

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 7, 2010 BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

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

The meeting was opened at 7:30 pm by the Chair.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Town Treasurer Kevin Peck reported that he had \$368,311.36 as a negative balance still in the general checking account because of a payment due to the Stratham Memorial School. That check is being withheld until such time funds are available. Without that check, the general fund balance would be \$79,426.64.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Park: Kim Woods was present to discuss the acquisition of an ATV vehicle for use at the Park. She presented quotes she obtained in her recommendations. She also gave to the Board the materials she presented to the Stratham Hill Park Association. She would recommend purchasing a Kubota RTV for a price of up to \$11,564.93. Mr. Copeland moved to accept the recommendation. Mr. Federico seconded the motion.

Mr. Copeland also moved to approve up to \$1,050 for approximately half the cost of a rear mounted snow blower for the John Deere tractor to match funds pledged by the Park Association. Mr. Federico also seconded that motion. Both motions passed unanimously.

Ms. Woods reported on damage to the Andrew Stevens memorial bench at the top of Stratham Hill. It is unknown when the vandalism occurred. She has a quote to repair it at a cost of \$550. Mr. Canada said that Tara Barker, as the Department Head, would need to determine if there are funds available in the budget to make this repair.

Josh Tyman was present to report on the results of his Eagle Scout service project. He delivered the collection boxes for retired flags at the Police Department, Fire Department, Stratham Memorial School and the Stratham Municipal Center. He invited the Selectmen to attend the Flag Day ceremonies planned at the park on June 14th at 7:00 pm. The Board thanked him for all his efforts.

NEW BUSINESS:

John Tyman was present as Chair of the Stevens Park Baseball Field Fundraising Committee. The Baseball Board would like to conduct a raffle as part of those efforts. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the request as presented. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Police Department: Chief John Scippa was present to discuss the COPS grants application, which is pending at the Department of Justice. It was a grant application held over from 2009 which is under renewed consideration for a new grant program for 2010. There is a short period of time to update the application which is due by June 16th. Mr. Canada asked about the new terms of the grant. Mr. Scippa said that the grant now covers the full salary and benefits of an officer for three years with commitment from the Town to fully fund the fourth year of the position. Mr. Canada asked if there was truly a need to add a new position to the Department. Mr. Scippa acknowledged that if this was solely a local tax dollar funded position, he may have difficulty justifying the position. However, over the course of four years for which the grant program covers, that could change significantly. The circumstances under which the position

was created would have to be deeply evaluated at the end of the four year period. Anyone hired for the position would have to acknowledge that the position is a grant funded position with only a four year term, at which time it would be evaluated.

Mr. Canada asked what would occur if an officer were to leave midway through the four year grant term; would the Town have to advertise to fill the position for the remainder of the term. That was Mr. Scippa's understanding. Mr. Copeland asked if the elimination of the Lieutenant's position could be the impetus to create this new position instead of creating an eleventh sworn patrol officer's position. Mr. Scippa said that since the Town is budgeted for ten positions, we could not use the grant to supplant that budget, it can only add to it. It would be his opinion that a new eleventh position would have to be created.

Mr. Canada asked if the current Board of Selectmen could bind a Town Meeting four years from now for appropriating the cost of the fourth year of this program. Mr. Deschaine stated that a Town Meeting had already authorized the Board under RSA 31:95-B to hold a public hearing to accept grants and other unexpected funds. The terms of the grant would have to be discussed and fully disclosed; that was the purpose of the hearing. At that time, the Board could vote to accept the funds or not. Mr. Canada felt it still did not answer the question he had and asked that we contact the Local Government Center to confirm this possibility.

Mr. Copeland noted that Sgt. David Pierce and other officers had organized a fundraiser for the Police Association that occurred at the Irving gas station this past weekend which raised over \$300 by pumping gas. Mr. Canada thanked Mr. Pierce and the other officers for their efforts and for well representing the community.

The Board then discussed a citizen's complaint about the rate of speed of vehicles on Union Road. The Department has been monitoring the condition and the resident was appreciative of their efforts. However, that road was recently paved and the resident feels that the speeding problem will increase again. Mr. Scippa said that they will continue to monitor the situation closely. If a citation program is necessary, he is prepared to implement one. Mr. Canada also suggested using the speed enforcement trailer to survey the occurrence of speeding on Union Road to determine what time of day it is specifically occurring. Mr. Scippa replied that we could do that, but the necessary computer support needed replacement or repair.

Mr. Scippa said he had been asked by the Town Center Committee if traffic data was obtainable for the Town Center area. He looked into the matter and the only data available is enforcement oriented and would not be suitable.

Mr. Scippa then reported that he had over 70 applicants to fill the remaining open position. June 25th will be the start of the evaluation process of those candidates.

Mr. Copeland thanked the Chief for his continued assistance to the Fire Department during medical calls. Mr. Scippa's medical background has been a tremendous help in the ability to respond to medical calls.

The Chair then reviewed meetings scheduled in the coming week and reviewed meetings that were held during the past two weeks during the Memorial Day holiday. He noted that the Town's 300th Anniversary Committee is meeting tomorrow.

Mr. Canada noted and congratulated Fred Hutton on being recognized by his peers as the 2010 Road Agent of the Year.

PARK PERMITS/MUNICIPAL CENTER RENTALS:

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

Kristen & Matt Larrabee for the use of the Morgera Room at the Firehouse for a baby shower on July 18, 2010. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the use and to waive the fee due to his involvement in the Fire Department. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Kranthi Kantipudi requested use of the Municipal Center on June 26, 2010 for a family gathering. That request was approved.

The American Red Cross requested the use of the Park on June 24, 2010 for a recognition event. Mr. Copeland moved to allow the use and to waive the reservation fee. Mr. Canada seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

The Town of Newmarket Summer Camp Program requested use of the Park on July 6, 2010 for a field trip. Mr. Copeland moved to allow the use and to waive the fee for a sister town. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

Leo Gagnon requested the use of the Park on August 15, 2010 for a family reunion. That use was approved.

Administration: Mr. Deschaine informed the Board that two individuals had expressed an interest in being recommended as the Town's new Health Officer. He is obtaining more information on those individuals to present to the Board.

Mr. Deschaine then presented a renewal of the lease to the present occupants of the Gifford House. Mr. Canada moved to renew the lease for an additional year for the Gifford House as presented. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Deschaine presented a proclamation recognizing Lindt & Sprungli's new chocolate bean roaster facility being opened. The Board then signed the proclamation.

Mr. Deschaine then presented a request by the New England Agility Team for Dog Trials to occur at Stratham Hill Park during the period of May 13th through May 16th in 2011. The use would include self contained camping units. Mr. Copeland noted that those dates would coincide with the baseball season. Mr. Deschaine also noted that the dates are more than a year in advance of today, which is not usually allowed by the Board. With the noted conflicts with the baseball use of the area, the Selectmen denied their request. However, the Selectmen did note they would consider a revised request to include the Gifford Fields if they felt that was a reasonable alternative. They asked Tara Barker to reply to them with this information.

The interviews and recommendations for hiring a new Office Assistant in the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office were discussed. Mr. Canada moved to accept the search committee's recommendation of hiring Lisa Collins at \$15.00 an hour for a 25 hour per week position for that Department. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Deschaine said the Executive Assistant position applicants should be reviewed this coming week so that interviews can be scheduled some time shortly thereafter.

OLD BUSINESS:

The Board discussed the proposed tax deeding of a piece of property along the Swamscott River that they had previously discussed. It was noted that Lucien McCarty had volunteered to take a canoe down the Swamscott to view the property and reported that he had found the structure that was shown on the aerial photography, but he could not reach it due to the soft grounds surrounding it. Mr. Canada volunteered to further investigate the nature of the structure.

Mr. Deschaine presented an extension to the Cable TV Franchise Agreement. Since the parties are still negotiating terms of their renewal, he recommended to the Board that they authorize the extension. Mr. Canada moved to approve the extension as presented. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Canada reported that the Public Works Commission had recommended approval of the Wright Pierce proposal to do continuing studies on the water supply and potential for public sewers within the Commercial District. With that, Mr. Canada moved to approve the Wright Pierce contract and to authorize the Chair to execute same. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The Board discussed the state of the backlog of minutes that need to be dictated and then transcribed. The Board wanted Mr. Deschaine to explore the possibility of hiring a temporary employee to do transcription of Mr. Deschaine's dictation. Mr. Federico stated there was a transcriptionist who lived on Winnicutt Road who would possibly be interested; he will get her name and number to Mr. Deschaine some time tomorrow.

Mr. Federico mentioned that the street light at the intersection of Bunker Hill Ave. and Portsmouth Ave. was still malfunctioning. Mr. Canada suggested that he contact Unitil to report the problem as any citizen could.

Mr. Federico also noted that the lighting at the Veteran's Memorial Garden was out. He will speak with Kim Woods to see what the nature of the malfunction is.

Mr., Deschaine noted that it was his intention to finalize the Employee Manual draft this week for final review by the Board. The next step would be to send it to the Town's attorney for legal review.

At 9:43 pm, Mr. Copeland moved to go into non-public session to discuss a personnel matter. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.

At 9:53 pm, Mr. Canada moved to come out of non-public session and seal the minutes of the personnel matter discussed and to adjourn. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Reviewed By,

Stacey J. Grella
Executive Assistant

Paul Deschaine
Town Administrator