

## **MINUTES OF THE MARCH 22, 2010 BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING**

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

At 7:37 pm, the Chair opened the general meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

Dan Crow and Vicky Avery were present on behalf of the Stratham Hill Park Association. They requested a raffle permit for the Cow Flop Raffle to be held between now and the Stratham Fair. The drawing will occur on Sunday, July 25, 2010 at 1:00 pm at the Park. Mr. Canada moved to issue a raffle permit to the Stratham Hill Park Association as described. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Kevin Peck reported that he had \$2,849,742.06 in the general checking account, of which \$2,500,000 was invested.

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**Fire Department:** Matt Larrabee was present to request authorization to purchase the Zoll Defibrillator Cardiac Monitors as contained in the 2010 Warrant Article. The cost for the two units was set at \$37,076.16. Mr. Copeland questioned why Zoll sales representatives stated that the sale price was going to be lower than the one stated. Mr. Larrabee stated that the price quoted was a negotiated price after eight separate revisions to get to tonight's proposal. Mr. Copeland felt that this was somewhat deceptive or disingenuous by the sales representative. Mr. Canada questioned if there were EMS supplies in the Operating Budget that would go with these capital items. The current proposal includes supplies for these units. Consequently, the Operating Budget should be reduced by this amount. Mr. Larrabee said that in theory, if the expected call rates stay the same, Mr. Canada would be correct. Mr. Canada moved to accept the proposal for the equipment as presented and authorized the Chair to sign the proposal as accepted. Mr. Federico seconded the motion. Mr. Copeland objected to accepting the proposal as presented when the sales staff made other representations during the on-site demonstration. Mr. Canada said the proposals were changed at the request of the Fire Department, so the Board should not penalize the corporation for these revisions. John Sapienza of the audience asked the Board to support the motion. At that, the Board voted unanimously for the acquisition. Mr. Larrabee asked if the motion included the cost of supplies. Mr. Canada stated that that was not part of his motion. If later in the year there is a problem with funding for supplies, the Board could act at that time and approve the expenditure from the EMS fund. Mr. Larrabee thanked the Board for their consideration of the request.

Dan Crow was present to invite the Board to the first owner's construction meeting on the Library renovation, which will be held at 10:00 am tomorrow. These meetings will be held every other week until the project is complete.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Barbara Broderick was present as Stratham's representative to the COAST Board of Directors. She wanted clarification on the Board's position on continued funding for COAST. Mr. Canada said the Board and the Budget Advisory Committee supported COAST, but did not want to fund

the organization if it continued to have a negative impact on grant funding requests for the Town. Ms. Broderick understood that part of the conversation, but wanted to make sure that the Board knew that COAST did not have any part in determining how to penalize the Town's grant applications. Mr. Canada pointed out the Board was willing to have a dialogue with COAST and the Rockingham Planning Commission about the issue as there appears to be different impressions concerning the situation. Ms. Broderick stated the next meeting of the COAST Board of Directors was Wednesday at 8:30 am, and wanted to clarify the Selectmen's position on this issue. Mr. Canada said he thought the Board could give a more definitive answer next month, particularly if a meeting could be organized with COAST and the Rockingham Planning Commission. The Board thanked Ms. Broderick for her time.

**Administration:** Mr. Deschaine asked that Lincoln Daley and Terry Barnes come forward to present the draft of the Companion Ordinance to regulate and begin permitting home occupations. Mr. Daley reviewed the draft that he had. Mr. Barnes questioned how to apply the proposed ordinance to existing home occupations. Mr. Deschaine explained that this ordinance was a business regulation and licensing ordinance, which although connected to the new Zoning Amendment that was recently adopted, this ordinance was not really related to a Land Use regulation. The Selectmen wanted to review and comment next week on the draft. Mr. Daley will look for similar ordinances within the State to see if they have any precedence.

Mr. Daley stated he received information from the NH Department of Transportation concerning the Six Inch Aerial Photography project. The estimated up charge for the six foot aerials from the one foot aerials was \$5,058.00, of which that sum was in Mr. Daley's planning budget. Mr. Canada questioned whether it was truly in the planning budget. Mr. Deschaine said that it was budgeted for on a contingency basis, but no decision has been made until the final proposal was received. Mr. Daley had only received the material today. He did note that a response date was set for March 31, 2010. Mr. Canada wanted to review the document and his budget notes before committing to anything. The Board postponed action on this item until their next meeting.

**Assessing:** Andrea Lewy was present to review abatement requests with the Board (see attached).

Mr. Copeland moved to approve the abatement request of Carl and Sheila Scamman as recommended by Ms. Lewy. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Copeland then moved to approve the abatement request for Dennis Ball as recommended by Ms. Lewy. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Copeland then moved to accept Ms. Lewy's recommendation to abate any taxes assessed on the Eastman heirs since this lot appears to have been part of the adjacent frost lot down by the Squamscott River. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Copeland moved to accept Ms. Lewy's recommendation of approving the abatement request of Steve and Leslie Blaney. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

Mr. Copeland moved to accept Ms. Lewy's recommendation of approving the abatement request of Jacob and Amy Dusling. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Copeland then moved to accept Ms. Lewy's recommendation of approving the abatement request of Misa Pignataro. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Copeland moved to deny the abatement request of Edna Beaton based upon the recommendation of Ms. Lewy. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Lewy recommended the denial of Ronald Deane's abatement request as untimely. Mr. Deane had requested the Board's leniency for not filing on time due to the fact that he did not have power on March 1<sup>st</sup>, on the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline, caused by the wind storm. Ms. Lewy also noted the application had minimal reference to his objections to his assessment. Mr. Canada moved not to deny the abatement based on untimely filing. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Ms. Lewy will consequently review the abatement on its merits.

Mr. Copeland moved to deny the abatement request of Betsy Jo Wentworth based on the recommendation of Ms. Lewy. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Lewy then recommended the following Veteran's credit applications be approved: Henry Bedford, Susan Dionne, John Peracchi, Francis Silva and Jean St. Pierre. Mr. Copeland moved to approve all five applications as presented by the Town Assessor. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

At 8:56 pm, Mr. Copeland moved to go into non-public session to discuss consideration of the elderly exemption applications, which will involve confidential financial information. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

At 9:03 pm, Mr. Canada moved to come out of non-public session and to seal the minutes due to the personal information discussed. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Lewy then discussed the BTLA decision concerning the Soft Draw tax appeal. A motion to re-hear the case has been made by Soft Draw and the BTLA is yet to rule on that re-hearing motion. Mr. Deschaine inquired of the Board if they wished to pay Softdraw the amount due per the BTLA decision even though payment is not required pending appeal. By doing so, interest would not continue to accrue. His belief was that the amount owed by the Town would not go down because of Softdraw's appeal. The Board voted to do so.

Ms. Lewy reported that the tax map numbering conversion will start on Wednesday to implement the next tax map numbering system. This will convert all the Avitar files in Assessing, Building Permits and Tax Collections to reflect the new tax map numbers on the new tax maps.

Ms. Lewy then reported that the State has provided an estimated sales to assessment ratio. The report arrived on March 19<sup>th</sup>. The State has determined that the Town's sales assessment ratio is at 98.7% with a COD of 6.2 and a PRD of 1.01, all of which are very favorable outcomes after reevaluation. Ms. Lewy stated that the Town's State Monitor was in today and was very satisfied with these results.

Ms. Lewy then stated the Assessing Manual is done. This coming year, the Town will be subject to a State's assessment review. Contact letters have been sent out to all who are receiving

exemptions, tax credits and tax exempt property, and many have already responded. Property owners subject to current use will also receive a letter shortly verifying their information.

To date, Ms. Lewy reported that they have received 117 abatement requests by the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. She will be working on reviewing and processing those requests as timely as possible.

The Chair then reviewed meetings scheduled for the coming week and those held during the past week. Mr. Federico reported that the Transportation Chapter of the Master Plan was approved by the Planning Board at their last meeting.

**PARK PERMITS/MUNICIPAL CENTER RENTALS:**

The following Park permits and Municipal Center rentals were reviewed and acted upon:

Jim Proulx requested the use of the Park for a high school class reunion on July 10, 2010. This request was approved.

Walter and Anne Sanderson of the General Electric Retirees requested the use of the Park for an outing on July 15, 2010. This request was approved.

Sarah Raizes requested the use of the Municipal Center on May 15<sup>th</sup> for a memorial service. This request was approved.

The Chisholm Farm Homeowner's Association requested the use of the Municipal Center on May 19, 2010 for their annual meeting. Mr. Canada moved to waive the fee if this was indeed their first meeting of the year. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**Administration:** Mr. Deschaine continued by presenting a request by Gary LaCasse for use of the Morgera Room at the Fire Department for an Eagle Court of Honor. Mr. Federico moved and Mr. Canada seconded to approve the request, which passed unanimously.

The Board briefly discussed the transition to a new Fire Chief. They wanted to make sure that the new Fire Chief was aware of his responsibility of posting uses on the Fire Department calendar or that he appoint a designee in writing if he so chooses. As a result of some confusion regarding this posting, Mr. Canada moved to approve the use by Rob and Vicky Cook of the Morgera Room. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion. Mr. Federico felt that a clarification needs to be done to ensure that a designee has been made on behalf of the Fire Chief to post such things on the calendar. Mr. Deschaine suggested that the Chief could designate someone as long as it was in writing. Mr. Canada stated that that was not part of the current policy and asked Mr. Deschaine to contact Matt Larrabee, who has been posting on behalf of the Chief, to identify that his authority to post was at the request of the new Chief, Stan Walker.

Mr. Deschaine again brought up the discussion of the notice from the NH Department of Transportation about the culvert replacement on Squamscott Road. The Board had nothing to note regarding that project.

Mr. Copeland expressed his concerns about the proposed new Federal Health Care Program awaiting the President's signature. A number of states are looking into suing the Federal Government over the unfunded mandates contained in the legislation passed by Congress. He

was expressing those concerns to the NH Attorney General to encourage similar action. There was no action taken upon this issue.

Discussion continued on the request for a streetlight at the intersection of Blue Ridge Circle and Portsmouth Ave. Mr. Canada observed the intersection was quite dark. Mr. Federico thought there wasn't enough traffic at the intersection to warrant it. The Board reaffirmed the general policy that for an intersection to be lighted, it must be a busy intersection of through streets wherein a significant amount of traffic is generated by both intersecting streets with considerable turns from, and into, both streets. No further action was taken on the issue.

There was additional discussion concerning the charges for data requests and copies policy. Mr. Canada had spoken to Joyce Charbonneau who had some additional fees for other documents that were commonly requested. Mr. Deschaine will distribute the re-draft of the copying charges and data request charges to other departments to get their input.

A discussion occurred concerning the Town's printing of business cards. Mr. Canada suggested that it was much more cost effective to print small numbers of cards using the Avery card stock. In addition, he liked having a more unified presentation using the new Town logo within the template provided by Avery. Mr. Canada moved to direct all departments to use the new logo and the Avery template to print business cards in house. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

At 10:10 pm, Mr. Canada moved to go into non-public session to discuss a personnel issue. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

At 10:29 pm, Mr. Copeland moved to come out of non-public session and to seal the minutes due to the matters of personnel discussed. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Reviewed By,

Stacey J. Grella  
Executive Assistant

Paul Deschaine  
Town Administrator