



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

SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

DATE: October 15, 2007

CALL TO ORDER: 6:30 pm

PRESENT: Michelle L. Curran, *Chairman*; Lawrence W. Gil, *Vice Chairman*; Daniel John A. Sherman, Daniel Poliquin

EXCUSED: Charles L. Blinn, Jr.

MINUTES:

The Board of Selectmen postponed reviewing the 10-01-2007 minutes. The Selectmen would like more time to review the document.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Brian Levasseur of LaPearle Avenue is present to discuss Haynes Boulevard. He asks when the residents can expect Haynes Boulevard to be open to the public. States it's been closed for the past six months.

M. Curran states when they came in front of the planning board there were going to be repairs to that road. That would have been part of the project and they would have been given a right of way.

B. Levasseur states everyone was originally told it was a two to four week period and no one was notified of a change but it's now become a six-month process. States he's the only one to question it.

J. Hoch states that the road will be open by November 1st. Haverhill, MA has closed their portion of the road and given it to the plaza. This makes the Haverhill, MA side a private driveway.

M. Curran states they were going to use it as the cut around to the back of the building for the larger vehicles and questions is that still correct?

J. Hoch replies yes nothing is going to change with the appearance of the road and its purpose.

D. Poliquin arrives at 6:40 pm.

M. Curran asks who will be responsible for plowing.

J. Hoch replies right now we plow the road and the plaza will plow the parking lot.

J. Sherman states Haverhill took a different approach and are not blocking off Haynes Boulevard but are just giving it to the plaza.

J. Hoch states if you've been down there you will see a solid wall going up next to the cemetery and the process took much longer than anticipated on the Mass border. It increased the size of the MA project.

J. Sherman asks so when the planning board approved the plan it gave the developers the authority to close the road for an undetermined amount of time?

M. Curran replies there was going to be some work done on that plaza – but in our minds the road was only going to be tied up for a short period of time. We approved the road heading north from Haverhill as the truck entrance from Haverhill and that Hanes Blvd would remain a one-way street for trucks off Wentworth.

B. Levasseur states he thought Haynes Boulevard was now a two way street.

M. Curran states they will keep it the way it was and keep the traffic out of the main plaza. States the delays you are referring to had nothing to do with the town. It was the private project near the cemetery area that caused the delay.

B. Levasseur states it seems like the developer is taking advantage of the situation with trailers parked in Haynes Boulevard, which is a public road. Additional comments - don't know your intentions with the warrant article that was passed this past year requiring selectmen decision as to what the intentions were on Haynes Boulevard. If you're not going to do that I would suggest something be put in next year's warrant – just a recommendation. Additional comment Kristen Savage mentioned there is a utility pole in the center of Haynes Boulevard that could be moved to one side or the other by the utility co. I was under the understanding that they would be responsible to move this if requested.

J Hoch states yes they will but timeliness of the project is the problem.

B. Levasseur states also saw elderly women carrying grocery bags from Shaws down to Western Avenue the length of the road. It is unfortunate there is no sidewalk there. I don't know if it's something you can negotiate or if it's too late but it's unfortunate.

M. Curran states there was talk about the curbing. States it was brought up because of the set backs they had. I don't remember the details but there were issues with the wetlands in the back of the plaza. The entrances and exits were discussed due to the wetland and drainage issue. I believe the sidewalks came up in conversation but didn't come to fruition.

B. Levasseur states I think it would be good to have sidewalks for our citizens and that they should be able to use Hanes Boulevard to walk.

J. Sherman states I guess my concern is how can a public way be closed for that period of time - that seems like a long time. How does it happen and was it the planning board?

M. Curran replies I'm not sure John.

J. Hoch states as the schedule kept extending we probably let it slide. We felt less of a push on it because it was a Haverhill road. We could have pushed on our side but we didn't because we knew we wouldn't have gotten a through road.

J. Sherman states the fact that the developer can cause a road to be closed for six month that was suppose to be closed for a couple weeks is excessive. To close a road for this amount of time seems like it should need to be approved by the board.

M. Curran asks so this road is still closed - can we take care of that immediately Jason?

J. Hoch states no. We can open the Plaistow side but we have no authority on the Haverhill side. We can ask again but I don't want to raise false hopes.

J. Sherman states I would like to see it opened by Nov 1st but lets not let this happen again.

M. Curran states they won't be able to open Shaws until the road is finished. It will be part of a very lengthy discussion and won't be overlooked to get a CO on that building. It's unfortunate that if Brian hadn't brought this to our attention we wouldn't have known.

FIRE BUDGET

J. Hoch states **permanent positions** reflects wages at \$66,461 noting increase of \$3,418. **Uniforms** remain unchanged. **Telephone and communications**, re-calculation of landline and cell phones \$4,776 less \$480. **Data Processing** has a new item Firehouse software Suite3 user licenses at \$4,500. States this is to keep track of calls within department and has capacity to kick out reports that are necessary to file directly with the state and interface with other programs. This is something we don't currently have the ability to do.

Chief McArdle states one of the biggest issues is that we enter the data in 3 different locations verses one. States one of the questions I asked the vendor is if this program will also provide an Informational database that can be used on a medical basis as well as going out on the run and for

fire. States they gave us that as part of a grant a few years ago however we have never upgraded because it met our needs but is no longer efficient.

J. Sherman asks what is the annual cost of the administrative fee?

Chief McArdle replies unsure but will check

J. Hoch states there will be an annual number but should be 1/3 of that.

J. Sherman states that may be for support.

Chief McArdle states I've spoken with several department and they are all satisfied with it but there is also a learning curve.

J. Hoch states **medical services** \$3,150 up \$1,070 - Chief Budgeted for two physicals this year and four next year; **dues** increased \$150 to \$1,26; **office supplies** up \$300 to \$1,660; **books and periodicals** remain the same at \$200; **miscellaneous** reduced by \$585 to \$695 – re-classing to detail; **mileage and expense reimbursement** increased \$740 to \$3421 - reduce the amount for Chief's private vehicle travel and increased travel for firefighter training outside the dept; **events and activities** increased by \$600 to \$1,200 because of reclassification of misc. for pay night supper. **Permanent positions**/firefighters increased \$5,156 to \$110,380 - This reflects where we are through the current year. CPI adjustment and wages for two day shift members which includes backfill for vacation, sick and longevity. States **part-time positions –call firefighters** increased \$35,561 to 147,977 – hourly wage increased from 2006 includes EMT coverage and average of incentive awards.

First part continuing the call program, the difference is to include weekend coverage.

Chief McArdle states we've had some weekend coverage available. Staffing is an issue that we look at continuously. States it's one of the areas that is very inconsistent and at times leaves us very short handed. States we find the problem exists in surrounding areas as well. Some areas have depts. commit to a shift. States we can see if members are willing to commit to duty coverage where they are expected to respond. We have some people that are very active while others are non-active, and the input into the call forces is sporadic at best. We may have one person left after a five-year period that is still active in the dept. What we are seeing now is that commutes are much longer and people have less free time. We have two periods that are very active 4-6pm and 5-8am are areas of greatest exposure. I don't want to sound alarmed but this is a caution. Also, volunteerism is a matter of convenience and it shouldn't be. What I looked at in the budget for coverage is 3 members driver and two EMT's on stipend. Weekends would be similar to now but I will have a minimum of three people guaranteed. I would be willing to back off on that during the slower hours. If that's not possible then we need additional staff. I'm going to start data gathering to see if they can commit. Kingston is different so they have to have coverage. When they go out at night it's for 1-2 hours guaranteed. The biggest issue is EMS calls

J. Sherman asks what's the rate increase

Chief McArdle states 4%

j. Hoch states I just want to echo it's not an immediate crises but we are seeing a trend.

J. Sheman asks is there a minimum amount of time?

Chief McArdle replies no.

D. Poliquin asks have you had a chance to look at numbers for earlier in the year?

Chief McArdle replies through September 142 calls. By screening calls for medical emergencies and fires verses non-emergency calls I believe the value is \$20K-\$25k that we are not paying out in direct response.

D. Pliquin states that would offset your proposal significantly. Would stipends remain?

Chief McArdle replies these people would also be paid by the hour.

D. Poliquin states so you are just guaranteeing these people will be available - this is geared towards the EMS.

Chief McArdle replies yes - motor vehicle accidents we would easily get sufficient people. I don't expect that person to come running down to the station for a bum leg or minor injury.

D. Poliquin states I know the average calls have increase.

Chief McArdle responds we seem to have leveled off at the moment.

L. Gil states I thought I heard 1/3 are regulars. Please explain the later 1/3. How do you prompt them to become more active

Chief McArdle states it's a mix. One individual has had life change, one in early 70s with dept for 30-35 years. Although they may not come to calls they offer insight. May not be around all that often but can offer historical information. States another problem, you don't see many fires now, but these people have the knowledge if needed. Some are more involved in kids' activities. Family comes first and then job so we suffer because of that. We are finding as kids get into their teens they have less time to commit and make the sacrifice.

L. Gil states I guess if you had more people involved, word of mouth would spread and you would have more people that are regular participants.

Chief McArdle states looking at the membership after about 20 years is when they start to take a back seat. We take for granted what we do but the make up of the generations that are coming in aren't as willing to give up personal commitments.

D. Poliquin states there is a significant burnout rate. If you look at ambulance crews the average rate of expectancy is 12 years. I admit that for the last ten years I've not been that active. I let my EMT lapse because I don't have the time to commit to it.

L. Gill asks what is the current trend?

Chief McArdle replies Accidents seem to be down on 125 not sure why but they are. People call us for just about everything and anything. Twenty years ago we never would have received the calls we receive now. We receive calls for a variety of non-emergencies across the board.

J. Hoch states **overtime firefighters** line increased \$868 to \$25,643. **Building maintenance** up \$500 to \$1,900. **Training** at \$5,800 decrease to \$26,258; Removed FF1 2 @ \$1,600. **Dues** increase from \$5,000 to \$5,800. **Equipment maintenance** down by \$2,468 to \$7,175. **Fuel** good estimates for number of gallons used. As we draw closer to end of year we will calculate that number. **Vehicle maintenance** \$12,495 unchanged. **Vehicle repair** unchanged at \$3,500. **Equipment purchase** items are batteries for SCBA and mask amplifiers \$400. Structural firefighting foam up from \$300 to \$600. Opticom systems remains the same at \$300. New items are vehicle identification plates \$275 for front of vehicle; attack nozzle, tank 5 or engine 7 at \$2,795; fire call pages – 5 @ \$550 each. States some pagers are recycled or repaired while others are replaced, why is that?

Chief McArdle replies not sure why some are replaced more often than others. Once it's no longer feasible to fix we have to replace. The newer models have more capabilities but they break more easily.

J. Hoch states purchase of two clappered fittings for tank 5 and engine 7 \$2,400; storz adapters \$600; UHF Radio Rescue \$1,600 – if sending people to MA hospitals requires a separate interface for that. Replace computer \$1,000. **Equipment bunker gear** increase to \$1,610 to \$9,660.

J. Sherman states we haven't spent much of that portion of the budget this year.

Chief McArdle replies you will there is a 6-8 week lead time.

J. Hoch states books and periodicals prevention remain the same at \$2,200; general supplies increase by \$559 to \$6,144; part-time position for forest fire permitting fees down \$700 to \$200.

J. Sherman requests move to approve the budget for \$471,754.

L. Gill seconds the motion.

J. Sherman skipping on the safety

Vote

4-0-0

WATER DISTRIBUTION

J. Hoch states **temporary positions** increase of \$482 to \$8,690.

Chief McArdle states I think they do a great job. Going in the right direction as far as routinely changing equipment. The plan is to continue to recycle vales.

J. Hoch states keeping the **engineering** non-CIP projects unchanged; **telephone** \$1200; **electric** decreased \$1,629 to \$12,656.

Chief McArdle replies from an industrial standpoint they guarantee the power will be there. Whether we draw on it once or 15 times. One of our firefighters used to work for them so the good news is that we now pay closer attention to the jockey pump.

J. Hoch states reduce the **heating** line to 600; kept **general supplies** unchanged \$200. Reduce **mileage and expense reimbursement** to \$223; **Waterline repairs** at \$10,500 one of the recommendations is to have an adequate fence around it.

J Sherman requests define an adequate fence,

Chief McArdle responds we have three tiers and it is showing rust on top, the fence is in good condition except for the barbed wire on top. One roll of barbed wire should do it. States I suggest Reliable Fence Co.

J. Hoch states **equipment repairs** unchanged; **equipment maintenance** – process pump removal \$5,000, one of those pieces we realized would be more cost effective to have a contractor come in and handle.

Chief McArdle responds with the exception of the pump itself.

M. Curran asks so the idea is to close down the pump house, is that part of the recommendation?

J. Hoch replies yes.

J. Sherman asks so why would we spend \$5,000 to remove the pump.

Chief McArdle replies the longer you leave it un-serviced the less the chance of getting any salvage out of it.

J. Sherman asks what about the building?

Chief McArdle responds once that's done we have to look at the physical part of the building. The roof of the building is coming down.

J. Sherman asks why spend \$5,000 if we won't get it back.

Chief McArdle replies to avoid possible vandalism or the fact we might not be able to salvage anything if we wait too long.

J. Hoch states in a perfect world it would offset but I would really hope we don't spend \$5k on this total project.

D Poliquin states that's already been segregated.

Chief McArdle states Pump was removed from service around 1999.

J. Sherman asks can we get a revenue sheet of how much revenue and add the salvage value to get the total revenue?

Chief McArdle responds yes. States there are actually two building above ground and one is below grade that was used to distribute water over to Westville and was abandoned in 1998. We could take the 300k gallons of water from the reservoir, the capability exists to do that fairly easily. It's 300k gallons of water we could use. States we are going to put a steal plate over the access hole and lock it. There are no pressurized lines under there to my knowledge so once closed off it should be secure.

D. Poliquin states there is nothing to back feed into that area now.

Chief McArdle replies I believe that's correct the valves are closed and you would have to open to valves to do that.

Hoch states **fuel for diesel pump** remains unchanged. **Capital improvements** have been reduced to zero. What we were looking at was \$250k going into the work on route 125 each year. Discussion this past year was to put balance in the capital reserve. There is no work slated for 2008 but we still need to fund the reserve. Capital **equipment purchase** picked up new item – vehicle purchase hydro kit and vehicle strictly for animal control and water dept. Line to find appropriate

J. Hoch states that the vehicle line was left in for now. At some point when we come back to visit we need to adjust one vehicle to the correct dept and remove the second.

J. Sherman asks how would we paint it? States I guess I would like to see some consistency in all the town's vehicles.

J. Sherman motions to approve water distribution budget for \$62,269

D. Poliquin seconds motion.

Vote
4-0-0

AMBULANCE

J. Hoch states ambulance billing is increased from \$200 to \$700.

Chief McArdle states 7% of the bill is third party billing. Problem is manifested by the fact that in emergency situations, will transport and then bill the insurance company. This is done by a third party. Sometimes it's paid and sometimes not

J. Sherman motion to approve budget

Chief McArdle states we have anticipated other towns are growing as well and have their own coverage. If it's not a critical transfer we will call trinity or Kingston. We do what we can to keep our people in town.

Vote
4-0-0

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

J. Hoch states emergency management budget remains the same at \$5,933.

J. Sherman states motion to approve.

D. Poliquin states second the motion.

DISCUSSION ON MOTION

J. Sherman asks do we have direct reimbursement?

J. Hoch states there is no direct reimbursement. States mutual benefits are sometimes used as a match for radio replacement. This year no grant type function. As we looked forward that might be a good use of 07 monies.

Vote
4-0-0

TOWN MANAGERS REPORT

Correspondence

J. Hoch states report from NHDES with 2006 solid waste and disposal and recycling rates compared across the state. Data shows 10.09% recycling rate in 2006. States this is one of the lowest rates of reporting towns in the state.

M. Curran asks what were we last year

J. Hoch replies around 10.9%

L. Gil states we've talked about this quite a bit. Time to bring up the fact that we are not getting the response we need. States if you want an individual tax this is the way to do it. Need to look into it with the rising budget and only a 10% response.

M. Curran responds I think it's easier for a community to absorb it tax wise rather than expecting individuals. Now this is one more unexpected bill. As a community we should take care of ourselves.

L. Gil states the elderly, I'll presume, are not generating 5 barrels of trash a week and they recycle. We provided the containers for free yet the % of people recycling hasn't increased. This is one way to reduce taxes.

D. Poliquin states I haven't actually seen a town that has had reduced taxes because of this.

J. Sherman states one town that does very well is Littleton.

L. Gil states it's about time to look into it.

J. Hoch states Littleton had a totally different model. They bought individual trash bags, had full time employees with benefits and put in less than \$100k in property taxes to run that center. States if we are going to pursue this we should look at a handful of towns to get a flavor of what works and what doesn't. Some towns get one can and with an option to purchase additional cans. This is a good time to have two people interested in the recycle committee take some trips and see how it works. It is not going to be a win-fall savings. Half the cost is pickup and other half disposal. When I had to pay for every trash bag, I tried to recycle as much as possible. Suggests revive recycle committee this spring, well worth exploring.

L. Gil request to consider warrant article to see who is in favor or not. Give towns people some ideas as to potential savings. Will generate lot of questions with some apposed but we have a \$600k plus bill and this seems to be the only way to offset.

J. Sherman states if we increase our recycle to 20% it's not a trivial sum - you could save up to \$250k.

J. Hoch responds yes but by breaking up the burden of payment between individual households also, you're still going to have tipping fees for disposal but now you've shifted the cost.

M. Curran states my personal opinion is you are not saving in the end.

J. Hoch questions is it worth while to reallocate the burden or not.

J. Sherman states so if we are spending \$650k year and we have 4k households, each household is spending \$150 - \$200 years on trash pickup. So you might save \$100 year. The approach we should take is to update our goals. Maybe we need to make recycle hire on the list or add to future agenda.

J. Hoch states I passed along flyer from UNH regarding forest law workshops. States passed along notice from Sumner re Town of Plaistow vs. Silva - filing for petition for payment. States recommended renewing the appointments of Dennise and Mike for municipal health officer and deputy health officer. States draft of three year lease for district court. Asks please advise of any questions or concerns.

L. Gil asks tenants provision, the town is providing janitorial provisions.

J. Hoch replies the town is providing them but we are reimbursed by the state.

M. Curr asks is this three years? States we had only agreed to a one year interval.

J. Sherman asks any updates?

J. Hoch replies none.

M. Curran asks what was the increase.

J. Hoch replies 2.5%, 0 and 2.5%.

J. Sherman responds not ready to go along with this agreement. Anytime agreement like this should run by legal council.

J. Hoch states it's a standard state agreement.

J. Sherman states if format hasn't changed we don't need to pass by council but if so, need to pass by council. Asks any plans on where to build the court house, maybe we could pursue that.

J. Hoch states we provide the services and they reimburse us for them. The intent is that I need to plug a number in so they know what it is.

J. Sherman states the lease runs out January 18th.

J. Hoch asks is there a preference of one vs multiple years.

L. Gil replies no as long as there is a yearly increase,

J. Sherman responds the reason for one year was to drive the state into some action. Maybe we should try again. Not comfortable with contract at this point. Nice to have the revenue but there certainly is an impact to our citizens including parking problems, possible safety issues, and cuts back on time to have the court in town.

M. Curran states would like to see it have an increase every year so we can review.

J. Hoch states will do comparison and make note of increase. Check to see update on any new buildings.

J. Sherman states there was discussion among the board that building residing here is a burden to our citizens. It isn't all positive that's why we wanted one year agreement to see if they could come up with new location in town.

Recreation

J. Hoch states trip report in fyi folder – this weeks Queechee Gorge senior trip, total revenue \$448 offsetting town payment of \$845.

Fire

J. Hoch states memo in your file from Chief McArdle regarding disposition of old SCBA equipment with recommendation to donate the equipment we can no longer use to another dept. Similar to when we received hose from Freemont by swapping out. States second part of request is disposition of old compressor to the association and let them handle the sale and retain the proceeds.

L. Gil questions any liability with transfer of equipment that is out of date.

D. Poliquin responds equipment in question is up to date.

Gil excused from room 8:25pm

J. Hoch states suggestion of consignment sale would be future revenues and could be returned to the firemen's association vs donate equipment to the association.

J. Sherman states make sense to donate that to firemen assoc and let them handle it.

J. Sherman states move that we donate old SCBA and equipment.

Motion by J. Sherman and second by D. Poliquin

Vote

3-0-0 Gil Abstain

Budget

J. Hoch states information requested from police including overtime comparison, SOU memo and vehicle roster in your folders. This weeks budgets fire, water, emergency management and ambulance in your folder.

Other

J. Hoch states summary of my reports May – Sept manager report in your folders. Haynes Blvd. will be open by at least November 1st if not before. Shaws is slated to open Nov. 1st so everything must be cleaned up by then. Friday afternoon call from library stating they received the check for \$163,179.40 for the Nelson Trust disbursement. Need to hold public hearing at a future meeting to accept. Last item plans for new Rite-Aid proj. they are potentially looking for access of right of way of town. Suggest joint meeting to review access point. Board can go to their preliminary hearing and it would be a joint meeting so everyone could hear info once and then discuss. Prior to that meeting should have plans from their engineer and any observations I have.

M. Curren asks any old or new business?

J. Sherman asks what is the trick or treat date.

N. Carr replies 5-7pm on Halloween night.

M. Curran states wedding 6-7pm at gazebo same night

Selectmen reports

J. Sherman states no budget committee meeting last week. Will discuss three openings at next budget meeting. States there are three openings and volunteers are welcome. Disappointing that the more people involved the better for the town but lack of interest. Budget meeting

next Tuesday night at 7pm. No budget committee issues related to that. CIT meeting this Thursday night.

L. Gil states planning board Oct 3rd Chart Industries took up bulk of time. They had worked out most of very the lengthy language requirements of site plan. No significant issues. Asked if town of Wakefield would consider them good neighbor. Response was good neighbor with no problems.

J. Sherman asks was this for informational purposes only?

L. Gil replies yes, strictly information – important to know of skeletons in closet.

J. Sherman states thought the planning board was required to make decision based on here only and can't consider outside issues.

L. Gil responds Yes, and I couldn't tell you with absolute certainty – town of Wakefield had no issues.

J. Hoch states we can consider one company's performance at their own site. Piece we can't consider is performance of company doing contract work out some place else. It's informative to check references if they are doing contract work with a similar setup in another location.

M. Curr states they do have a website but it's under construction and there is no other way to obtain information. This particular site happened to be a trigger site but Jason's right . We don't go looking for offsite

D. Poliquin asks what will the site be used for?

M. Curran replies 1/3 heavy equipment; portion in front for rental - specific uses, and utilizing of railroad.

D. Poliquin asks there are companies they can rent to that do not have to come before the planning board.

L. Gil states if there are any changes they would have to come back to us

M. Curran states this is same as all situations where changes have to come through the planning board. However, we've set the outline so as long as they maintain under specific parameters. There is language that they asked for -specific language for uses and utilization of the property.

D. Poliquin asks what are they.

M. Curran states there are specific parameters for parking, use of vehicles, they have a number specific to their use. When we went over with Craig he was very specific with respect to how the land would be used.

J. Sherman states it's important that we as selectmen don't take a stand because as members of the board we can't come back and take a position. I'm sure that will frustrate some of our viewers but we can't take a position.

L. Gil states sub div on 27 Westville Rd – the eng that represented the owners didn't hit it off well with the town. Difficult lot, lots of wetlands and he wanted to put in driveway that borders along little river in order to get the amount of land. They were odd shaped lots and he had interpreted the size of the lot differently. The board was adamant that the driveway would be built to board specs but he wouldn't agree.

M. Curran asks is there emergency access?

L. Gil replies strictly from a safety standpoint there were significant safety issues with access getting in and out. He was adamant that he could work with the board to get it developed. Lot 61 hair salon monitoring well on site plan. Concerns about septic system going to hair salon.

M. Curran asks do they have approval?

J. Hoch states yes, they have approval. Upgraded septic.

M. Curran states they had to get the septic system for certain amount of seats

J. Hoch states yes there was an issue with the septic vs the amount of seats but it was worked out and approved.

L. Gil states Camp America no longer will be campers but multi use of used cars, car lot, and heavy equipment.

L. Gil states Walmart has a craft fair and cookout. Wanted it out front but need to move it to the side for safety and traffic. 9 Walton Rd, a house that the owner wants to use for storage and would require site for residential to storage.

D. Poliquin states nothing to report.

M. Curran states nothing to report, on vacation.

ADJOURNEMENT:

M. Curran states meeting adjourned at 8:55pm.