



Selectmen's Meeting

Town Office

Wednesday, July 11, 2012

Present: Jed Brummer, Chair; Roberta Oeser, Selectman; Carlotta Pini, Town Administrator; Linda Stonehill, Administrative Assistant (Selectman Sam Seppala was absent).

APPROVED MINUTES

6:00pm Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

CITIZEN'S FORUM

John Kauer asked about the status of the DPW exhaust system. It's being worked on, and we're keeping the bays open whenever the engines are running.

Vachon Clukay is auditing our 2011 books this week and we're about on track with revenues and expenses for being halfway through the year. Jed said that changing our fiscal year to July-to-June to align with the school and state will improve our cash flow and give us the chance to know what their cuts are before setting the budget. To switch over, we'll have to fund the first budget for 18 months. This month, we owe the school \$816,000 and each year we need to raise \$1.5 million for the county. John Kauer asked whether changing the budget cycle will affect our election date, and Roberta said that changing it would require a town vote.

Donna and Bill Mackelroy expressed concern about the increase in speeding and vandalism, despite police efforts, by people loitering at Christian Outreach. In April, it was suggested to post a "no loitering after hours" sign in the Outreach parking lot so the police could issue tickets. Interim Chief Frank Morrill was there a few hours this afternoon, flashed his lights at three speeders, and Officer Blake issued a ticket this morning. Bill said this was the site of an amusement park for 16 years without any problems, but since the church has come in, it's terrorized the neighborhood. Jed said we've tried to address the neighbors' complaints through Crime Watch and meeting with Frank about ways to alleviate their concerns. Frank said this situation requires more time, patience, a few more resources, and a whole lot of luck. Roberta suggested giving a schedule of Christian Outreach events to the Police Department and Frank agreed that would help. Donna said she doesn't know what to do anymore, and no one will buy a house there.

Dick Call asked about installing cameras, but Frank said New Hampshire prohibits filming traffic up close. Jed noted that state guidelines for police presence indicate that Rindge's population should have 12 officers, and yet we often have only one officer on duty. Frank said after the new officer completes Academy training in December, they will have seven officers. Jed said Jaffrey has 12 officers without a University, and Frank said that we also have four part-timers to help out.

Jim Grant said he sees a lot of dedication here and would prefer to have a full-time, local Chief that can focus on Rindge. He advocated promoting from within and not regionalizing the police force. Jed said that Jaffrey's Chief will be retiring in a couple of years and their administration is looking for space. He believes regionalizing some functions should be explored because, with the depressed economy, it's hard for every small, neighboring town to support its own infrastructure, services, resources, and equipment. Sharon asked how long it would take for a Jaffrey officer to get to her house here. Roberta said it would be no different than calling into Mutual Aid, and Jed said about 98-99% of Mutual Aid calls have someone there within 8-12 minutes. Any call taking 20 minutes gets a red flag and is investigated. John Kauer said that other towns have regionalized animal control and other functions for better leveraging. Jed added that Rindge is looking into combining some purchasing, etc. to facilitate a more efficient town government.

MOTION: Roberta motioned to approve the Accounts Payable and Payroll manifests, Jed seconded, and all were in favor.

6:30pm Public Hearing: Acceptance of Monadnock View Road as a town road: Bob Van Dyke constructed Monadnock View Road in The Taggart Meadow subdivision near the Fitzwilliam line in the early 2000s, and people moving in assumed it would one day become a town road. In 2004, residents voiced dissatisfaction with the condition of the road and wondered when the town would start plowing and maintaining it. Looking at it, The Roadway Committee was concerned that it had not been constructed to Planning's specifications, and some drainage issues were addressed in 2009. After the engineers' required waiting period to see if the new drainage worked (it did), Mr. Van Dyke applied the final coat of pavement. He then formally requested that Monadnock View Road be considered a town road, and this public hearing was scheduled.

At yesterday's Roadway Advisory Committee, a vote was taken to recommend that the Selectmen accept the road as a town road. We would like to send a notice to everyone on the road and believe, with such an important decision, that all the Selectmen should be involved (and Selectman Seppala isn't here tonight). A resident said they'd given Bob Van Dyke a petition supporting Monadnock View as a town road; they pay taxes but the road's not maintained. Jed said Monadnock View would add about 1,500 feet to the town roads and a little more to everyone's tax bills in a time when people say they can't afford more taxes. While the Selectmen are authorized to accept roads, they're also under pressure to keep taxes down and generally let people vote on new roads at the Town Meeting. Right now, we're not meeting our road paving plan.

Firefighter Assistance Grant re: SCBAs: Fire Chief Rick Donovan and Administrative Assistant Deb Douglas applied for a grant for self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBAs) for firefighters entering dangerous situations. The grant requires a partial match but would save the Town about \$147,000; we'll know the results between mid-November and year's end. John Kauer asked about renting instead of purchasing the SCBAs, and Rick said that renting them back in 1999 cost \$50,000. Jed noted that our equipment needs to be replaced if we're going to have certified firefighters, and some of our SCBAs are over 10 years old. There would be considerable liability issues if, during a fire, the SCBAs were needed but unusable.

Fire Dept. Patch: Fire Chief Rick Donovan presented a design for the new Fire Department uniform and engine patch that harkens back to the early days of the Rindge Fire Department which formed after the great fire of 1925. Carlotta mentioned that the Town branding strategy being developed over the next few years by the Rindge Economic Development Initiative (REDI) might one day impact the design of the patch. The consensus was to authorize the new patch if it will not be a big expense.

Transfer of Dodge Cruiser from Police Dept. to Fire Dept.: Rick: Engine One's oil gets changed twice a year and the brush truck, which Casey uses most, gets four oil changes a year. Dick Call: Who changes the oil? Rick: We do. Dick: The Highway Dept. should have someone who can change the cruisers' oil. Roberta: You'd need to pay them about \$25/hour. Rick: Highway's been a huge help—Rich and George are two of the best diesel mechanics we know, and when something gets above them we send the vehicle to Red's, etc. for a certified guy to fix.

MOTION: Roberta motioned that we transfer the retiring Police Dodge Cruiser to the Fire Department. Jed seconded, and all were in favor.

7:00pm Public Hearing: Donation of a defibrillator (approx. value \$15,500) by The Fire Association: Rick: By Jan 1, 2013, all EMS providers will need to have a 12-lead defibrillator. We have a five-lead which will be refurbished as a back-up. This one is capable of relaying the monitor from the scene to the hospital, but Monadnock Community Hospital is not set up for that yet. At least the 12-lead will give them more information about the cardiac event. Deb headed the committee for researching this unit which cost \$15,501 and was completely paid for by The Fire Association. The Association also included training of our EMS staff, the first year's service contract worth \$1,000, and replacement of the batteries which can cost up to \$400 apiece. Jed: Is

this defibrillator the same brand that the Jaffrey-Rindge Ambulance uses? Rick: Yes, we try to stay compatible with theirs so we don't have to interrupt a call. Carlotta: It's amazing that The Fire Association can donate this equipment to the Town so the taxpayers don't need to fund it. Rick: The Crosby family actually donated this equipment and there will be a plaque on it.

MOTION: Roberta motioned for the Town to accept the gift of the defibrillator from The Fire Association for \$15,500, Jed seconded, and all were in favor.

Rick: On August 20th, Fire Deputy Rob Jackson will inspect the new fire engine. It will be shipped to New Hampshire and outfitted in Ossipee and probably will be here by the end of August.

ABATEMENT REQUESTS:

Yong Sim Royea: 5 Oak Drive:

Dave DuVernay analyzed the list of singlewide comps that Yong submitted and said the comps were older homes. Yong's friend responded that she couldn't sell hers close to the \$82,000 assessed value; it was appraised for \$45,000, she bought it for \$50,000, and it's depreciated. Yong said there's a singlewide around the corner listed for \$29,000 that isn't selling. Consensus was that, despite the value of the land in Monadnock Tenants Park, its home assessments may be too high. Roberta added that some homes' age may make financing difficult and require cash buyers. Todd suggested that we reduce Yong's assessment by \$5,000 to \$74,000 and take a look at values in the Park. Dave will credit Yong's account so the next tax bill will be reduced by that amount. As Jed said two weeks ago, we have to be careful in dropping her assessment so as not to affect the others.

Marge Stratton: 16 Monadnock View Road / Meadow View:

Dave DuVernay received her list of the houses on Monadnock View Road. Todd had already measured the house outside, but Marge had measured the smaller inside. Dave said their house is the only one rated as "good" rather than "average +20" because of its quality. Marge said they've found a lot of things to address in their house. Roberta said their house has many upgrades the others don't. Discussion ensued about the non-functional bathroom and Dave asked whether they wanted to table this until he can do some figuring and see the unfinished room over the garage.

Elias Parkonen: 33 Michael Drive:

Elias present four comp properties but one was a foreclosure and another was a distressed sale. Dave said that homes are taxed on the effective area and his is right in the ballpark. Roberta agreed that his assessment wasn't out of line. Elias objected, saying he can't sell the house for the assessed value. He was told that that is not the issue; for an abatement, the taxpayer must prove his home has been disproportionately assessed compared to others. Carlotta said that Rindge homes are currently assessed at 106.1 % of the market value (the equalization ratio) which brings his home's value down to \$307,000 and is in keeping with similar houses. Jed said he would like to help, but in fairness to the others doesn't think they can change this assessment.

Paul LeBlanc: 460 Cathedral Road:

The abatement will correct past tax card errors. Paul said the replacement cost for his modular home is \$96,000 but was informed that the Town does not use replacement cost. Roberta said modular homes are generally well-built since they have to travel. There was a discrepancy about whether Paul has two or three bathrooms which could mean a \$10,000 value adjustment. Meanwhile, Todd reduced the grade level from Average+10 to Average.

MOTION: Jed motioned to give Paul LeBlanc the \$12,800 abatement and have them check on the \$10,000 adjustment and, if there are any adjustments to make, that Dave DuVernay make them. Roberta seconded and all were in favor.

Dick Call: I think the tax bills should go out with the tax card. Carlotta: A compromise would be to send everyone their tax card in the revaluation year (every fifth year). The proposition of including it with the annual tax bill is fairly daunting considering that there are several thousand properties in town.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Jacintha Saginario would like to book a 150-person wedding event at the Rec Center on September 15th and is requesting a waiver on the alcohol policy. Roberta expressed concern about the Town's liability for the alcohol served at the Rec Center. Frank said the taxpayers feel that they should be able to enjoy their facilities and be given a waiver within reason, and people bringing their own beer and wine do not usually create a problem. Carlotta asked whether the Selectmen could allow beer and wine only to be dispensed by a licensed server for a limited period of time. The licensed server would take on the liability and we would ask for their certificate of insurance. The consensus was to get more information before voting on this.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Ed Lamoreaux sent an email attaching a letter of support for Interim Police Chief Frank Morrill that he asked be read into the record.

Appointment: Al Lefebvre has volunteered to serve on the Telecommunications Committee. We have a lot of interesting projects coming up including the FastRoads project as well as the Argent franchise agreement.

MOTION: Jed motioned to appoint Al LeFebvre to the Telecommunications Committee, Roberta seconded, and all were in favor.

The Board has a copy of the mid-year expenditure and revenue reports. In terms of expenditures, we are at 46% excluding the Mutual Aid payment and that's very close to where we were last year. Revenues are at 39% but the room and meals tax is paid at the end of the year. Motor vehicles revenues are at 49% which is about what we'd like to see since they're our largest revenue source aside from real estate.

Continued discussion of the modular classroom—Although we could use the space, we'd need to install a new roof and maintain it indefinitely—it might be a money pit as well as an eyesore that would invite criticism and jeopardize the Town's chances for a real public safety building. John Kauer added that the school wants it gone before the start of the school year, so we'd have a lot of hoops to go through to get this 24'x80' thing moved here by Aug. 20th. Bob Van Dyke said moving and setting it up would be around \$3,100.

Jed motioned to go from Public to nonpublic for reputation, Roberta seconded, and all were in favor.

Jed motioned to go out of nonpublic, seal the minutes, go back into public, and adjourn the meeting, Roberta seconded, and all were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 9:16pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Linda Stonehill, Administrative Assistant