

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 9, 2009 BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman David Canada, Selectmen Bruno Federico and Tim Copeland, and Town Administrator Paul Deschaine.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Mr. Deschaine reported for Kevin Peck that he has \$575,655.39 in the general checking account and has \$3,900,000 invested.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Police: Mr. Canada asked Chief Mike Daley if he had anything tonight as it is his scheduled night to report, to which Mr. Daley responded no.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Canada stated they would be suspending the regular order of business tonight to have the Public Hearing of the 2009 Warrant. Mr. Deschaine then read the Public Notice for tonight's hearing.

Article 6: To raise such sums of money as may be necessary to defray general Town charges for the ensuing year and make appropriations for the same.

Mr. Canada stated the Board of Selectmen, in conjunction with the Budget Committee, spent approximately 25 hours going through this on a line-by-line basis. They tried to keep it as close to a zero increase as possible. As it stands now it is at a 0.3% decrease. Mr. Canada stated a lot of the major changes they are proposing will be separate warrant articles. Mr. Deschaine stated there are no salary increases as far as cost of living adjustments proposed for this year. Most departments were level-funded.

Mr. Deschaine stated on long-term debt, the Town is now paying a full year's worth of interest on the second Conservation/Public Safety Complex Bond in the amount of \$69,586. Only one payment of interest was paid last year.

Mr. Deschaine stated regarding the Highway Department, the cost of salt has risen dramatically resulting in an increase of \$45,000.

John Sapienza stated it is his understanding that no Town employees will be getting raises this year. Mr. Canada responded the Patrol Officers will not receive a cost of living increase but they will receive their step increases. Additionally there have been two to three adjustments on a case-by-case basis. Employees have taken on more responsibilities, have changed to a higher-level position or have come out of a probation period.

Kirk Scamman asked if any money had been taken out of this budget and put into another article. Mr. Canada responded one example is the Gateway Committee has requested \$10,000 so they can join with Rockingham Planning Commission to develop some "Form Based Code" zoning regulations to come before the Town in 2010. He added they initially thought that should be

coupled with the Public Works Commission's need for money to investigate water and sewer systems in the commercial district. The commercial district cannot be built out without addressing the water and sewer issues. He added there is some sentiment to take the Gateway Committee money and put it back in the Planning budget. Mr. Canada stated they took a \$4,000 request from the Fire Department for ambulance equipment and put it as a special warrant article to buy that equipment out of the ambulance fund. Mr. Canada added we do have a very healthy ambulance fund and it seems appropriate to take money from that fund to keep the ambulances equipped with the new equipment needed. Mr. Deschaine added more specific to Mr. Scamman's question is the three-year cruiser lease. The lease agreement renewal for the Police cruisers is done by separate warrant article. By doing so, the money is raised in that article. Typically in the other two years of the lease that money is in the Police Department's budget.

John Sapienza stated they are asking residents to spend \$75,000 for a ball field, yet they are asking the employees to go without a cost of living increase. Everyone has been faced with an increase in the cost of everything this past year. Mr. Canada responded the Town, in the past, has always given a cost of living increase and they were very hesitant not to give one this year. He added many people are taking cuts in pay to keep their jobs and many people are losing their jobs. One choice the Board did not want to make was to lay anyone off.

Jeff Medeiros questioned the money spent on road salt. Mr. Canada responded there is an expectation the roads will be bare shortly after a storm is over and it takes quite a bit of salt. He added last week the Conservation Commission gave the Board of Selectmen a presentation on the effects of using salt. They will recommend ways the Town can reduce their use of salt.

Mr. Canada moved that the Selectmen recommend the passage of the budget as presented tonight. Tim Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Article 7: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Hundred Three Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$703,000.00) to implement the Capital Improvements Program for 2009 as presented in the Town Report and approved by the Planning Board. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until the specific items are completed or obtained but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from the appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI).

Mr. Canada, along with Mr. Deschaine, went through the Capital Improvements Program giving a description of each. Concerning the Radio Communications Capital Reserve Fund, John Sapienza asked if there were funds in place to cover the installation of a repeater, if that becomes a reality. Mr. Deschaine responded there is approximately \$92,000 in that account. Mr. Copeland responded they are investigating whether they need a repeater or a receiver based on the radio issues with Newmarket Dispatch.

Mr. Copeland motioned that the Board recommend Article 7. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Article 8: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Twenty Five Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$325,000.00) for the purpose of renovating the

Stratham Municipal Center to allow for phase 1 of 2 expansions of the Wiggin Memorial Library. This is a special warrant article, which will be non-lapsing until this purpose is accomplished but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI).

Mr. Deschaine displayed a plan showing the area to be renovated. A general discussion about the nature of the renovations occurred, which noted that this was part 1 of a 2-part effort to fully renovate and expand the Library. Kirk Scamman asked if the Town were to pass this year's appropriation, were we required to fund the second part next year. Mr. Canada stated that both parts of the renovation are discrete and could stand on their own. Even though there is \$275,000 in next year's proposed CIP, there is no requirement to fund it in that year.

Colleen Lake stated she will be voting against this article adding that the Library should be fundraising to get the needed money. Carol Gulla, Library Trustee, responded it is a public Library and there are statutes that apply to how they are funded and how they are supported. Ms. Gulla added the Library is actively fundraising to help defray some of the costs. The demands for programming and space have increased. She added for approximately \$53.00 per resident per year there are a wide variety of resources available including videos and adult education classes.

Mr. Federico motioned that the Board recommend Article 8. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Article 9: To see if the Town will ratify the long term lease agreement between the Town and TRM Towers, LLC, its successors and assigns, dated August 25, 2008 for the construction and operation of a communications tower on Town property located at 10 Bunker Hill Avenue (Tax Map 9 Lot 10). TRM Towers, LLC and the Board of Selectmen have agreed to a lease of approximately thirty two hundred (3,200) square feet of the parking lot of the Stratham Municipal Center for an initial term of five (5) years with five (5) additional periods of five (5) years each for a possible total term of thirty (30) years and includes easements reasonably required to implement the proposed use such as easements to provide access and utilities to the site. The lease includes other terms the Board of Selectmen deems in the best interests of the Town.

Mr. Deschaine displayed a plan for the audience members and further described the article.

Kevin Peck asked what the impact would be on the playground behind the Municipal Center. Mr. Canada responded there would be no impact. Mr. Peck asked if approval of this article would bind the Town for the entire term of the lease agreement. Mr. Canada said that it would

Michael McCarthy asked if the Selectmen have looked at any other locations to place the tower. Mr. Canada responded the agreement is in place and they are looking to ratify it. Mr. Deschaine stated the ordinance as adopted by the Town promotes and encourages siting of this type of structure on Town property. He added this is a dead spot for many services. The closest Town property with the proper elevation is this property.

Kirk Scamman asked if this tower will interfere with the Police radios. Mr. Deschaine responded the specific terms of the lease state that there cannot be any interference with radio frequencies of the Town whether it is the Police Department or any other department. To do so would be a material breach of the contract and the Town would be able to void it.

Mr. Canada motioned to recommend Article 9. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Article 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy Five Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$75,000.00) for the purpose of constructing various improvements to Stevens Park to include a new Babe Ruth Baseball Field and accessory improvements as the first phase of a two-phased proposal. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until this purpose is accomplished but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI).

Mr. Deschaine displayed a plan and described the field further. Mr. Canada gave an overview of the nature and history of the project. He stated there were funds up to \$50,000 from 2008 appropriated for these kinds of improvements. In 2009, they were looking for \$75,000, and it is likely an additional \$65,000 would be needed in 2010 are represented in the CIP. This last amount is dependent on the amount of fundraising the baseball groups can accomplish in the coming year.

Kevin Peck stated he has been involved with the Recreation Department for fifteen to sixteen years. Back then, all the activities were held at the Stratham Technical College. Located there is the Town's only full-sized baseball field. The field proposed in this article will replace that field, in anticipation of the college property being sold and no longer available for Town use.

Mr. Canada stated he received a phone call from Georgiana Law who is the southern abutter to the entire Stevens Park property. Ms. Law said she has had a continual problem with water flowing onto her property from Stevens Field. Mr. Canada added Ms. Law is upset the Town is considering building there since it will exacerbate her problem. Stan Walker questioned construction of the holding pond on site and stated it was not working properly. Mr. Canada stated that problem had been corrected.

Mr. Copeland motioned that the Board recommend Article 10. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Article 11: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty Five Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$45,000.00) for the purpose of conducting a statistical update of the valuations of the property assessments within the Town. This is a special warrant article, which will be non-lapsing until this purpose is accomplished but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI).

Mr. Canada explained the need for the appropriation. Hearing no further comment, Mr. Canada motioned the Board recommend Article 11. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Article 12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eighty Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy Dollars and no cents (\$88,770.00) for the purpose of assisting the Planning Board in developing a "Form Based Code" for the current General Commercial District to become known as the "Gateway Commercial District" and for the purpose of conducting studies in support of this effort. This is a special warrant article, which will be non-lapsing until this purpose is accomplished but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI).

Mr. Canada stated the subcommittee of the Planning Board, known as the Gateway Committee, has done much work on this but can go no further without professional help. Mr. Canada recommended \$10,000 be taken from the \$88,770 to make it \$78,770 and put the \$10,000 into the Planner's special projects line in the regular budget. Mr. Canada stated that \$10,000 would be used as our match for the Rockingham Planning Commission's Coastal Zone Grant and would make sure that Form Based Code work continued in a professional manner so it can be brought to the voters next March. The \$78,770 would be used for water and sewer studies.

Janet Johnson, Chairman of the Planning Board, stated the Planning Board is in favor of separating the \$10,000 and putting it back in the Planning Department's budget. She added the Planning Department was \$22,000 under budget last year.

Mr. Canada also recommended reducing the remainder Article 12 to \$20,000 based on the recommendation of John Boisvert of the Public Works Commission. Mr. Boisvert explained how the Commission came to the revised request since the Gateway proposal was not moving as fast as once anticipated. Consequently, their efforts did not have to be so intense to back up the Gateway efforts. Given the economy, everyone felt the revised number of \$20,000 would be more likely to be supported at Town Meeting. Mr. Canada said with the increase in the line item known as the Special Projects line in the Planner's budget by \$10,000 to support the Gateway/Rockingham Planning Commission initiative in the budget and with revised Article 12 for \$20,000 to support the infrastructure studies needed to keep Gateway moving, the Town should still be able to put forth next year a comprehensive rezoning of the Commercial District. Without objection, he made that recommendation into a motion. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Mr. Deschaine reminded the Board that moving the \$10,000 from the warrant article to the operating budget no longer protects that amount relative to it lapsing at the end of the fiscal year.

Article 13: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a three (3) year lease/purchase agreement amounting to \$87,251.00 for the purpose of leasing three (3) new police cruisers for the Police Department and to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Three Thousand Seventeen Dollars and no cents (\$33,017.00) of which Twenty Seven Thousand One Hundred Seventeen Dollars and no cents (\$27,117.00) is for the first year's payment for that agreement and Five Thousand Nine Hundred Dollars and no cents (\$5,900.00) is for equipping these new cruisers. This lease/purchase agreement contains a fiscal funding clause. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until the specific items are completed or obtained but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI).

Chief Michael Daley stated since 1994 they have been leasing three police cruisers every three years. He added it has worked out very well for them. Mr. Canada noted all three cruisers are close to, if not over, 100,000 miles when they are turned in.

Mr. Canada motioned to recommend Article 13. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Article 14: To see if the Town will vote to create a Fire Department Revolving Fund pursuant to RSA 31:95-h, for the purpose of public safety services. All revenues received for the benefit of the Stratham Fire Department will be deposited into the fund and the money in the fund shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year and shall not be considered part of the Town's general fund unreserved fund balance. The Town Treasurer shall have custody of all moneys in the fund and shall pay out the same only upon order of the Fire Department Revolving Fund Committee and no further approval is required by the legislative body to expend from the fund. Such funds may be expended only for the purpose for which the fund was created. The Revolving Fund Committee will consist of five (5) residents nominated by members of the Fire Department and appointed by the Board of Selectmen for 3-year terms. The initial Committee members shall be appointed to the following terms in order to stagger the expiration of terms for members of the Committee: 2 members for 3 years, 2 members for 2 years and 1 member for 1 year.

Mr. Canada stated this article is intended to be sure the hard work done and funds raised by the Fire Department are in compliance with all the various State and Federal regulations, is consistent with what the Townspeople want, and is consistent with what the Fire Department wants to do with their money.

John Sapienza stated there are a number of Fire Department entities that control money. He asked if this will be an umbrella to cover all of them. Mr. Canada responded that is correct. Stan Walker summarized his dealings with the Attorney General's Office on this matter.

Mr. Copeland motioned that the Board recommend Article 14. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Article 15: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$4,000.00) for the purpose of purchasing a Pulse CO-Oximeter for the use of the Stratham Volunteer Fire Department and to further authorize the withdrawal of Four Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$4,000.00) from the Stratham Fire Department EMS Special Revenue Fund created for these purposes during the March 17, 2000 Annual Town Meeting and as amended during the March 11, 2005 Town Meeting. This is a special warrant article, which will be non-lapsing until this purpose is accomplished but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from the appropriation per NH RSA 32:7(VI). No additional funds from general taxation are to be used.

Mr. Copeland stated the Town already has one of these devices for one ambulance and this is for the second ambulance. He added it is a device that registers the carbon monoxide that is inside the body through the blood levels. When someone has smoke inhalation, whether a resident or a

firefighter, the degree of carbon monoxide inside their body is unknown. This device tells you exactly what the levels are and the amount of oxygen needed. Mr. Copeland added that oxygen is considered a drug.

Mr. Canada motioned that the Board recommend Article 15. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Article 16: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty Four Thousand Nine Dollars and no cents (\$44,009.00) to be deposited in the Accrued Benefits Liability Expendable Trust Fund as created by the March 16, 2007 Town Meeting to meet the currently unfunded obligations of the Town. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until the specific items are completed or obtained but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI).

Mr. Canada explained this by stating every year employees are entitled to so many vacation and sick days. If they don't use all their sick days, they can accrue those days up to a certain number. Once that cap has been reached they are paid for half of the sick time and the other half goes into a bank, which other Town employees can draw upon. Employees are allowed to accrue vacation time. If it is not used, they lose it. The Town now has at least four employees whose total accrued time is valued \$44,009. Mr. Canada added they have not indicated any desire to retire and there is no reason to believe they will retire this year, but they will not be retiring ten years from now either. Mr. Canada stated he would like to change this article to \$20,000 since they have no reason to believe there will be a \$44,000 draw on this during this year.

Mr. Federico suggested they consider how this is going to be funded in the future. He suggested they make it part of the department salary and expense funds so it is clearly shown in the department that requires the expenditures.

Mr. Canada moved that the Board of Selectmen amend this article to read \$20,000 and that they recommend this article as amended. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Article 17: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Three Hundred Dollars and no cents (\$2,300.00) for support of Transportation Assistance for Seacoast Citizens (TASC), a non-profit agency whose mission is to mobilize and coordinate a network of volunteer drivers to provide transportation to senior citizens and other adults whose health prevents them from driving. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until the specific items are completed or obtained but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI).

Carol Gulla, a coordinator for TASC, stated they are asking for help from the communities that they serve. Ms. Gulla stated fifteen of their registered passengers are Stratham residents. She added they would like to use some of the funds for marketing and public education so that folks who need help with transportation know there is a resource they can call. TASC overall has been averaging over two hundred and fifty rides a month with forty volunteers.

Mary Jane Keane stated she is a volunteer driver for TASC. Ms. Keane stated this is an incredibly worthwhile service to the residents.

Mr. Canada motioned that the Board recommend this article. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Article 18: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$2,000.00) for support of Womenade of Greater Squamscott, a non-profit agency whose mission is to provide financial assistance to local families in need. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until the specific items are completed or obtained but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from the appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI).

Mary Jane Keane stated the mission of Womenade is to provide individuals with a resource to obtain small amounts of money while still maintaining their dignity and without filling out an endless array of forms.

Joyce Charbonneau stated Womenade serves six towns. In Stratham alone, in 2008, they gave \$8,000 to residents in need. During the first six weeks of 2009, they have given \$1,800 to residents. Mrs. Charbonneau added Womenade does several fundraisers every year, but with the economic climate, it gets more difficult to raise money. Mrs. Charbonneau stated Womenade is a great organization.

Mr. Copeland motioned the Board recommend this article. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Article 19: To see if the Town will vote pursuant to RSA 32:5, V-a to require that all votes on recommendations on budget items or warrant articles by the governing body shall be recorded votes and that the numerical tally of such votes shall be printed in the Town Warrant next to the affected warrant article.

Mr. Canada stated there is a bit of ambiguity in State law as to whether they must, can or can't recommend articles. Article 19 would make it clear that the Town wants the Board of Selectmen to make a recommendation on every warrant article. Mr. Canada added this would just clarify with the State that their warrant articles are 100% correct in structure.

Mr. Canada motioned the Board recommend Article 19. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Article 20: To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

John Sapienza stated the Board has just reduced by approximately \$82,000 the total warrant articles. Mr. Sapienza asked the Board once again to please consider the Town employees who will not be receiving a pay raise. He added he wouldn't have much of a problem with this if it was across the board, but there are a select few who will be getting raises for reasons stated

earlier. Mr. Sapienza respectfully asked the Board to reconsider their decision with regards to this issue.

Mr. Canada stated that concluded the Public Hearing on the Warrant Articles at 9:19PM. At 9:28PM, Chairman Canada reconvened the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Canada read the meetings scheduled for the coming week and held the last week.

PARK PERMITS/MUNICIPAL CENTER RENTALS:

A request was received from Elyse Jordan of Massachusetts for use of the Front Pavilion for a family reunion on August 2, 2009. A decision was postponed until next week to enable Mr. Canada to determine what her connection to Stratham is.

Sarah Deschaine for use of Stratham Hill Park for an engagement party was approved. The fee was waived in keeping with past practice of the Board as Ms. Deschaine is the daughter of a Town employee.

Tammy Keane for use of the Municipal Center on March 6, 2009 for a birthday party was approved.

Kim Williams and Susan Bendroff of the Acorn School for use of the Scamman Pavilion on April 20, 2009 for their observance of Earth Day was approved. They requested a waiver of the fee as they are non-profit. Mr. Copeland moved to waive the fee. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Gina Anderson for use of the Municipal Center for a birthday party on March 21, 2009 was approved.

Mr. Copeland mentioned there was an incident during a birthday party held at the Municipal Center this past weekend. A smoke machine was brought into the building and used, which set off the building's smoke detectors. He hoped future users of the building would be more responsible.

Mr. Canada stated he was approached by Barbara Broderick on behalf of the Stratham Democratic Committee requesting use of Stratham Hill Park for a bonfire on February 22, 2009. Mr. Canada suggested the use of Gifford Farm field. They would like to have a non-partisan event for Washington's Birthday from 3:00PM to 5:00PM. Mr. Copeland stated he doesn't see a fire hazard but a fire permit will need to be obtained from the Fire Chief. There were also concerns relative to attending the fire from start to finish, availability of a water source and sanding the roadway. The Board determined Ms. Broderick will need to fill out a Park request form, the committee can use burnable wood with no nails, the fee will be \$50.00, the Board will need a guarantee from Ms. Broderick that the area will be picked up afterwards, and she will

need to contact the Fire Chief to determine whether she needs a permit. The Board will discuss this further on February 19, 2009 at the Selectmen's Project Meeting.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Town Assessor: Andrea Lewy stated she received from the Department of Revenue Administration the equalization ratio for 2008. The Town is currently at 90.5 percent of market value. Mr. Canada added we are supposed to be between 90 and 110 percent. Ms. Lewy added since 2003 they have maintained a very tight balance of all the Town's assessments.

Administration: Mr. Deschaine reminded the Board that the CED's Project List Application is in the reader file as well as the MPO Project List that needs to be returned in a timely fashion. The Board needs to confirm whether the projects currently on the Metropolitan Planning Organization list, which are in the 10 year plan, are still priority projects and if anything needs to be added to the list.

Mr. Deschaine stated the New Life Baptist Church has asked to renew their lease, which is up in March or the beginning of April. They still are unable to find a suitable place. Mr. Canada stated they are very respectful of Town property, they clean the floor when they are done and it brings in a small income for the Town. Mr. Canada moved to renew their lease for one year at the same rate and conditions. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Deschaine reported that Fred Hutton had contacted the company which offered to dispose of wood debris for free with a tub grinder. The company said there was not enough wood debris at Stevens Park to justify their involvement.

Mr. Federico wanted to commend the Highway Department for the great job they have done on the roads this winter. He expressed his concern with asking the Highway Department to cut back on their salt use.

Mr. Canada moved to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2008, the January 5, 2009 the January 12, 2009 and the January 26, 2009 Selectmen's meetings with small corrections to the minutes of January 12, 2009 and January 26, 2009. Mr. Canada added that Mr. Deschaine is authorized to make such corrections. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The Board then discussed the Selectmen's letter to accompany the Town Clerk's dog notice mailer. Mr. Canada had prepared a draft. Various editorial changes were suggested. Mr. Deschaine will make those changes and provide a final draft for the Board to review and, once approved, give to the Town Clerk for mailing.

Mr. Canada asked if Tara Barker had asked Ken Murray to begin to approach dog owners at the Park to make them aware of the dog waste problem. Mr. Deschaine will insure Ms. Barker has communicated that to Mr. Murray.

Mr. Canada reported that the freestanding Fire Department sign has been delivered. There is a proposal for a sign to be attached to the building that's being worked on with the help of architect Michael Keane. This sign is being proposed to be donated by Mark Stevens and/or Susan Conway. Once the sign is finalized and the value of the donation, Mr. Canada will report back to the Board so they can act on accepting the donation.

Mr. Copeland stated he was still working on a safety equipment checklist to be used by Tim Slager to do fire inspections. The Fire Chief is also reviewing the list to insure it's completeness.

The discussion next turned to the improvements that Newmarket dispatch was doing to their communications system. They are moving the broadcast antenna to a higher location which is also closer to Stratham. That should improve things; however, should it prove not to improve the situation greatly, we may have to research alternatives such as a repeater to improve the communication between the Town of Stratham and it's dispatch center.

Mr. Canada discussed the possibility of obtaining a discount from the company that operates Virtual Town Hall. That discount would have been approximately \$400 if they prepaid for those services in this coming year. An alternate proposal would be to spread the total cost over three years but the discount would not be realized. Mr. Federico expressed a concern regarding prepaying for three years worth of services in that under this economic climate should the company stop doing business the Town may be out it's money so distributing the payment annually over three years was his preferred method. As a result of those discussions, the operating budget was changed to reflect the three-year payment option.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Deschaine stated Kase Printing of Hudson was the lowest responsible bidder for the Town Report with a bid of \$3780 for twelve hundred copies. Mr. Deschaine added he has spoken with their references and they received glowing acknowledgements. Mr. Copeland motioned to proceed with the bid from Kase Printing to produce the Town Report for 2008. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

At 10:42PM Mr. Federico moved to adjourn. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Reviewed By,

Norma Corrow
Recording Secretary

Paul Deschaine
Town Administrator