

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 13, 2012 BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

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

At 7:35 pm, the Chair opened the general meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Mr. Copeland moved to approve the minutes as amended from the regular meeting on 02/06/12. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Kevin Peck reported that he had \$5,820,366.54 in the general checking account.

NEW BUSINESS:

At 7:37 pm, Mr. Canada opened the public hearing regarding the 2012 Warrant. The Board agreed to waive the reading of the actual Warrant (*see attached*) at this time and address each article individually. The Board also agreed to address Warrant Article 11 first since most people in attendance were present to discuss that particular article.

ARTICLE 11 regarding hunting at Stratham Hill Park and adjacent Town-owned lands. Many members of the public were present, including those who spoke regarding this article: Dotty ?, Kim Woods (Park Ranger), Josiah Towne (Fish & Game), Marty Wool, John Scippa (Police Chief), Dan Crow, Mary Jane Keane, Michael Perfit, Josh Crow, Mike Nichols, Pat Kelley, Pat Novello, Bob Goodrich, Christian Citarella, Greg Blood, John Sapienza, Ada Dolloff, Blake Palmer, Frank Elliott, Heidi Hanson, Tom Fosher (SMS Principal). After many public comments and a lengthy discussion, Mr. Canada moved to put to the voters, "Do you favor banning hunting in the original portion of Stratham Hill Park, including 300' east of the Fire Tower, and declaring the remaining Town-adjacent land to be a compact area pursuant to RSA 644:13, which would allow bow hunting." Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ARTICLE 3 regarding the 2012 operating budget (attached). John Sapienza requested that the Board increase the 2% raise for all employees to 3%. After a brief discussion, the Board stated they are keeping the pay increase at 2%. Marty Wool inquired as to the increase in the Financial Administration and Personnel Administration lines. Mr. Deschaine explained that the increases in Financial Administration are due to computer services consulting and the increase in Personnel Administration is due to the increase in the State retirement. Mr. Copeland moved to raise the salary line of the employees from the 2% that was originally allocated in this budget to 3%. There being no second, the motion failed.

ARTICLE 4 regarding the Capital Improvements Program for 2012 (attached). Fire Chief Rob Cook was present at the meeting and discussed the Fire Department's Capital Reserve Fund with the Board.

ARTICLE 5 regarding the Town purchasing property as part of a future expansion of the Maple Lane Cemetery. Mr. Wool expressed a concern that ten years ago it was determined that the land was not suitable for this use. Cemetery Trustee Bob Cushman was present at the meeting and stated that the amount of work that needs to go into that land to make it suitable for cemetery use is too high a price to pay at this time. Mr. Canada stated that the Board had received an estimate of \$17,650 to correct all of the issues there and does not feel that that is insurmountable.

ARTICLE 6 regarding creating a "Town Buildings and Grounds Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund". Mr. Wool questioned the word "improvements" in the article. Mr. Deschaine explained the reasoning.

ARTICLE 7 regarding appropriating money for providing training for the Stratham Volunteer Fire Department. After a question raised by Mr. Wool, the Board agreed to change the language to read, "...for the purpose of providing EMS training for the members of the Stratham Volunteer Fire Department."

ARTICLE 8 regarding appropriating money for purchasing and equipping a new fire truck. Assistant Fire Chief Matt Larrabee was present at the meeting and explained where the money would be coming from to fund this, which includes \$180,000 out of the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund, a \$40,000 anonymous donation from a resident, an \$80,000 donation from the Fire Department Association, and \$136,500 from the EMS Special Revenue Fund.

ARTICLE 9 regarding appropriating money for an Accrued Benefits Liability Expendable Trust Fund. The Board explained that this fund is necessary to pay for accrued time for retiring employees. There is currently \$31,266 in this trust fund.

ARTICLE 10 regarding appropriating money to update the Town's history. There was some question as to the amount, but the Board confirmed that they are requesting \$55,000.

ARTICLE 12 regarding any other business that may be before this meeting.

Mr. Canada then closed the public hearing and thanked everyone for coming.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Fire Department: Fire Chief Rob Cook was present at the meeting to discuss his Department's activities. He stated the Department was quite busy in January with 48 calls.

Mr. Cook requested permission from the Board to send a Department member to Fire I training in Deerfield at a cost of \$650. Mr. Canada moved to approve the request. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Cook stated the antenna on the tanker broke inside the cab so they did need to replace the antenna.

The group discussed the use of the reader board sign in front of the Firehouse.

Police Department: Police Chief John Scippa was present at the meeting to discuss his Department's activities. He informed the Board the new rifles have arrived. They are still locked in the armory and will not be deployed until everyone is qualified to use them.

Mr. Scippa stated the Rockingham County Sheriff's Office has hung all of the new equipment onto the Fire Tower, including a voter repeater for police and fire. They will power it up some time next week.

Mr. Scippa stated that Officer Michael Oliveira will be assisting CMS with a presentation for parents on February 15th at 6:00 pm on drug and alcohol awareness. This was prompted by a recent survey that was conducted at Exeter High School where there was some pretty significant findings regarding drug and alcohol use among the high school students.

Mr. Scippa informed the Board that there was some confusion with regard to personal days as presented in the newly revised Employee Manual. The wording spoke to two days off and Mr. Scippa would like some clarification from the Board. Many times such leave is taken by the hour rather than a whole day. Most police shifts are 10 hours long, unlike the standard 8 hours for the rest of the Town's employees. Do police officers get 20 hours of personal time leave if their regular shift is 10 hours long, where other employees would get 16 hours? . After some discussion, the group agreed that, for police officers, the entire shift would have to be taken off as personal time and it cannot be broken up into hours since the employees who work ten hour shifts would garner more of a benefit than other employees if used in hourly increments. Mr. Scippa will address this by special order so no changes will be made to the Employee Manual.

Mr. Scippa then discussed the paint scheme of the police cruisers with the Board. After a significant amount of review, Mr. Scippa has decided that he is content to maintain the same paint scheme that they have currently. The only change on the cruisers would be the patches being switched out at a cost of approximately \$30 per car. Mr. Scippa did express a concern that if the Town purchases one car a year, it is not guaranteed that they will get the same color blue, as the colors can change from year to year. He recommended purchasing the cars in black as that would not change. After some discussion, Mr. Copeland moved to accept solid black cars with silver trim, as recommended by the Chief. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed 2-1.

Mr. Scippa then requested to use some vacation time between February 24th and March 5th. Mr. Copeland moved to grant the request. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Deschaine stated the Highway Safety Committee paperwork has come in. Mr. Federico moved to leave Fred Hutton on the Committee until his retirement and his replacement could join the Committee next year. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Scippa stated there is some old police equipment at the Highway barn that the Police Department has no need for. Mr. Scippa will talk with the Fire Chief about possibly having the volunteers use the old light bars and will try and sell the remaining equipment.

MEETINGS: The Chair then reviewed the meetings scheduled for the coming week and reviewed the meetings held this past week.

PARK PERMITS/MUNICIPAL CENTER RENTALS:

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

Tim Copeland requested the use of the Park on June 16, 2012 for a graduation party. Mr. Canada moved to approve the use and to waive the fee. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed 2-0 (Mr. Copeland recused himself).

ADMINISTRATION:

Mr. Deschaine stated that the deadline for the window replacement project is March 10th according to the grant guidelines. There have been numerous attempts to contact the owner of the company, but with negative results. There is still one window missing at this time. The Board had authorized Mr. Deschaine last week to send a demand letter to the contractor.

The Board reviewed a request from New Life Baptist Church to renew their lease with the Town. Mr. Canada moved to allow another year's lease for the New Life Baptist Church and to keep the rate and terms the same. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The Board then discussed their recommendations for the Warrant Articles. The Board agreed to recommend Articles 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10, with a vote of 3-0. The Board agreed to make no recommendation on Article 11, with a vote of 3-0.

The Board agreed to send out a letter to all employees concerning last year's BOS/staff meeting. The letter outlines what actions were requested by employees and what actions the BOS has taken in response.

At 10:49 pm, Mr. Canada moved to go into non-public session to discuss a personnel issue. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

At 11:13 pm, Mr. Canada moved to come out of non-public session and to seal the minutes due to the matters discussed. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

At 11:14 pm, Mr. Canada moved to adjourn. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Reviewed By,

Stacey J. Grella
Executive Assistant

Paul R. Deschaine
Town Administrator