



Town of Plaistow ♦ Board of Selectmen
145 Main Street ♦ Plaistow ♦ NH ♦ 03865

SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

DATE: February 26, 2007

PRESENT: Lawrence W. Gil, Vice Chair; Michelle L. Curran; Daniel J. Poliquin; Charles L. Blinn, Jr.; Jason Hoch, Town Manager

EXCUSED: John Sherman, Chairman

CALL TO ORDER: 6:35 pm

MINUTES:

★Motion by M. Curran and second by D. Poliquin. to approve the minutes of February 12, 2007.

VOTE: 2-0-2 M. Curran and C. Blinn abstain.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Recreation Director Carlene Sarty approaches the Board stating that on February 20, 2007, she was hit by a car in front of Town Hall. She was doing nothing unusual. She was loading her car and was hit. She would like to find a way to take action about this. Bob Gray's mother was hit before and many cars have been hit. She is concerned that people visiting the Town Hall will be unaware of the traffic flow and could be seriously injured. She suggests that a letter be written to the State regarding the issue.

M. Curran states that she has seen people go airborne at the tracks near her building.

L. Gil states that he and C. Blinn had their vehicles hit while they were attending a meeting. He is always worried about being hit when he steps out of his car. He would like a letter sent to the State, possibly with statistics.

C. Blinn states that there may need to be a flashing light in front of the Town Hall. He states that the road narrows in front of the Town Hall and this creates a dangerous situation.

L. Gil believes that it is only by the grace of God that someone has not been hit. He feels that this is the time to push the issue. C. Sarty was lucky that she was not severely hurt.

C. Blinn states that he spoke with Representative Norm Major and he would like a copy of the letter that we send to the State. He will follow through on his level and advocate on our behalf.

C. Sarty states that it is her hope that this ends positively with something being done to increase safety.

L. Gil suggests talking to the Police Chief about potential solutions.

C. Blinn states that people are getting out of their cars in this area and the situation is dangerous.

J. Hoch states that he will draft a letter and research who to send the letter to. He states that this is a heavily traveled road. At the time of the accident the school zone light was flashing and the driver was 10 feet from the sign. He states that the road is wider at the tracks and this causes drivers to increase speed. The road narrows in front of Town Hall and people are driving too fast for the road.

C. Sarty states that the Plaistow Fire and Rescue were great and handled the situation well. She states that J. Hoch was one of the first people on the scene. He got the license plate number of the car and called for assistance.

D. Poliquin asks if there can be an increase in police presence.

M. Curran states that in their defense, just last week an officer was parked in her lot observing traffic.

C. Blinn suggests a plastic pedestrian crossing sign.

J. Hoch states this is a good idea and he will look into it.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

Correspondence:

J. Hoch states that there is a notice for a wireless communication hearing in Epping. There are two letters from DES regarding well testing on Shady Lane and there were no findings above standards.

L. Gil asks what prompted testing?

J. Hoch states that it is routine.

M. Curran states this testing occurs about every 6 months.

J. Hoch states that there is a spare copy of NHMA's 2005 "Knowing the Territory" if any Selectmen would like to borrow it. The Trustees of the Trust Funds response to DRA is in the folder. J. Hoch met with J. Senter and she has provided updated reports

and the documentation about reserve funds to DRA. There is a notice of the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission meeting.

L. Gil states that they have had a joint meeting with Rockingham Planning Commission and the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission in the past and he would like to continue this type of relationship.

J. Hoch states that there is a copy of the standard agreement with the Department of Transportation (DOT) in the new business folder. This agreement is regarding the rebuilding of the Route 125 and Old County Road intersection. When federal funds are involved, DOT needs to execute an agreement with the Town in which the Town recognizes that it is responsible for maintaining the improved Town Roads.

Utility:

J. Hoch states that Attorney Kaman has been working with DOT on their role in amending pole licenses to make them subject to taxation. Highway Supervisor Dan Garlington and J. Hoch have signed a petition identical to the Board of Selectmen's to initiate the process.

Waste:

J. Hoch states the Town has received a performance bond continuation from Waste Management for the contract year beginning March 1, 2007.

Assessing:

J. Hoch informs the Board that cycled inspections will begin next month. Letters informing residents have been mailed.

Highway:

J. Hoch states that he received a letter complimenting the Highway Department on the quality of their plowing.

L. Gil states that this may not have been a big storm, but the driving conditions were some of the worst he has seen in a while. We have a good Highway Department and sometimes they are overlooked because of the lack of problems.

Police:

J. Hoch states that ads for a part-time dispatcher are circulating. The Police Chief has identified a candidate for conditional offer and in initiating a full application review. He states that the Federal Certification for Equitable Sharing Fund, more commonly known as the Drug Forfeiture Fund, has been submitted. \$9,616.20 was spent in 2006 on body armor, electronic surveillance equipment, drug education programs and a safety emergency light. The fund's balance is currently \$14,812.78. Sergeant Thomas Hawthorne has given notice of his retirement at the end of March.

L. Gil would like information on any retirement events for Sgt. Hawthorne. He has had the opportunity to work with him on personal issues and had a positive experience.

Town Clerk:

J. Hoch states that the Town Clerk's Office has started live connection to the State for vehicle registrations. This required the purchase and installation of additional networking equipment. Since the data is clear between registrations and the State system, the process should be faster for people to register vehicles.

Finance:

J. Hoch states that as of January 31, 2007, revenues for the month were \$469,073.95, expenditures were \$1,817,420.50, leaving a balance of \$6,130,806.99. There is a potential to need to borrow in May. He states that the new procedure for billing and collection for Special Details has been implemented.

M. Curran asks if this is tracked the same as payroll and deductions taken.

J. Hoch states that this is correct. In the budget reports you will see a line with this number as a negative.

L. Gil asks what an example of non-billed events would be.

J. Hoch states that an example would be waterline construction.

Emergency Management/Health Department:

J. Hoch reviews that Health Inspector Dennise Horrocks has set up a class on 3/13/07, from 8am to noon for key personnel, including elected officials. He states that this is repeat information but the Selectmen will need to complete this training because future FEMA funding will be contingent on appropriate certification. He states 2 more staff completed the training.

Water:

J. Hoch states year 2010 is the response to last week's question of when the waterline is expected to reach Rockingham Athletic Club. He states that Chief McArdle and Underwood Engineering continue to work with DOT on the Route 125 widening project and potential relocation of some portions of the waterline. The current plan calls for some pipe to be replaced to avoid a series of turns in the pipe.

M. Curran asks if they can move their catch basins.

J. Hoch states that they have asked this question and it is not possible. We can straighten a few sections or curve the line. Replacing the pipe would be \$3,000 and this would make the line straight and this is more efficient than a curved line.

L. Gil asks if this will be an ongoing issue.

J. Hoch states this is only for the section that has already been constructed. He states that this project has become more complex than first anticipated. He is reviewing the draft of the Request for Proposal for assessment of the water system. He states Dick Latham has given his opinion to Chief McArdle.

Town Hall:

J. Hoch states that last week a window blew open in the basement causing a component in the control to freeze. This resulted in the alarm system activating. The window has been secured to prevent further problems.

D. Poliquin states that the sprinkler heads on the third floor were painted. They can not just be cleaned, they need to be replaced. He states that painters should know not to paint these. He would like J. Hoch to look into whose responsibility this is and the potential compensation.

Buildings:

J. Hoch states that a window on the back side of the Historical Society was broken. Maintenance Supervisor Dave Bowles replaced the window and it was broken again. The Fire Chief approached some of the kids playing ice hockey near there to donate toward the repairs. A mesh screen is being built to cover the windows. He states that Atlantic Energy solutions did an energy audit at the safety complex and pump station. We will receive a report of their findings. J. Hoch has been discussing the future job opening that will develop when John Arrahovites retires at the end of March.

M. Curran would like a letter sent to John Arrahovites regarding his work at the Town and his friendly disposition.

Snow Storm:

J. Hoch states that during the February 14, 2007 snow storm we received many calls about waste disposal. Waste Management had notified us that they were delaying pick-up. We posted this on the website and placed in on the cable channel.

Congresswomen Carol Shea-Porter:

J. Hoch attended the opening of Congresswoman Carol Shea-Porter's district office. He discussed Plaistow's interest in extending rail service here with her.

Legislative Bulletins:

J. Hoch states that he is compiling a list of bills of interest in legislature from his review of the Legislative Bulletins and input from staff. He asks the Board to let him know of any bills of interest that they may have. He would like to have this available for discussion with our legislative delegation.

Section 125 Benefit Plan:

J. Hoch states that on the request of several employees the section 125 benefit plan has been reactivated. We have been paying the administrative fees, but not

participating. This saves the employees money as well as reducing base wages upon which the employee and Town pay taxes.

Selectmen Stipend:

J. Hoch informs the Selectmen that they must submit a request for their stipend. He has given each Selectman a form. The reason for this change is that he should not be authorizing their stipend payments.

Well Connections:

J. Hoch states that he is compiling background information regarding well connections on Old County Road.

M. Curran asks if the draft is in the process.

J. Hoch states that he had a conversation with Attorney Kalman and he will be getting further information to him on this topic.

Property Sales:

J. Hoch states that the State is looking to purchase a piece of property to own outright and a drainage easement. The procedure for the Board to authorize the sale of land is laid out in the RSA accepted by the Board of Selectmen. The Conservation Commission, Planning Board and 2 public hearings are necessary. This is a decent stretch of time to get all of these pieces to fall into place. The sooner we get to this the better. He wanted to place this on the Selectmen's radar screen.

M. Curran asks how this is done. If the Town has a hearing, shouldn't it be open to anyone who wants to bid on it?

J. Hoch states this is part of the discussion. This is limited use property and there are options. You need to decide if you want to accept the proposal, open it up to auction or something else.

L. Gil will bring this issue up at the Conservation Commission.

Cable Show:

J. Hoch states that he will be taping a show on warrant articles later this week.

Town Report:

J. Hoch states that the Town Report is at the printer and ready to be produced. He states that shifting to Adobe this year made some parts of the report easier to manage. He states that we did spend additional funds for a technology consultant. However, this should be offset by reduced overtime and lower printing costs. Another benefit of the Adobe format is that we will be producing CDs. He states that the CDs will offer supplemental information. A CD only costs the Town \$.10 and a book costs the Town \$10.00.

NEW BUSINESS:

Sidewalk Snow Removal:

D. Poliquin states that he has had a few residents approach him regarding clearing snow off sidewalks. Around the Town Hall this was not done. He would like this to be addressed. He tried to walk into the Town Hall and had to walk in the street.

J. Hoch states that the policy has been no sidewalk maintenance. He would like the Selectmen's opinion on this. We would need a definitive policy. Currently, the policy is that we do not maintain sidewalks. If we want something different we need more discussion. The clearing off in front of town buildings is one issue and sidewalk maintenance is another.

D. Poliquin states that we have always done the front entrance to the buildings.

C. Blinn asks what type of equipment we have.

J. Hoch states that we have a snow blower but would need some type of tractor.

L. Gil asks what the exact policy states.

J. Hoch states that he can research the policy, but his recollection is that we do not maintain sidewalks.

C. Blinn asks if it is a liability to not have the sidewalks done.

L. Gil states that it is surprising to him that we do not have this clearly documented and he would like to look into this. He states that some residents are taking care of the sidewalks in front of their property. When you introduce a sidewalk into a property you didn't have before, does the resident have the responsibility to maintain it? He would like clarification.

J. Hoch states that moving beyond our property is a whole different issue.

L. Gil feels we need to look at all the issues effecting the Town and decide what we are or are not going to do.

D. Poliquin states the concerns he heard of were in front of the Town Hall and past Pollard School. This was due to children walking from school.

Pump House Snow Removal:

D. Poliquin states that the Highway Department is not plowing out the pump house on Arbor Lane. He states that two people he knows were asked to plow this area and they said no because they were not subcontracted by the Town.

C. Blinn asks if this is a Water Department, Fire Department or Highway Department issue.

J. Hoch states he had a conversation with Chief McArdle and Highway Supervisor Dan Garlington regarding this issue. This is an operational issue.

M. Curran states that there are a lot of man hours spent cleaning the schools and they do not pay us. She feels that we need to have our properties done before we start on other properties.

D. Poliquin states that he heard from someone who spoke with the Fire Chief that he asked the Highway Department to clear the area. The Highway department said they only go to the gate and their equipment is too heavy for the area.

L. Gil states that it does not make sense to him that this is a new issue. He feels that we need to look into what was done in the past and develop a plan moving forward.

D. Poliquin states that this is a safety issue. If that system needs to be activated in an emergency we need to be able to get to it. This can be taken care of with the plows or the loader. If other trucks can go into the area, then the Highway Department trucks can as well.

M. Curran would like J. Hoch to look into this and come back to the Board with how it will be addressed.

SELECTMEN REPORTS:

M. Curran asks if the Board is still planning on conducting reviews tonight.

L. Gil states he would like to wait until all 5 members of the Board are present.

M. Curran states that the Planning Board had two revocation hearings. The property known as Telly's was unable to meet their obligations and withdrew. The problem is that the Route 125 access road becomes an issue. There is no longer a site plan and there is now the potential of eminent domain. The Davies's property did not get revoked because he was able to come up with a last minute bond. He has 30 days to have a preconstruction meeting and 120 to have a vested interest. The Planning Board is going to establish firmer guidelines/timelines to follow. J. Hoch sent over forms for the Planning Board to look at. She states that we are elected officials and people need to be more involved. J. Hoch suggested a form that discloses what members of the Boards have researched regarding the property. This makes everything up front and keeps things cleaner. Discussion of Stateline Pet retaining wall and boulders.

L. Gil is concerned with the angle of the retaining wall and the replacement fence.

M. Curran states that the Building Inspector issued a cease and desists concerning this.

L. Gil asks about Greenhill Estates.

M. Curran states that nothing is going on at this property and Mr. Brown may be looking into an Elderly Housing option.

L. Gil states that if there was ever a site that should have been revoked it was this property.

M. Curran states that this was either revoked or it was withdrawn due to issues with a driveway permit. This is another argument for the timeline format for the Planning Board. The Planning Board is also going to start a practice of disclosing conflicts.

C. Blinn does not have anything to report.

D. Poliquin states that Family Mediation has reorganized and updated position titles. Family Mediation has yearly statistics of service utilization and Plaistow was the second largest user of services.

L. Gil states that he did not attend the Conservation Commission meeting.

M. Curran states that the Papalaydo property on the Atkinson line will be coming before the Conservation Commission.

ADJOURNMENT:

L. Gil declares the meeting adjourned at 8:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicole Carr
Recording Secretary