectmen review the employee notification packet prior to employee distribution.

Mr. Sterndale reviewed the information he has received to replace the roof over the gym and kitchen and the proposed warrant article for Town Meeting. After discussion the Selectmen agreed they would include the roof replacement as a warrant article with a special exception clause for a possible catastrophe.

Mr. Sterndale reviewed the other proposed warrant articles, including those similar articles that have been included for the past few years. The list includes items for road reconstruction, highway vehicle reserve fund, fire vehicle reserve fund, tri-centennial fund, HVAC, social services, Ambulance Operations, Pawtuckaway PLIA lake host program, capping the cable franchise fees, increasing the number of Library Trustees, eliminate mailing property assessment cards, as well as the roof replacement.

Mr. Sterndale would review the request for Conservation Commission fund payment of the lake host program with the Conservation Commission.

Mr. Sterndale would review prior year warrant articles regarding sale of town owned property to determine if the request has been voted on previously.

Mr. Sterndale reviewed the request to eliminate sending a copy of both the old and new property record cards to property owners when their value has changed for the revaluation, because it would mean sending cards to every property owner. Discussion took place about the current process of notifying property owners of changing values and how it might be changed to provide both the new and old property data during the 2015 revaluation. The Selectmen requested additional clarification on the wording of the warrant article.

Ultimately the Selectmen wanted to make sure there was a method for property owners to review both the old and new property data in the process for a revaluation year and non-revaluation years.

The Selectmen agreed that the request for a new 4x4 truck for the Fire Department would not be included within the Fire Department budget but would be approved, or denied, by warrant article.

Mr. Sterndale reviewed the Selectmen will discuss at future meetings information about cistern and dry hydrant repair/replacement, new mapping option, social services agencies and any other additional requests that might come to be noticed.

The Selectmen expressed their appreciation for the job Mr. Sterndale has done with the budget process during his first year in the process.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION: The Board entered non-public under RSA 91-A:3 II(e).

8:49 PM Motion: Motion by Ms. Bonser, second by Ms. Danis to enter non-public under RSA 91-A:3 II(e).

Vote: Bonser – Yea, Carpenter – Yea, Danis – Yea. 3 – 0 in favor.

The Selectmen made no decisions during the non-public meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business,

9:15 PM **Motion:** by Ms. Bonser, second by Ms. Danis to adjourn.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Wirkkala