

MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 3, 2014 BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

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

At 7:33 pm, Mr. Canada opened the general meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Copeland conducted the new police officer swearing-in ceremony. The new police officers sworn in were John Emerson, Brian Holbrook, and Michael Doucette.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Deb Bronson reported that there is \$6,821,401.65 in the general checking account.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Mr. Federico moved to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2014 meeting as amended. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PARK PERMITS/MUNICIPAL CENTER RENTALS:

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

Detective Pierce from the police department requested use of the Municipal center on Sunday, April 27, 2014 for the annual Chief Maloney 6.2 mile run. He reported that last year they had 1300 participants. This year they plan to bus participants to the Municipal Center so that parking would not be an issue. The race will begin at Portsmouth Ave and Bunker Hill and end at the Greenland fire department. Mr. Copeland moved to accept the application to host the start of the run for the Chief Maloney annual 6.2 mile run, held Sunday, April 27, 2014, and to waive the fee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Federico. The motion passed unanimously.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

PARKS & RECREATION: Director Seth Hickey was present at the meeting to update the Board on his Department's activities. He announced that after school activities are going very well. The ski programs are in the third week with many taking advantage of this opportunity. The community can also take advantage of a weekly Zumba class, and a bone builder fitness program for folks who are 55 years of age and older, held two times a week.

Mr. Hickey informed the Board that he and Joe Dyrkacz are cleaning out Community Room B, which had many items stored that can be placed elsewhere. He reported the room should be cleared by end of this week.

Mr. Hickey updated the Board on the skating rink in the Park. It is going well and is popular with the community. An option they are considering is reducing the skating rink from one large rink to two smaller rinks, stating that with the fluctuation in weather it would be easier to maintain two smaller rinks. Mr. Hickey stated that they could possibly have another 6 weeks of skating weather. Mr. Canada asked if there is anything in his budget specifically earmarked for improvements to the skating rink. Mr. Hickey replied that the improvements to the rink come from the Park Association. One costly issue that we need to figure out is the water that we need

to create the ice. It would be better to find a natural water source, and more manageable to have two smaller rinks than one large one.

Mr. Hickey stated that they are keeping up with trail grooming needs. Whenever it snows, he and Kim Woods make sure the trails are cleared. Mr. Hickey reported they are working with the fire department on safety zones in the park. They are looking at creating a zone map to post at the fire department and the police department in case of a need for search and rescue, or evacuation. Mr. Hickey reported that there have been two weeks of the winter mountain biking racing series, with approximately 35 participants per week.

Mr. Hickey reported he recently met at Stevens Park with the two baseball coaches from Seacoast United and the Chairperson from the Stratham baseball Board. Seacoast is looking to use the Babe Ruth field this spring and summer when our Babe Ruth programs are not using it. Mr. Hickey is working on a proposal with Seacoast for either a financial exchange, or services that they could offer to our program, such as coach clinics. Mr. Canada stated that he has a problem with providing our fields to "for profit" organizations. If the field can take the extra stress then he would want to see financial compensation for the use of the field. Mr. Federico stated that he is not interested in the coach clinics, but would prefer compensation that would go to maintaining the fields. Mr. Copeland agreed that we would need to be compensated for use of the fields by outside organizations and was leery of "in kind" payments.

Mr. Hickey then updated the Board on the youth sports basketball program stating that it is going very well. Things are going smooth with using the school facilities, the tournament teams are starting to enter the tournaments. They have a 5th-6th girls' team, a 5th grade boys' team, and a 6th grade boys' team entered in the tournament. Baseball and softball will have open registrations in the coming week.

Mr. Hickey provided the Board with a list of summer programs that his department will be offering—included on the list are summer camps that would require a signed contract. Mr. Hickey also presented the Board with a copy of a contract from US Sports Institute to review, mentioning that it is standard contract language and is the same provisions that we have signed in the past. We have had approximately 25 – 30 kids participate in this camp in the past and US Sports Institute gives us \$10.00 per participant. Mr. Canada asked if the cost of \$10.00 per participant fee is what US Sports Institute charges. Mr. Hickey clarified that the cost of the camp is \$185.00 per student, which is paid from the parent to the Institute and then we are paid \$10.00 per student. Mr. Federico asked if we charge for the facility. Mr. Hickey said that we do not, stating that the majority of kids are Stratham residents. Mr. Canada moved to accept the terms of the contract. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hickey updated the Board on upcoming events such as summer concert series in the park; spring thaw road race March 29, 2014 at Stratham Memorial School; Easter egg hunt; and mountain bike series for the spring and possibly the summer.

Mr. Copeland inquired of Mr. Hickey about the Liquor Commission Hearing that is schedule for Wednesday, February 19, 2014 asking why it was scheduled for a Wednesday morning. Mr. Hickey gave the attorney dates and times that the room was available, and that is the day and time that the attorney chose. Mr. Copeland mentioned that he had told the attorney for the

Liquor Commission that he was not available on Wednesdays, and is also concerned that it would not be a good time for the community to come and voice their concerns.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT: Highway Agent Colin Lavery was present at the meeting to update the Board on his Department's activities.

Mr. Lavery, on behalf of the Cemetery Committee, reported to the Board that the Cemetery Trustees have reviewed the cemetery fees, compared them to the prices in surrounding community cemeteries, and advises that the cemetery fees are to be raised effective April 1, 2014. Mr. Lavery explained that Stratham has the lowest costs in the area. Mr. Lavery provided the Board with average cemetery costs associated with surrounding community cemeteries, and made recommendations to the Board for the updated fee schedule. The Board unanimously concurs with the recommended fees.

Mr. Lavery updated the Board on various projects throughout Town, including the Municipal Center parking lot lightening. He is looking into options and will soon have a full report for the Board. Another recent project was on the 1982 Hudson trailer which was in need of a new deck, paint, lighting and new hitch. The department was able to do all of the repairs at a cost of \$560.00 which the Fair Committee agreed to pay for since they often use the trailer.

Mr. Lavery reported to the Board that the Highway Department restored a trailer that was dropped off at the transfer station. The trailer will be used for storage and transportation of emergency equipment. It now has cones, barricades, signs, etc. that will be used in emergency situations. It is quicker than having to load all of those items, and will be used by the police department and fire department as well.

The Highway Department has been busy with tree work and site-line clearing areas; the goal is to be done March 31, 2014.

Mr. Lavery updated the Board on snow maintenance and salt use. Things are going well, there have been minimal equipment issues and all have been easy to fix. The salt inventory is at around 600 tons. If we continue to have storms, we might need to purchase more salt.

Mr. Lavery reported that recently the Town received a letter from the Northeast Resource Recovery Association (NRRA), recognizing us for our efforts in recycling scrap metal. We did over 25 tons last year and we had only been dealing with NRRA for six months so we hope to double that amount in 2014.

Mr. Canada asked Mr. Lavery about the uniform contract they have for the Highway Department uniforms. He pointed out that the contract had not been authorized, nor was it in a form which would be authorized, by the Board and that it had been inappropriately signed by his predecessor. Mr. Lavery stated that the service has not been acceptable and that there is a clause in the contract that they can use to get out of the remainder of the contract. Mr. Lavery has looked into other uniform companies and options for obtaining uniform service. He will continue to do research and bring this issue back to the Board.

MEETINGS: The Chair then reviewed the meetings scheduled for the coming week and reviewed the meetings held since the last Selectmen's meeting in January 27, 2014.

Mr. Canada mentioned that Tuesday, February 4, 2014 is the deadline to receive Petition Warrant Articles and asked Mr. Deschaine if any had come in so far. Mr. Deschaine said that we have received the following; a petition for funding for Annie's Angels; a petition to direct communication be sent to our Congressmen, Senators, Legislators, and the President to get big money out of politics in campaigns; and two petitions to either ban hunting in Stratham Hill Park and the Gifford property, or adopt a compact zone that includes Stratham Hill Park, and the Gifford property.

PARK PERMITS/MUNICIPAL CENTER RENTALS CONTINUED:

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

Robin Frost requested to reserve Stratham Hill Park on June 21, 2014 for a Collie rescue picnic/meeting. The Board requested more information regarding the group before making a final decision.

Susan Devine Canada requested use of the Municipal Center on June 28, 2014 for the Exeter Area Garden Club Container Flower Exhibition. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the request and waive the fee. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

John Dold requested to reserve Stratham Hill Park on August 29, 30 and 31, 2014 for the 300th Anniversary Committee Pow Wow. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the request and waive the fee. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

The Lions Club Health Fair requested the Municipal Center on February May 29, 2014 for a health fair and asked to have the fee waived. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the request and waive the fee. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

Susan Devine Canada requested use of Stratham Hill Park on September 30, 2014 for the Friends of the Wiggin memorial Library yard sale. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the request and waive the fee. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which was passed unanimously.

ADMINISTRATION:

Mr. Deschaine reported that the New Life Baptist Church as requested to renew their use of Community Room A for the upcoming year. Mr. Copeland mentioned that they have taken very good care of the room. Mr. Copeland moved to grant the request with the same terms as previously agreed to, with the understanding that they can get displaced if there is another event that needs the room. Mr. Canada seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Copeland mentioned that the Superintendent of the Rockingham County Jail is willing to have inmates scrape and paint the Cushman house.

Mr. Canada opened the discussion regarding employee performance and pay rate. Mr. Deschaine said that the November Consumer price index was .9. Mr. Canada asked the Board what they think of Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). Mr. Copeland said that he is in favor of them. Mr. Federico is also in favor of a COLA. Mr. Canada said that we need to look at the whole compensation package, which includes health care, retirement, etc., and recommends a 1% COLA. Mr. Copeland moved to give the employees a 1% COLA increase for 2014 payroll. Mr. Federico seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Deschaine reported that he received favorable news from the NH Department of Transportation on the TE Grant. They met with representatives of the Federal Highway Administration who have agreed that an overlay is a necessary improvement and a safe thing to do for the Town Center Sidewalk Project, consequently, the pavement overlay will be TE Grant eligible. The total cost of the overlay will be around \$100,000 bringing the total cost to \$490,000. The Town will be responsible for 20% of that cost, which will mean we will have to appropriate an additional \$62,000 this year to have enough funds for the match.

At 9:05 Mr. Canada moved to go into non-public meeting to discuss personnel matters. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

At 11:22 pm, Mr. Canada moved to come out of non-public session and to seal the minutes due to the nature of the matters discussed. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

At 11:23 pm, Mr. Canada moved to adjourn. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Hensley
Executive Assistant