

## **MINUTES OF THE JULY 26, 2010 BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING**

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

At 7:30 pm, the Chair opened the general meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Kevin Peck reported that he had \$5,002,446.36 in the general checking account.

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**Parks & Recreation:** Park Ranger Kim Woods was present to give her report. Ms. Woods stated the new RTV is working out very well. It's much easier and more fuel efficient to use within the Park. The Police Department used it during the Fair.

Ms. Woods reported the Fair went well. A sink in the Scamman bathroom was damaged and John Sapienza immediately replaced it with a new one. Ms. Woods stated there are a few holes in the upper ball field. Most of the carnival equipment was gone and she expected the rest to be removed by Wednesday. The major trash has been removed. The Boy Scouts are scheduled to come in to pick up the remaining trash. Ms. Woods stated that she greatly appreciated the cooperation from the Fire Department.

Ms. Woods stated that on Thursday morning at 9:00 am, Timberland will be at the Town Forest with approximately 30 volunteers to work on the trails in conjunction with the Conservation Commission. Ms. Woods requested the Board members make an appearance to express their gratitude to Timberland for all of their help. Mr. Copeland and Mr. Canada will be stopping by.

Ms. Woods requested a laptop computer from the Town in order to stop using her own personal computer. She uses this to respond to requests, communicate via email, etc. Mr. Deschaine requested to have a further discussion with Ms. Woods about the use of a laptop versus a Smartphone. It was noted that if her computer is subpoenaed during a Town related lawsuit, all of Ms. Woods' personal information on that computer would be accessed. Mr. Federico suggested having Ms. Woods plan accordingly for the upcoming budget season.

Ms. Woods expressed an interest in participating in the Rockingham Accountability Project (RAP). Ms. Woods explained that this would involve having non-violent offenders provide manual labor to maintain the Parks, which Ms. Woods would supervise. Mr. Copeland expressed reservations about the program. Mr. Federico agreed that more information would be needed. Ms. Woods will look into the matter and provide the Board with further information.

Mr. Copeland wanted to commend Ms. Woods on a great job and on her cooperative attitude during the Fair.

**Assessor:** Andrea Lewy was present to review her recommendations for action on abatement requests (please see attached).

There was a discussion on the logistics of confirming data on a residence before moving forward with just assumptions. This occurs when the Town is unable to obtain access to a property to properly assess it. Mr. Canada suggested sending a survey to homeowners that are subject to assumptions if there is not an internal inspection. Mr. Federico suggested re-introducing the inventory program. It was agreed that a letter stating the assumptions to be used be sent to the property owner prior to their use with a deadline to schedule an inspection of the property.

Mr. Canada moved to approve all the abatements Ms. Lewy has recommended with the exception of 56 Stratham Health Center LLC, which has been put on hold to allow further review by Ms. Lewy, and to deny 72 Winnicutt Road and 15 Chisholm Farm Drive per her recommendations. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Ms. Lewy presented two residents requesting Veterans Credit: Ernest Holm and John Gray. Ms. Lewy requested Mr. Gray be put on hold so she can review it further. Ms. Lewy also requested the Elderly Exemption be put on hold as the Town only has a partial year of financial data from the resident. Mr. Canada moved to approve Mr. Holm's veteran's credit. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Ms. Lewy discussed the Land Use Change Tax Warrant on four Sewall properties. Ms. Lewy stated she sent the Sewall's a courtesy letter on her analysis and the final impact. She has not heard anything back from anyone. Ms. Lewy presented the actual warrant to the Board for their approval and signature. Mr. Federico moved to approve the Land Use Change Tax Warrant for the Sewall properties in the amount of \$29,796.00. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Discussion took place on the Roman Catholic Church Current Use application. The Church decided not to build on a certain piece of land where the value of that land went way up due to the change in zoning. The Church is requesting the Board to allow them to put this into Current Use so they reduce the taxes on the land. Ms. Lewy explained that the deadline for such applications was April 15<sup>th</sup> in order to be effective in the current tax year. They are requesting their application be effective in 2010. The Board took the request under consideration for a week and took no further action.

Ms. Lewy reported that she investigated the garage next to Sweet Dreams Bakery and she did not see any evidence of a business being conducted from it. This was a follow up from a request from Mr. Federico from last month's meeting. Consequently, there would be no further adjustments to their assessment.

Mr. Canada asked how many more abatements remained to be reviewed. Ms. Lewy stated there were 19 remaining out of 116 filed. Four of the 19 include residences. The remainder were all commercial abatement requests. She is hopeful to wrap things up shortly.

The Chair reviewed the meetings held the previous week and meetings scheduled for the coming week.

The discussion next turned to a request for a \$25.00 refund from a group that had booked one of the pavilions at the Park on July 18, 2010. Unfortunately, the Front Pavilion was double booked and they had to relocate to the Scamman Pavilion. The normal fee for the Front Pavilion is \$75.00 while the Scamman Pavilion is \$50.00; hence, they wanted to know if it was possible to receive a \$25.00 refund. The Board approved the request.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Mr. Canada opened the scheduled public hearing regarding donations to the Police Department. Mr. Deschaine read the Notice of Public Hearing in regards to three grants and one donation as previously posted. Mr. Canada asked for comments from the public in attendance. There being none, he closed the public hearing. He then moved to accept the donation from the Stratham Police Association for \$35,752.78 in addition to a NH Highway Safety Project Grant for \$12,500.00 for laptop computers in six police cruisers. He also moved to accept the NH Highway Safety Project Grant for \$2,250.00 to cover the personnel costs associated with the DWI Hunter Patrol Program, and lastly, to accept the NH Highway Safety Project Grant for \$6,166.12 to cover the personnel cost associated with a DWI Saturation Patrol Program. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Canada expressed the Board's appreciation to the Police Association for the donation for the laptops and thanked Sgt. David Pierce, who was present, for all of his great work done at the Fair.

**PARK PERMITS/MUNICIPAL CENTER RENTALS:**

The following park permits and municipal center rentals were discussed and acted upon:

Vicky Cook requested the use of the Morgera Room at the Fire House on July 28<sup>th</sup> for a wake. Mr. Canada moved to approve the use and waive the fee. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Easter Seals requested the use of the Park on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Mr. Federico moved to approve the use and waive the fee. Mr. Copeland seconded which passed unanimously.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Tracy Abbott from the Stratham Recreation Commission, Todd Gallant from the Exeter Youth Soccer Association and Harvey Bierman and Jon Hewitt from the Stratham Youth Soccer Board were present to discuss the request by the Exeter Youth Soccer Association to use Stevens Field.

Mr. Gallant stated that the Exeter Youth Soccer program is a competitive travel soccer program. They are requesting the use of Stevens Field for an additional two week nights and one weekend day which would make their total usage seven days a week for eight to ten weeks. The total enrollment for the program is 320 children (U-9 up through U-16); out of that 320, 53 children (U-12 and up) are from Stratham. The Board expressed concerns of how much that will tax the field. Mr. Gallant stated they are also using the Exeter Recreation Fields and they have limited use of Brentwood and Kensington fields for practices.

There was a discussion on the condition of the field. Mr. Copeland noted that last year we had to limit the use of one field in order to recover from the previous season's use. Mr. Bierman reports that currently the worn areas of the field need to be re-sodded and there seems to be some sort of irrigation problem there as well. He also stated the fertilization being done needs to be reevaluated and aeration needs to take place. Mr. Bierman stated the price to re-sod just the significantly damaged areas would be about 2,000 square feet at approximately \$1.20 per square foot. As far as costs to repair the field and to keep them maintained, it would require approximately a \$5,000 or \$6,000 annual budget.

Ms. Abbott recommends waiving the fee for this year since Exeter Youth Soccer probably already has their budget done, but cut the use back to three nights a week and one weekend day and then revisit this next year. Mr. Federico agrees with the recommendation from the Recreation Commission.

Mr. Canada moved to allow the Exeter Youth Soccer Association to use one field at Stevens Field for three days a week and one weekend day, waive the fee for 2010, and the Exeter Youth Soccer Association will continue to line the fields and maintain the goals. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Canada asked Mr. Bierman to gather a couple of different price quotes for maintenance costs, which he will do.

Mr. Copeland asked about the fundraising meeting for the Babe Ruth Field to be held Thursday at Jon Tymann's house. He asked if it should be held at the Municipal Center instead. The Board observed that it might be better for improved communications if it were. Mr. Canada expressed his desire to have plans for the dugouts and concession stands approved by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Copeland will report back on what happened at the meeting and obtain additional information.

Mr. Canada reported on a meeting between Colleen Lake and representatives of the Town held last Thursday. She apparently possesses the plans that the Town has been seeking. She will provide copies of those plans as soon as possible. Lincoln Daley is gathering those plans to create an approval set for the Planning Board.

At 11:18 pm, Mr. Canada moved to adjourn. Mr. Federico seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Reviewed By,

Stacey J. Grella  
Executive Assistant

Paul Deschaine  
Town Administrator