



Selectmen's Meeting
Town Office
Wednesday, May 30, 2012
6:00 P.M.

Present: Jed Brummer, Chair; Roberta Oeser, Selectman; Carlotta Pini, Town Administrator
Absent: Sam Seppala, Selectman

APPROVED Minutes

The meeting opened with the Call to Order and the Pledge of Allegiance.

MOTION: Roberta motioned to approve the payroll and accounts payable manifests for the previous week and Jed seconded.

CITIZEN'S FORUM

Jed: I want to thank you, Pat Martin, for all your work on the Memorial Day services held in Rindge. I think the older we get, the more significance this celebration has because we know people who have lost their lives for our freedom. Thank you – it was a great parade, a nice day, a lot of townspeople were there, and it was a great job you did.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Planning Board: Rindge Economic Development Initiative (REDI): Matt Henry, Planning Director, gave a presentation articulating some of the goals of the Town and mentioned several initiatives including the REDI and the Plan NH charrette. Matt will be presenting ideas for the charrette at the next Planning Board meeting to be held in the Wellington Community Center so that more residents can attend. Jed: Planning is extremely important to the Town—it limits what can be built and where, and having building codes helps limit structural fires, etc. We know businesses will come here and we'd like to ascribe a certain character to them. Roberta: And we want to try to diversify the base so the businesses we have are not all retail. Jed: Given that we're a border town, we should put a lot of effort into planning. Pat Martin: I feel that energy issues will become more important going forward. Elisa Benincaso: There's an organization in Portsmouth that helps NH towns attract foreign businesses. I don't think enough is done to give people long-term career jobs with versus retail or other short-term jobs. Both my children are raised and gone because there's no opportunity in Rindge. And we have to offer businesses something to come here. Roberta: But the state limits what we can offer. Matt: That's the attitude and energy we need, and it should reflect in the Economic Development Committee. Roberta: The biggest obstacle is our limited internet access (many of those present agreed). For the last 10 years, people didn't buy houses here because of the lack of access and it's hard for businesses to function without the internet. Matt: There are certain incentives, but they're limited. Jed: And some businesses look at how close the airports are, etc. Plus there are a lot of people here that want to keep the gates to Rindge closed. Elisa: I think you could still have decent, low-impact businesses with a hundred good jobs here. John Kauer: But businesses do not reduce town taxes. In fact, if businesses keep coming here, we won't be #2 in tax payments to Keene any more. Jed: We have to keep an eye on how we do develop – if we have mostly retail jobs paying \$10/hour it will be difficult for people to make a living here. The Planning Department works to find the right balance of commercial, residential, and green space. Roberta: Franklin Pierce University is not tax-exempt, but Keene State is and that's partly why Rindge taxes are so high. The ideal balance in commercial development is for business assessments to pay the Town tax portion and residential assessments to pay the School tax portion.

Director of Public Works:

- Oil Purchase for the 2012-2013 Heating Season – Mike Cloutier, Public Works Director, said that he will continue to work with Red's and will be in touch with Karen Gray of the School District regarding possibly buying the oil jointly.
- Paving Bid Recommendation – Six companies bid, the most we've had in 15 years, and four looked at our roads. The highest bidder was Lane Construction at \$84/ton. GMI paving was \$74/ton, Broken Stone was \$72/ton, and Frank Whitcomb was \$71/ton. Keating was \$69.20/ton which is the same as last year which is great.

MOTION: Jed motioned that we award the paving contract to PJ Keating and Roberta seconded.

Carlotta: The Board should know that Mike has a contract he's used for the last few years and I want to run it by Town Counsel who said it looks good and I'm waiting to hear from Primex. The contract is ready for your signature. Kauer: How high is the road cost for paving? Mike: It depends on how wide the road is and how deep. Last year we spent \$300,000 to pave three miles.

- Exhaust system – Mike: There aren't a lot of companies that do that, so a few came down and looked at my facility. Meanwhile, I'm also getting bids for the electrical which is a bit of an issue because we have single phase, not three-phase, power. We do have three-phase at the transfer station but you have to upgrade the panel to get it there. Jed: It sounds like you're doing your homework on that.
- Summer Help – Mike: I actually don't need any more summer help. The summer helper I've had for three years has come back; he's a really good worker and I won't have to train anyone new. He is a UNH student and does everything, is very efficient, and has worked out really well. Jed: Thank you for your work, Mike; you're conscientious about what you do and do a great job.

Flexible Spending Account Limits: Carlotta: At our last meeting, the board approved the renewal of our health insurance with Harvard Pilgrim and we had a meeting on Tuesday with the employees and the administrators of our FSA and HRA. The woman asked whether we'll be continuing with the same terms as last year and I said that was our understanding. The FSA lets employees deduct money from their paychecks pre-tax which is loaded on a credit card for submitting claims for glasses, dental work, and co-pays, etc. Employees can have up to \$20/week withheld for a total of \$1,040 over the course of the year. It's governed by IRS rules which say if the employee doesn't use all the money withheld within the year they'll lose it. That's their risk but the \$1,040 becomes available to them on the first day of the year (before it's actually withheld). We also offer a dependent care program for kids' camp or parent day programs where paycheck withholdings can be used to pay for those expenses, though the funds aren't available from the first day of the year.

We've saved money by switching to the four-tier drug plan, but some employees have incurred additional expense because of this that they can pay for through the FSA. Jed: I think we've come up with the best plan we can. The BAC has added their input. Carlotta: Our health premiums were going to go up 8%, then it was 4% and now it's just 2%. Jed: So far it's worked out really well.

Sign Deed without Covenants: McNicholas law offices are representing a loan servicing company that took a property by foreclosure deed. They found a missing link in the chain of title and they want the board to clean that up. So, we had our attorney take a look at it to give an opinion, and he agrees that this is something reasonable to do to make sure the Town makes no claim to the lot in issue. Most recently, Roger Burt and Aurora foreclosed on Dennis and Andrea Werrick. The property is on Route 119 near the state sheds. Roberta: The deed to Burt was lost prior to recording. The town doesn't want it; we got rid of it once and collected taxes up to the new ownership of the parcel. Going this route is less expensive than quieting the title.

MOTION: Jed motioned to approve the Deed without Covenants for Map 47, Lot 25 and Roberta seconded.

We have the auditors coming up the week of July 9th. Linda's writing up a summary of the retreat so we can talk about that at the next meeting and share the board's goals with folks. The Farmer's Market got off to a good start, and we talked about the very successful Memorial Day event. The Meeting House Oversight Committee met yesterday and they talked about painting one side of the building and the windows soon. We're reaching out to Richard Monahan, a Peterborough architect, to come out and see it. We don't have a lot of money but we might be able to do one side. Some folks thought doing the windows at the same time would be a good idea. Pat Martin: For the next Energy meeting, we were thinking of focusing on the library's energy needs but could shift that to the Meeting House.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS / COMMUNICATION

ZBA's Decision re: Selectmen's Administrative Decision Concerning Sunridge Road: The Decision has been requested by several people including Fitzwilliam's Town Administrator. However, the Decision does not specifically name which of the two alternate roads the Zoning Board is requiring renters to use to access the Castle: Sauvola Drive off Able Road in Rindge or Fullam Hill Road in Fitzwilliam. So it's looking like the ZBA may reopen the case at its next meeting to clarify that issue and we'll have to wait and see.

Jed: The Zoning Board questioned when a week starts and ends since renting no more than once a week was part of the Selectmen's Decision. Roberta: The Zoning Board deleted or overturned a lot of the Selectmen's parameters including that rentals are not to occur more frequently than once a week. John Hunt would lose his residency if he rented the property for more than 180 days. But within the 180 days, he could have people in and out of there every three days. Jed: At the Zoning Board meeting it was mentioned that John was willing to assign another access to the Castle. Carlotta: I went out there with the Director of Public Works yesterday via Sauvola Road and it looks like John has improved the roadway from Sauvola and there are signs installed. So it appears he is planning to use that one as the primary access, though when we were there we spoke with Mike, the Sunridge caretaker, and he said they were coming in from Fullam Hill also. Member of the audience: This is a private road so you're dumping private residents with a public access. Roberta: Fitzwilliam has no standing because this is not an application for a change of use, subdivision, or building and this is not the sole access; there are three accesses. Audience: If someone comes in from Fullam Hill Road, it's another access. Roberta: Fullam Hill is a public road. John Kauer: Originally John Hunt had maps, but people ignored them. Whatever road the renters are on, their GPS recalculates the route. Carlotta: I Googled the Castle from the Boston area and the map brings you down Robbins Road to Sunridge. Charlie Eicher: If Fitzwilliam wants a rehearing, okay. This conversation is moot.

Carlotta: We held our second all-employee Safety Committee meeting and will bring in the Safety Committee's plan in the near future. Tomorrow is the torch run for Special Olympics. Today was the toll road from 4:00—7:00pm. Tomorrow from 12:00-5:00pm is Chief Sielicki's going away party. We have been approved for the fire truck lease. You have our ad in the newspaper looking for volunteers and we haven't gotten a whole lot of feedback, but Charlie Eicher did submit his name for consideration for the Town-Gown Committee and in his letter he shares some of his experience and background information.

MOTION: Jed motioned to recommend Charlie to the Town-Gown Committee. Roberta said we should wait a little longer for the ad to be responded to. **MOTION DID NOT PASS.**

Continental Paving's Work on Route 202: Work will begin on or around June 1st.

Assessing Clerk Memo re: 2011 Abatement Hearings: We received 33 abatement applications this year and have until July 1st to respond to them so we may need to hold some special meetings in June. Carlotta: what's working against us is that the market has fallen, so according to the State our assessments average 6% more than market value. The State does the study every year and develops this equalization rate to be used to make sure that when

the Jaffrey-Rindge school taxes are allocated that we're on an equal playing field with Jaffrey. So we're trying to walk people through an understanding the process before they file.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION PER RSA 91-A:3 II (C)

The nonpublic minutes were not sealed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:47pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Linda Stonehill, Administrative Assistant