

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 8, 2014 BOARD OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

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

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

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Mr. Copeland moved to approve the amended minutes of the August 25, 2015 meeting. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Deb Bronson reported that there is \$7,440,496.32 in the general checking account.

PUBLIC HEARING: At 7:34 pm the Chair opened the public hearing for the Proposal for Renewal of Cable Television Franchise Agreement with Comcast. The Board of Selectmen is the franchising authority under New Hampshire law and our Town engaged in a process to determine whether Comcast has complied with the provisions of the current cable television franchise agreement. Mr. Deschaine stated that the renewal process was long and arduous. The highlights of the agreement include a better definition of affiliate and affiliate person; the authority of the Board of Selectmen; cable location – based on zoning requirements; customer service performance standards; credit for service interruption; insurance; performance bonds, and bonding language. Also, all Comcast workers will drive vehicles that are clearly labeled and the local Police Department will be notified if the service worker will be in the area for 6 hours or more. Mr. Canada opened the public hearing for discussion. Mr. Copeland expressed frustration over the lack of customer service and run-around when he recently had a cable issue. The Chair closed the public hearing when no other comments were presented. Mr. Canada moved to adopt the contract with Comcast as proposed. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

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

Mr. Lavery introduced John Labonte from the Cemetery Trustees and presented to the Board a proposal to expand the Maple Lane/Harmony Hill Cemetery expansion. The proposal includes a loop connector road that would be 12 feet wide, and have an additional 652 full 4' x 10' burial plots. There will be a landscaped area. Mr. Canada said that resident Robert Wickham sent a letter asking why the land would be developed now instead later in the future when it is not necessary at this time. Mr. Lavery explained that doing all of the clearing at one time would save over \$100,000 and the Cemetery Trustees believe that is a better fiduciary plan. Mr. Canada stated he would like to discuss different possibilities such as what if we were to build dirt roads throughout the entire property so the infrastructure was there - not pave it all and not clear cut it all. Mr. Lavery said that is possible and if we went that direction he would recommend either putting down recycled asphalt gravel or leaving parts of it grass as the upper Harmony Hill section currently is. Resident Peter Lessels stated that he doesn't understand why we would

spend money now when we have 33 years until we need more plots. Mr. Lavery stated that it does not have to be done now; however, the money was approved at Town Meeting this year. Mr. Lessels stated that this is not something the Town currently needs, conservatively speaking we will not need for at least another 10 years and yet, if the project goes forward, there will be maintenance costs associated with it and that does not make sense to him. Mr. Canada stated that he would like to make the observation that you cannot just do the math, it is like a theater where you have several single seats but you need two seats together. Resident Robert Wickham stated that he wrote a letter to the Selectmen on this topic in August and he believes the motive behind the expansion is we own the land so let's expand it. Mr. Wickham stated that we should not do anything with the land until we need it. Mr. Lavery stated that the total cost of the project would be \$89,250 and there is \$91,722 in the CIP leaving a balance of \$2,472 in the CIP. Mr. Lavery explained that if the project is approved it could start on Wednesday, September 10, 2014 and be completed by October 16, 2014. Mr. Federico stated that he likes to plan and the land was purchased to be a cemetery and it should be prepared so that the people can see it and purchase their plots. Mr. Copeland stated that he likes the detail and the planning but he does not think we need to do this today. Mr. Copeland stated that it would be prudent to look at this every 5 years to see if it is now time. Mr. Canada stated that he has given a lot of thought to the cemetery expansion and he believes it is very important to reserve land now. He stated that he is in favor of having this plan in process but does not think it needs to be done at this time. Mr. Canada stated that a lesser plan might be more appropriate at this time. Mr. Copeland stated that perhaps the Cemetery Trustees would like to submit a Phase I plan and the current plan would be a Phase II. The Board did not approve the Cemetery expansion at this time.

Mr. Lavery presented a request from Arthur Linde who owns property on Barker Lane and would like to install an electrical line 620 feet under gravel portions of Barker Lane. A 12" to 18" deep trench by 6" wide would need to be dug for the electrical power to run from his barn to a pasture. Mr. Lavery recommends the trench be run no less than 24" deep and is placed inside of schedule 40 conduit and that all work must be inspected by the Stratham Highway Department. Mr. Canada moved to allow Mr. Linde run a conduit two feet under Barker Lane as proposed under the conditions recommended by Mr. Lavery, and that the work begin at Mr. Linde's pleasure and if he so desires he can present us with an easement codifying the terms. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Lavery and Mr. Hickey reported that the work on the new multi-purpose ball field behind the Municipal Center is wrapping up. The Highway Department and the Parks and Recreation Department propose installing additional chain link fence for security and safety measures. Currently there is a chain link fence that runs on the far side by the Stratham Plaza and on the backside of the field abutting Market Street. The proposed fence would run parallel with Market Street and close the loop on the ball field. Mr. Lavery presented a proposal to the Board for different types of fencing for them to consider. Mr. Lavery stated that there is money remaining in the CIP for this project. Mr. Hickey stated that at Steven's Park there were concerns in the past that we were able to mitigate by putting up a fence. Mr. Hickey stated that he believes the fence is a necessity for the longevity of the field and safety for people using the park. Mr. Federico moved to approve the contract with CG Fences for the galvanized 4' tall heavy duty fence with a gate for a contract total amount of \$5,845. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Lavery reported that resident Mike Welty has requested that firewood the Town might have be donated to Annie's Angels families. Mr. Lavery recommends Stratham Highway bring the firewood to Annie's Angels in Portsmouth to be processed for distribution. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the firewood donation to Annie's Angels. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Lavery updated the Board on the Municipal lighting project stating it has been completed. Kramer Electric is working on producing all invoices to Unitil for a rebate.

Mr. Lavery reported that the Bunker Hill Common fire cistern has been installed. It passed the flow test without any issues, the excavation inspections went well and the backfill is complete. Mr. Lavery stated that he is waiting for Severino Trucking to complete a couple punch list items before the cistern is approved as complete.

Mr. Lavery reported that the Highway Department is working on a traffic pattern for the primary election tomorrow. The new traffic pattern will be a test for the general election which gets a larger voter turnout.

Mr. Lavery reported on the upcoming activity that the Highway Department will be involved in. At the Cemetery they will be working on the broken markers; they will be doing roadside mowing in Town until the plowing season; getting the equipment ready for the winter work; rebuild some catch basins; hot mix paving; patch paving; construct a playground area in the property by the Municipal Center; and install a bench at Steven's Park.

Mr. Lavery reported that truck #9 came back from being painted – we were given an estimate of \$6,500 but it actually only cost \$5,800. On Truck #7 the plow pump was failing so it is getting fixed for a cost of \$800. Mr. Lavery reported the equipment is in good shape for the winter season.

PARKS & RECREATION: Director Seth Hickey was present at the meeting to update the Board on his Department's activities.

Mr. Hickey reported that the resurfacing of the basketball court at Stratham Hill Park went well they did a very good job. Mr. Hickey reported that he met with Ben Collins with Convenient MD regarding a sponsorship at a Stratham Hill Park and Steven's Park. They are proposing to have 10 banners placed on various structures and their name on the back of sports team jerseys. They will pay \$50,000 over a five-year period, but they want exclusive rights. After much discussion the Board directed Mr. Hickey to research what other Towns are doing and what the going market rate is.

Mr. Hickey reported that at Stratham Hill Park they put up signs at the three pavilions but are still having some issues with some people using the pavilions who did not reserve them. The Board suggested having a free standing sign that says "Reserved: the pavilion is reserved today".

Mr. Hickey reported the Seacoast United has requested to use the baseball fields at Steven's Park until mid-October for a total of 6 weekends. Mr. Hickey reported that they rented the fields last

spring and there were no problems. They have offered to pay \$30 per hour for the use of the fields. Mr. Canada expressed the opinion that as a for-profit company they should pay more than just maintenance costs; they should pay capital costs as well. He moved to charge \$75 per hour for the use of the field. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Hickey reported that fall softball is a Stratham recreation program that started this year – they meet on Sunday's at the Municipal Center fields. The Soccer program is going well. Mr. Hickey reported that he met with the Soccer Board and they reviewed a few things, the first thing is they have decided not to renew their contract with Challenger who runs the soccer camps and, therefore, will no longer offer soccer camp through the Soccer Board. They also decided they will no longer compete with Exeter Youth Soccer Association and a few other for-profit soccer groups in the area who have taken some of our premier players. The Soccer Board also decided they will disband at the end of this season and they will turn over the majority of the administrative duties to the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Hickey reported that registration for basketball will begin the first week of October.

Mr. Hickey reported that there is a lot of administrative work associated with the youth sports programs and with the Soccer Board disbanding and other Boards relying heavily on the Parks and Recreation Department, a refocus of priorities is in order. Mr. Hickey requested permission from the Board to hire a part-time program coordinator. He would use \$2,500 in the general fund that was appropriated for hiring an intern and use \$5,000 from the Recreation Revolving account. Mr. Hickey suggested this could be a trial for 25 hours per week until the end of this year and he presented the Board with a resume from a person who he would highly recommend for this part-time position. The Board discussed this request at length. Mr. Copeland moved to approve Mr. Hickey's recommendation. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Mr. Copeland moved to hire Cantrece Forest at \$17.00 per hour. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Hickey reported that there will be a Fire Tower 5K on September 21, 2014. The Fall Music Festival will also be on September 21, 2014 at Stratham Hill Park. October 19, 2014 is the day of the annual Gordon Barker Bike Race. There will be a senior trip on September 23rd for a Mount Washington Cruise and lunch at Hart's Turkey Farm He is looking to add another senior trip on December 13, 2014 to a Portland Symphony Orchestra performance of the Magic of Christmas in Portland, Maine. The price for buses for both of these trips is \$1,200 each. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the cost of the two bus trips at \$1,200 each. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

MEETINGS: The Chair then 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:

James Ryan requested the use of the Stratham Hill Park Front Pavilion on October 18, 2014 for an Air National Guard Squadron picnic. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the request and to waive the fee. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Geri Denton requested the use of the Stratham Hill Park Front Pavilion and Scamman Pavilion on October 4, 2014 for a Cub Scout campout and requested the fee be waived. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the request and to waive the fee. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Geri Denton requested the use of the Stratham Hill Park Front Pavilion and Scamman Pavilion on June 6, 2015 for a Cub Scout campout and requested the fee be waived. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the request and to waive the fee. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Geri Denton requested the use of the Firehouse on February 7, 2015 for a Cub Scout Blue & Gold Awards Pack meeting and requested the fee be waived. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the request and to waive the fee. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Laura Batchelder requested the use of the Stratham Hill Park Scamman Pavilion on September 24 2014 for a SMS 5th grade activity and requested the fee be waived. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the request and to waive the fee. Mr. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Christopher Boulbol requested the use of the Firehouse on every 2nd Wednesday through June for Cub Scout meetings and requested the fee be waived. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the request and to waive the fee. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Matt Larrabee requested the use of the Firehouse on October 25, 2014 for a baby shower and requested the fee be waived. Mr. Copeland moved to approve the request and to waive the fee. Mr. Canada seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Sanjay Iyer requested the use of the Municipal Center Meeting Room A on September 20, 2014 for a birthday party. The Board approved the request.

ADMINISTRATION: Mr. Federico moved to reappoint Lincoln Daley as representative to the Technical Assistance Committee and to reappoint Paul Deschaine as alternate to the Technical Assistance Committee. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Deschaine reported that Flossie Wiggin requested that the 300th Anniversary Committee be allowed to set up a table to sell their wares at the Primary Election tomorrow. Mr. Federico move to approve. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Deschaine reported that the Town Center Revitalization Committee discussed beautifying the Town Center signs. Mr. Canada moved to allow the Town Center Revitalization Committee to spend \$2,500 for the Town Center sign project. Mr. Federico seconded the motion. The motion passed 2-1.

Mr. Deschaine reported that he, Mr. Canada, and Mr. Dyrkacz were called to the 28 Bunker Hill Avenue property because the tenant reported some water in the basement which occurred because some covers over the window wells were broken and allowing rain in. Upon further

investigation we discovered several windows have some rot issues and at least two of them need to be replaced. We will bring the cost of replacing the windows to the Budget Committee in January.

At 10:37 pm the Chair opened the public hearing on the establishment of a fee to an owner of a qualifying structure who intends to participate in the Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive Program (NH RSA 79E). The applicant shall file a complete application form and submit the required non-refundable application fee of \$200.00.

Mr. Deschaine stated that this is a program that the Town adopted and needs to be implemented. The Town Planner has created an application process that the Board has approved, but the fees associated cannot be approved without a public hearing.

Seeing no further comments, at 10:38 pm the Chair closed the public hearing. Mr. Canada moved to adopt the fee schedule as proposed by Mr. Daley. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Mr. Canada stated that he got a letter from Brad Woods requesting a final determination from the Planning Board for the subdivision final approval. Mr. Deschaine stated that it will eventually come before the Planning Board but they are looking to appear before the Board of Selectmen on September 22, 2014 before going to the Planning Board.

Mr. Canada stated that he has a lease for 28 Bunker Hill Ave for the Board to sign. Mr. Canada reported that the tenants are keeping the yard immaculate.

At 10:47 pm Mr. Canada moved to go into non-public session to discuss a matter that could affect the reputation of another, not a member of the Board. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

At 11:02 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. Federico seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

At 11:02 pm Mr. Canada moved to adjourn. Mr. Copeland seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Hensley
Executive Assistant