

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 31, 2009 BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

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

The meeting opened at 7:34 PM.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Kevin Peck reported that he had \$352,639.63 in the general checking account. He also reported that he had \$3,500,000 invested.

NEW BUSINESS:

Travis Thompson, of the Stratham School Board, was present to report to the Board of Selectmen on the School Board's activities. First, they have been setting goals for the Board for the coming school year. The goals consist of fiscal responsibility to the community. This involves a responsible budget for the coming year. They have been working on improved financial policies, which include approving manifests and expenditures, and improved management controls over expenditures in the current budget. The second goal is to improve communications with bodies outside of the school district. His presence at tonight's meeting was part of that goal and he intends to continue this interaction over the coming months. The third goal was to support and establish better goals for the faculty and staff. Mr. Thompson then updated the Board on some improvements made to the facility, particularly at Stratham Memorial School, such as new security doors being installed in the front entry area. The Board has gotten estimates for installing a generator at the facility as a result of last year's ice storm. The estimates have run as low as \$15,000 for adding wiring that would allow a generator to be plugged into the building. To install a generator to run just the core facilities at Stratham Memorial School would cost approximately \$48,000. Finally, the purchase of a generator that would run the core facility in the existing sprinkler system would cost approximately \$63,000. Estimates to obtain a generator that was capable of running the entire school building have approached \$140,000 plus \$48,000 for a new fire system. The overall cost for total coverage of the building would be close to \$200,000. Due to the size of that expense, the School Board felt that it would be justified that a separate warrant article be placed on the School Warrant to authorize that type of expenditure.

The AED has been authorized for purchase and installation at the school. Mr. Thompson said that Exeter Hospital might have a program in assisting and acquiring such a medical device. He thought Nurse Judy had more information on this program. He noted that the boiler, which services the kitchen, had to be replaced because it was over twenty years old and not properly performing.

Mr. Thompson then reviewed staff changes, the hiring of new staff and other information and news related to the SAU.

Mr. Thompson lastly covered a number of new legislative efforts that were approved during the last past year including the State funding bills for inadequate education. Currently, State Aid Funding has been fully funded through the American Recovery and Investment Act. Building

aid was fully funded but it was as a result of a bond issue being issued by the State. Catastrophic aid was curtailed, however. The State subsidy for retirement for School employees was reduced, as was the subsidy to towns and cities.

Lastly, Mr. Thompson reported that the air quality in the school has been tested at least twice and there were no adverse results filed. The Board thanked Mr. Thompson for his time in providing this update.

At 8:34 PM, Mr. Canada opened the public hearing on the application of Florence Wiggin for a discretionary Barn Preservation Easement. Ms. Wiggin noted the farm had been in the Wiggin family since the 1600s and the existing barn was over a hundred years old. Andrea Lewy read her report into the record (please see attached). They have made a number of improvements to the barn recently to restore and preserve it but it is getting expensive to maintain without some sort of assistance. Ms. Wiggin related the additional historical nature of the property. Becky Mitchell, of the Heritage Commission, was present who spoke in favor of the easement. She felt that it met all the requirements of the statutes. Hearing no further comment, Mr. Canada closed the public hearing at 8:42PM. Mr. Canada asked for Ms. Lewy's recommendation. Ms. Lewy recommended approval of the easement at the 75% of value level for ten years. Mr. Canada moved to grant the easement under such terms. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Scott Gallant was present to discuss his proposed Eagle Scout Service Project, which consists of replacing the large Stratham Hill Park sign. He will be using most, if not all, the metal hardware that is currently on the sign. He is approaching Seacoast Mills Building Supply who has offered to donate some materials at a cost of approximately \$700 to \$800. He will be recreating the sign itself, as it currently exists; however, he intends to route the lettering into the wood rather than just painting it on. Mr. Copeland asked if wood composites could be used. Mr. Deschaine explained that composites are probably not usable for this type of application and it also would not be able to be routed. Mr. Gallant asked if there was any Town funding available. Mr. Deschaine explained that the operating budget has been significantly depleted. Mr. Copeland suggested the Stratham Hill Park Association. Mr. Deschaine said that was a possibility but they were heavily committed to the purchase of the playground equipment. The only other source of funds may be the Stratham Hill Park Recreation Revolving Fund. Mr. Canada asked if Scott has been doing any fundraising. Mr. Gallant said that he had not, other than approaching Seacoast Mills. If the Town did not assist in funding the project, he would begin fundraising efforts. Mr. Canada suggested that he do the fundraising first.

Joshua Jerge, of River Road, was present to discuss his proposed Eagle Scout Service Project, which was to redevelop the Town landing at the end of River Road. He would replace the benches and picnic tables that were previously at this site. He also suggested a boat launch to the river be constructed. Mr. Deschaine explained the idea of having a walkway down to the river but that may require State permits. It was suggested, as an alternative, that pre-cast concrete steps might be installed down to the river. Mr. Jerge said he would start looking at options.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Parks and Recreation: Tara Barker was present to give her monthly report. She presented a written report on the Recreation Revolving Fund and enrollments in the summer programs. Mr. Canada asked about the staffing ratio for summer camps. He wondered if there was any thought to reducing those ratios. Ms. Barker said the Recreation Commission has not addressed this issue because they are thinking about changing the entire format of summer camp, which will directly impact staffing ratios. She reported on various other events that occurred during the summer.

Ms. Barker reported that the fall and winter programming brochure is going to the printer this week. Fall programming starts September 14, 2009.

Ms. Barker reported that Stratham Hill Park is recovering well from the Fair. The Fair Directors wrote to express their great appreciation for Kim Woods' works during the Fair.

Ms. Barker reported that the Park Ranger House has been vacated, for the most part, by the previous tenant. Ms. Woods will be inside the residence to view its condition and assessing any repairs necessary. Ms. Barker reported the electricity had been turned off and that Ms. Woods has transferred the meter to her name in order to restore it.

A discussion occurred concerning the condition of the Gifford House. There had been a squirrel problem that has been corrected. There had been reports of a minor mold condition in one of the upstairs bedrooms. Ms. Barker had it tested and the results came back as a four out of one hundred on a scale used to measure the mold. Mr. Canada said that these results really do not rise to the level of requiring the Town to repair or respond to the report. Mr. Copeland suggested using Lysol to treat the wallpaper where the mold currently exists. Ms. Barker reported they tried to use a water and bleach treatment on a sample of the wallpaper but it made the pattern run and blur. The Board agreed to try treating the mold with Lysol but no other remediation would be necessary.

Ms. Barker reported that the juveniles who vandalized the Park have completed their community service at the Park and have written letters of apology to the Town.

There was a discussion about replacing the damaged trail signs. Ms. Barker had plans to do this in the spring during the Spring Day of Caring. The next Day of Caring, scheduled to occur on September 9, 2009, has been reserved for installing the new playground at the Park.

Ms. Barker noted that \$20,000 has been spent to date on the Babe Ruth field with \$20,000 worth of work being accomplished by the Highway Department. Ms. Barker went through the remaining construction sequencing for the year. Ms. Barker then reviewed the remaining work to occur on the softball field at Stevens Park. Dave Short is working on getting irrigation quotes for her. There has been a question on the final grades of the softball field that she needs to discuss further with Mr. Short. Mr. Canada asked if the Great Bay Community College has given permission to salvage anything from the existing ball field at the old Community College.

Mr. Deschaine said that he had talked with the President of the college, but the President wanted to contact the new owner to see if they had any use for the material before it is removed.

Assessing: Andrea Lewy presented the abatement request for the Ryan family of 8 Vineyard Drive for the 2008 tax year. The abatement consisted of various changes to the physical data of the property. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the abatement as presented. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Lewy discussed the Assessing Assistant applications. There were nearly one hundred and one applications received. Mr. Deschaine and Ms. Lewy will be reviewing the applicants and rating them. Once they have narrowed the candidates down, the Board will review finalists and participate in interviews.

Ms. Lewy presented an extension request for submitting the MS1 to the State for the Board's signature. The extension requests that the deadline be extended to November 1, 2009. If the statistical update can be completed before then, the MS1 can be submitted earlier. The reasons for the delay have been the loss of staff and computer network problems. She hopes to have preliminary values available by mid-September.

Administration: Mr. Deschaine referenced information provided by the NH Municipal Energy Assistance Program and he reviewed his understanding of their services. Mr. Federico supported pursuing the program and volunteered to help make an application.

Mr. Deschaine reported that the McDonnell Farm and Ranchland Protection Program application was accepted by the Natural Resource Conservation Service but was not ranked within the top three for funding. Consequently, it will be considered by that agency during their 2010 fiscal year. The Ad Hoc Conservation Bond Subcommittee is still considering the purchase of a conservation easement on the McDonnell Farm.

Mr. Deschaine reported on the dog warrant as described in a memo from Town Clerk Joyce Charbonneau. He noted that since Acting Police Chief Richard Gendron was not present, he was not able to report on the disposition of the warrant per State law. The Board will hear from the Acting Police Chief at their next meeting.

Mr. Deschaine reminded the Board about the Employee Manual and the final suggested changes. The Board will continue to review and discuss these changes at the next meeting.

Mr. Deschaine reminded the Board about the need to appoint an alternate to the Board of Adjustment. They will be looking into recommended replacements.

The Board then reviewed a letter of support for the Transportation Enhancement Grant Application. The Board then endorsed the letter.

Mr. Federico stated that he spoke to Dan Conner about the vending machine at the Fire House. He agreed to remove it if the Fire Department sent an acknowledgement of that request. Mr.

Canada objected to that requirement and will draft a letter from the Board of Selectmen since they have the final decision on whether the machine stays or was removed.

The Board set November 2, 2009 as a deadline for the Fire Department to set the requests for further funding from the Fire House Bond Fund.

Mr. Canada then moved to accept the minutes of June 1, 2009, June 8, 2009, June 15, 2009, and June 22, 2009 as presented with a small amendment to the June 15, 2009 minutes to add a reference that accessory apartments be reported in the Building Inspector's report. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Colleen Lake had requested a letter of support from the Board to establish a bus stop somewhere in the Town Center area by COAST. The Board supported the concept of a stop and allowed Mr. Deschaine to draft an appropriate letter when necessary.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED THIS WEEK/MEETINGS TO REPORT ON:

The Chair then reviewed the meetings scheduled for the coming week and meetings that were held in the past week. Mr. Canada reported on the construction meeting for the Library renovations adding that carpeting has been delayed by one week. Mr. Deschaine noted that the Library staff and volunteers would be moving the children's room over the Labor Day weekend.

PARK PERMITS/MUNICIPAL CENTER RENTALS:

Julee Katzman requested the use of the Scamman Pavilion at the Park on September 17, 2009 for a group picnic.

Karen Heselton requested the Scamman Pavilion for a birthday party on September 6, 2009.

Albert Blain requested the Front Pavilion for a reunion party on October 10, 2009.

All these requests were approved by the Board.

At 10:12 PM, Mr. Canada moved to go into non-public session to discuss a personnel matter. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. At 10:17 PM, Mr. Canada moved to come out of non-public session and to seal the minutes due to the matters of personnel discussed. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. At 10:18 PM, Mr. Canada moved to adjourn. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Reviewed By,

Norma Corrow
Recording Secretary

Paul Deschaine
Town Administrator