

## **MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 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 opened at 7:30PM.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

The Selectmen, with great satisfaction, announced their selection of John Scippa as the new Chief of Police for the Town of Stratham. Mr. Copeland read a public statement noting Mr. Scippa's qualifications and attributes that led to the Board's decision to hire him for the position (please see attached). Mr. Copeland then swore Mr. Scippa in as Chief of Police and administered the Oath of Office to a rousing applause by all present. Mr. Scippa thanked everyone present for attending and expressed his gratitude for all who helped him reach this point in his career. Again, everyone expressed their appreciation and gratitude to Mr. Scippa and wished him well as Chief of Police of the Town of Stratham.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:**

The Chair announced that the 2009 tax rate was set at \$18.06 per thousand. He observed that had we not gone through the recent revaluation that adjusted property assessments, the estimated tax rate would have been \$19.70.

The Chair then announced a reminder to everyone that there would be a test of the siren notification system for Seabrook Station on Wednesday, November 18, 2009, at 12:30PM. No actions would be necessary from residents when they hear the sirens. They should take note, though, of this test.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** After a short recess to allow the room to clear, Town Treasurer Kevin Peck stated he had \$380,790.19 in the general fund.

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**Highway:** Fred Hutton was present to give his report. He stated that all the metals at the Transfer Station would be shipped out sometime this week. This will be the fourth time this year that the scrap metal has been shipped out for recycling. In spite of a significant drop in scrap metal prices over the past several months, the Town expects to get a small amount of money for the metal.

Mr. Hutton noted the ball fields at Stevens Park have been mowed and aerated. Mr. Copeland asked if the new field has been fenced off. Mr. Hutton said that he did not think that it was necessary, but that maybe one hundred feet of snow fence could be erected. Various options were discussed including the possible use of the soccer goals as barriers to prevent vehicles from traveling out to the new fields to avoid damage.

Mr. Hutton reported that it took nearly a half day to rake all the debris off the lawns at the Fire Station and the Historical Society building. This was caused by rocks left over from the installation of the irrigation system.

Mr. Hutton then noted that all the sanders have been calibrated. Howard Fairfield, the company that provides our sanders, has reviewed their work. Mr. Canada asked if this included calibrating the one computerized sander owned by the Town and if it was now operational. Mr. Hutton said it was for now.

Mr. Hutton stated that he now has two people signed up to drive as temporary snowplow operators so he should be all set for drivers. Mr. Deschaine asked if that permitted double shift rotations. Mr. Hutton said he would need at least eight drivers to accomplish two shifts. Mr. Canada offered to post another ad on Craigslist to obtain more drivers.

The Board then discussed the Boy Scout trailer that is located currently at the Fire House. Mr. Hutton stated that, in its current location, it would impede snow removal from the parking lot. The Board agreed that it needed to be removed from its current location. The question that remained was to move to where. Mr. Canada suggested offering to store the trailer at the Park where they had offered to store the healthcare RV. Everyone agreed that that was a reasonable option.

Mr. Hutton reported that the Squamscott Road street signs were up. Mr. Federico thanked the Department for doing so.

Mr. Hutton also stated that he would be taking some of his vacation time during the next few weeks. Mr. Canada supported him doing so since he was in danger of losing the vacation time at the end of the year.

**Code Enforcement Officer/Building Inspector:** Terry Barnes was present to give his report. Lindt Chocolate has been keeping him very busy. Various system tests have occurred this last week. Some systems worked well, others did not. It is all being worked out by the various parties involved. He stated the Fire Chief has been kept in the loop regarding these tests. Mr. Barnes described the various testing systems that are on site.

Mr. Barnes reported that Planet Fitness is progressing with their renovations to a portion of the old Shaw's building for their use. He would guess that they hope to be open in December. Another storefront in that same building is also moving forward.

He noted that there have been a number of illegal signs placed in the right-of-way, which are becoming a nuisance. He also noted that the number of requests for generator permits has skyrocketed. He also reported on various other construction projects that are continuing throughout Town.

Mr. Barnes noted that the Board of Adjustment decided not to rehear the case of the landscaper on Winnicutt Road. Mr. Barnes has spoken with the owner and advised him to reduce the size of his request to comply with the home occupation standards.

Mr. Federico asked if there were any plans for future development in front of the new Shaw's property. Mr. Barnes said that he had not heard of any proposals but they would approach the Planning Board first.

Mr. Canada asked if the accessory apartment deed restriction document had been drafted. Mr. Barnes said that it has been drafted and used.

**Office of Emergency Management:** David Emanuel was present to give a report on his Department's efforts. He reported on the Emergency Operations Plan and its process of adoption. Mr. Emanuel then went on to summarize the plan, which covers all potential hazards that could occur in Town. He asked for the Board's concurrence in accepting the plan. The Board did accept the plan and proceeded to sign the document as noted.

Mr. Emanuel pointed out that he hopes to have everyone who participated in drafting the plan see Mr. Deschaine to sign the master copy and to provide a CD when they signed. Mr. Canada said that there is no staff available to make that many copies of the CD. Mr. Emanuel did state that he sent an electronic copy via email to all the participants. Mr. Emanuel also stated that the Police Department, Fire Department, Emergency Management Office, and the Selectmen would retain hard copies of the plan. Mr. Federico suggested a copy be placed in the Library. Mr. Emanuel said that he could do so but parts of the plan could be sensitive in terms of response plans to terrorists attacks and; therefore, should not be made public.

Mr. Emanuel then reported on the Emergency Management Planning Grant for which he is applying to outfit the Emergency Operations Center and other furnishings in the Fire House. The Emergency Management Planning Grant was also used to create the Emergency Operations Plan the Board just approved. Estimates are being updated regarding the cost of the furnishings, which range between \$14,000 to \$15,000 net costs to the Town if the grant is approved, with \$2,000 to \$3,000 of miscellaneous ancillary items also being part of the Town's grant match. This grant would require a 50% match from the Town, which he hoped would be provided by the remaining balance in the Fire House Bond Account. He stated that approval of the grant application would take approximately two to three months. When he updated the cost of the furnishings, the total costs would be between \$30,000 to \$40,000, so the match requirement would be between the \$15,000 and \$20,000 previously stated. Mr. Canada was hopeful to close out the bond account by the end of this year so those funds could go against the tax rate the following year. He said we could encumber \$15,000 as the match.

Mr. Emanuel then reported he was working with Mr. Deschaine to close out other reimbursements having to do with last year's ice storm and 2006 floods. Potential reimbursements were \$12,790.

Mr. Emanuel reported on the previous Seabrook Station graded exercises which cited three different deficiencies, which were the lack of radios, the lack of furnishings in the EOC and lastly, the lack of phone lines to the EOC. The radio deficiency has been corrected via another State grant. The furnishings would be corrected if the Emergency Management Planning Grant was awarded to the Town. The remaining issue would be the phone lines. That has been an unresolved issue for many years. The current two lines to the EOC are not sufficient. There is no commitment by any party to fund additional lines that are only used during emergencies.

Mr. Emanuel then reported that an inventory of equipment at the EOC is an ongoing task to be reported to the State. Tim and Andra Copeland maintain the inventory and associated reports. The year 2010 is also a graded exercise year. When he had more details, Mr. Emanuel will update the Board on that schedule.

Mr. Copeland motioned to adopt the National Emergency Notification System Resolution, which is located in the back of the Emergency Operations Plan. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. With that, the Board signed the Emergency Operations Plan where required.

**The following appointments were made:** Mr. Copeland moved to appoint Edie Barker to the Conservation Commission to fill an open alternate's position and to waive the formality of a formal application as Ms. Barker currently serves on the Ad Hoc Conservation Bond Subcommittee of the Conservation Commission. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

There are two people who have expressed an interest in serving on the Board of Adjustment. Mr. Canada moved to appoint James Scamman Jr. to the Zoning Board of Adjustment to fill an alternate's position. Mr. Copeland expressed concerns that this would create a quasi-judicial board, which had two members from the same family. The motion died for lack of a second. Mr. Federico then nominated Jeffrey Karam to the same position on the ZBA. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion and the appointment was made by a vote of 3-0.

**Administration:** Mr. Deschaine continued the discussion on the tax rate and the process of printing and delivering tax bills. The Tax Collector's Office will be working diligently this week to try to get those bills out as soon as possible. He reported that Town Assessor Andrea Lewy has prepared an insert for the tax bill mailing which will explain the recent revaluation to taxpayers.

Mr. Deschaine noted there was a need for continued discussion on the Public Works Commission bylaws. Mr. Canada stated that he would request that to be on next week's agenda.

Mr. Deschaine then discussed recent developments in the design of the proposed pre-emption light at the intersection of Winnicutt Road and Portsmouth Avenue. Upon review, the Board accepted the changes as proposed as potential savings in installing the system. Mr. Deschaine would continue to work with the designer to identify additional areas of savings. The current cost estimate, before implementing the above referenced changes, was \$46,640. Mr. Deschaine did note that the Town Center Committee was exploring of use of a roundabout at this intersection, which could potentially negate this effort. Mr. Copeland said that he did not think a roundabout would work at this location and that accidents would increase as a result of its installation. He much preferred having the pre-emption light.

Mr. Deschaine explained the renewal of the Accident and Sickness Policy for Fire Department members. As Mr. Deschaine understood it, due to recent additions in coverage terms, we will now have this coverage through Primex and the need for a separate policy was no longer necessary but he had to confirm this understanding. Mr. Federico moved and Mr. Copeland seconded to authorize Mr. Deschaine to evaluate the Fire Department Accident and Sickness Policy and renew the policy if there was not duplicate coverage available through the Town's insurances with Primex. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Deschaine then explained some confusion that occurred regarding the use of the signboard in front of the Fire House. The Board had previously dedicated two lines of the signboard to be used by other Departments and two other lines, of the four lines total, to be dedicated to Fire Department use. He noted that the two-line dedication of the four existing lines did not seem to work out very well because there were very few messages that could fit in just two lines. A potential conflict started last week when a filler message by the Fire Department was using all four lines when the Library was scheduled to use the message board promoting the Open House. Mr. Canada moved that all messages on the message board be scheduled through the Town Office, including the Fire

Department's. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Copeland will inform the Fire Department of this decision.

Mr. Canada moved to approve the minutes of November 2, 2009 as amended by Mr. Canada via email earlier today. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Canada asked about the employee benefit report. Mr. Deschaine stated that it had been started, but because of Valerie Kemp's bereavement leave this past week, it had not been completed. Mr. Canada also expressed his hope that the costs associated with the Fire District are being tracked.

Mr. Canada reported on a group of residents that met this past weekend to investigate the use of the Gifford Barn as a possible entertainment venue. Vicki Avery is heading up the group interested in the use. They will have additional information to report on during next week's Park Association meeting.

Mr. Federico asked what the final position of the Town was regarding the use of salt for the coming winter. He is being asked by many residents if the Selectmen will be changing their position on salt use. Many of them who are asking were upset that the Board would be considering a change. Mr. Canada and Mr. Copeland stated they felt it was still under consideration but no decision had been reached at this point.

**MEETINGS SCHEDULED THIS WEEK/MEETINGS TO REPORT ON:**

The Chair reviewed the meetings scheduled for the coming week and the meetings that were held during the last week.

At 10:07 PM, Mr. Canada moved to go into non-public session to discuss a personnel matter and a request for public assistance. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. At 11:00 PM, Mr. Federico moved to come out of non-public session and seal the minutes due to the personnel matters discussed and to adjourn. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Reviewed By,

Norma Corrow  
Recording Secretary

Paul Deschaine  
Town Administrator