

## **MINUTES OF THE MARCH 16, 2009 BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING**

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

The meeting was opened at 7:32 PM.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Treasurer Kevin Peck was not present due to his attendance at another meeting. Mr. Deschaine reported in his stead that he had \$443,091.53 in the general checking account and he still has \$2,600,000 invested.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

The Board moved immediately to New Business. There was a discussion on the election of Board Officers. Mr. Copeland moved to nominate Mr. Canada as Chairman. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Copeland nominated Mr. Federico as Vice-Chairman. Mr. Federico accepted by seconding the motion, which also passed unanimously.

There was a discussion about the possibility of rotating committee assignments. Everyone expressed the desire to stay on the committees and commissions on which they currently serve. Mr. Canada suggested that there should be a liaison to the Public Works Commission. Mr. Copeland suggested Mr. Canada to fulfill that function. Mr. Canada moved to appoint Mr. Federico to the Planning Board as the Selectmen's Representative, Mr. Copeland to the Conservation Commission as the Selectmen's Representative and Mr. Canada to the Heritage Commission and the Public Works Commission as the Selectmen's Representative. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The Chair then moved on to review the list of meetings held the past week and scheduled for the coming week. There was a discussion about the New Hampshire House Public Works Committee hearing that is scheduled for tomorrow at the State Capital to discuss the capital budget for the State. This budget includes funding for the new Hampton and Exeter District Court building. They will attempt to have someone present in support of that funding request, but at this point, no one could commit to doing so.

The review of meetings held continued with reports from individual members who attended.

The discussion turned to the results of Town Meeting and, in particular, the non-ratification of the cell tower lease. Mr. Deschaine and the Board were uncertain as to what the next step might be. The Board, while disappointed with the outcome, accepts the decision of the voters on this matter. Mr. Deschaine has contacted Town Counsel for advice regarding any negative consequences resulting from the vote and is awaiting a response from that request. The Board will await a response from Town Counsel before responding to any future proposal from the cell tower company should one be made.

The following Park permits and Municipal Center rentals were authorized:

The Stratham Fair for 2009 was approved. Mr. Copeland moved to waive the fee. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Cheryl Tessier for a bridal shower at the Municipal Center was also approved.

Nicole Merry for an Exeter Area High School Class Reunion of the Class of 1989 was approved for use of the Park.

#### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**CEO/Building Inspector:** Terry Barnes was present to report on building activity. Most of the activity has been occurring at the Lindt Chocolate Factory. The roasting plant and the bindler room are progressing. The roasting plant is being structurally constructed at this time. The bindler room has been constructed to the point where production machinery is now being installed. There is a lot of electrical work related to that installation. Mr. Barnes reported that the surgical center at the VIP building has gotten its certificate of occupancy but a bond had to be placed in order to insure that as-built plans were completed and presented, that the landscaping be installed later this spring, and that all signage and the striping of the parking lot were to occur. The bond was set at \$10,000 with the assistance of Chuck Grassie, Town Planner, and should cover all the items noted.

Mr. Barnes noted that he is chasing temporary signs, which are being installed all over Town, without permits.

Mr. Barnes also stated the office has been very busy with people coming in who are looking at houses to purchase. As a result, they are pulling house plans and septic designs. Mr. Canada asked if Mr. Barnes was busy enough to continue to be full-time. Mr. Barnes said that he was and that if he were not, he would inform Mr. Deschaine.

**Town Planner:** Chuck Grassie was present to provide an update on his March and April work plan. He will be working on updating all the zoning books as a result of the approval of all the zoning amendments. He also mentioned that he had met with the Rockingham Planning Commission on the Gateway Form-based Code contract, the Transportation Master Plan, and also re-drafting the Growth Control Ordinance. He continues to work on the Tax Map Update with Andrea Lewy.

Mr. Grassie noted that Market Basket has contacted him and is planning to be before the Planning Board by April 1<sup>st</sup> with plans and drawings related to the outbuilding that is to be constructed on their site. Once the outbuilding is constructed and their current tenants moved into it, they would proceed at a future date to demolish the store and build the new one.

Mr. Grassie said he was still working with the Public Works Commission on the Fire District and the related water and sewer issues.

Mr. Grassie also reported on the improvements to Marin Way, which is being prepared for the spring construction season. To his knowledge, the poles that needed to be relocated have been with various utilities still removing their connections.

Mr. Grassie continued to review his work plan for the remainder of March and April. Mr. Canada asked how busy his office had been. Mr. Grassie said that in addition to the work plan, there have been recently many walk-in inquiries from people concerning subdivisions, home occupations, easements, and setbacks, etc. These have been mostly from people who are looking to purchase homes or looking to do things to their existing homes and/or other improvements.

The Board then discussed the status of the performance bonds held for the Hills at Crockett Farm subdivision. The Homeowner's Association has asked that the owners of the subdivision be declared in default. Mr. Deschaine concurred with the request because he and Fred Hutton had come to that same conclusion last fall but was unable to do so before the winter season started. After much discussion on the logistics of calling the bond, the Board concurred in moving in that direction.

**Highway:** Fred Hutton was present to discuss the activities of his department. They are working on the brush piles at Stevens Park. They have been chipping the brush stored at that site in order to have it cleaned up before the Recreation Department needs to use the parking lot. He had also considered setting up an alternate site near the salt shed to store any additional brush people may bring. After a short discussion, the Board concurred with the proposed alternative site. Mr. Hutton expressed a concern that people are stacking brush along the roadside thinking the Town will dispose of it. Mr. Hutton said that he is not intending to do that. Because of the Board's actions earlier, these brush piles would be left in place for the homeowner to deal with. Mr. Deschaine cautioned that the brush could stay there but it cannot block the roadside drainage or any other improvements related to the road.

Mr. Hutton reported on the status of the vehicles receiving their State inspection for this month. Most vehicles are done. One truck will have to have its cab mounts redone.

Mr. Hutton reported that he had obtained a quote for Transfer Station permit decals. He normally orders 2500 decals at a cost of \$.25 per decal for an estimated cost of \$625 plus shipping. The Board authorized Mr. Hutton to proceed with the order. The Board then reviewed the process of issuing decals and checking residency with Mr. Hutton.

**Administration:** Mr. Deschaine reminded the Board about the discussion of the Dubois & King grant application. Mr. Canada suggested applying for free engineering services from them for the design of the Municipal Center parking lot and drainage improvements. Mr. Copeland and Mr. Federico agreed with that idea and that it was desirable.

Mr. Deschaine brought a request by the Girl Scouts of America to use the parking lot at the Municipal Center for a bus stop for the Camp Seaward day camp. They would pick up children at 8:00 AM and drop them off at 4:45 PM between July 6<sup>th</sup> and July 17<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Canada moved to allow them to use the parking lot as a bus stop. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

There was a brief discussion regarding the inquiry by a Mr. Henry Bedford who commented at Town Meeting that principal bond payments should not be included in the Capital Improvements Program. He felt that it was confusing. Mr. Canada suggested holding that discussion until the next budget season.

The next discussion occurred regarding a request by COAST for support in seeking State funding. The Governor's proposed budget contains a significant budget-funding cut to COAST. They specifically requested support in increasing the cap on the local option fee charged at the point in time vehicles are registered. The other proposal is to use increased toll fees towards the support of public transportation. Mr. Copeland supported the efforts in promoting public transportation particularly in this time of need by people who need cheap forms of transportation, but he was not sure that he supported the efforts being suggested. Mr. Canada agreed that the local option fee is not one that the Town of Stratham has supported and that diversion of toll money is where the Highway Transportation Fund has gotten into problems already. He felt this was something the Board could not support even though it supported public transportation. Mr. Canada also felt that there were other items of need to the Town that needed more support than this. His observation was that public transportation is a regional issue; therefore, the State should support it.

Mr. Deschaine brought the request of Aquarian Water Company to release digital tax information to them in order to do a groundwater resource inventory study and asset management study. They are requesting that the Town of Stratham write the Rockingham Planning Commission authorizing the release of the information to them. The Board agreed to grant the request.

Mr. Canada brought forward the intention of the Stratham Historical Society to make application for a grant to improve the Wiggin Memorial Library building by replacing the doghouse access point to the basement in the rear. Upon review, the Board endorsed the application and signed a letter of support.

#### **OTHER:**

Mr. Federico asked about the radio communications problem. If the cell tower was not going to be constructed, were there any alternatives he asked. Mr. Copeland said he was looking at those options and would report back.

Mr. Federico asked what would be the next action on the Library renovation project. Mr. Canada stated that he had arranged a meeting between himself, Mr. Deschaine, and Dan Crow to get a better fix on the cost of the project. Mr. Federico moved to appoint Mr. Canada as the Board's coordinator of that effort. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Canada will report to the Board next week on the results of those discussions.

There was a general discussion about the priorities for the coming month. Mr. Canada noted that the locksmithing for the previous renovation needs to be completed and that the transfer of the audio system from the current hearing room to the new hearing room needed to occur. Mr.

Deschaine is in the process of getting quotes from companies to work on the reinstallation of the audio equipment, which should be forthcoming. Mr. Canada asked about the permanent retention of audio recordings of meetings. He felt that there was a need to retain the audio recordings for future research regarding past actions of all Board and Committees. Mr. Deschaine expressed his concern about the possibility of having two conflicting public records, the first being the minutes and the second being the audiotapes. Mr. Canada moved that all audio recordings of the Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Adjustment be permanently preserved to the extent possible, short of any extraordinary means or expense. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Canada inquired about the status of having the Tri-Town Legislative Delegation Meeting. Mr. Deschaine said he had not heard anything from his counterparts in North Hampton or Exeter and will follow up on that.

Mr. Canada stated based on the last meeting's actions that Tara Barker, Stan Walker, Ken Murray, and Anne Buchanan need to be notified that there are not to be any rebound devices or aviation uses at the Park. Mr. Deschaine is working on language to add to the permit application to ask about these devices.

Mr. Copeland reported that he is still working on the Public Safety Inspection checklist.

The next discussion occurred regarding the update in the Employee Manual. The Board thought the update of the manual and the ordinance revisions need to be Mr. Deschaine's priorities in the immediate future.

At 9:48 PM, Mr. Canada moved to go into non-public session to discuss a personnel matter and a potential acquisition of property by the Conservation Commission. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. At 10:08 PM, Mr. Canada moved to come out of non-public session and to seal the minutes due to the matters of personnel and property acquisition negotiations that were discussed. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

At 10:09 PM, Mr. Federico moved to adjourn. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Reviewed By,

Norma Corrow  
Recording Secretary

Paul Deschaine  
Town Administrator