



**Selectmen's Meeting  
Town Office  
Wednesday, August 22, 2012**

Present: Jed Brummer, Chair; Roberta Oeser, Selectman; Sam Seppala, Selectman; Carlotta Lilback Pini, Town Administrator; Linda Stonehill, Administrative Assistant

**APPROVED MINUTES**

6:00pm Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance

CITIZEN'S FORUM

MOTION: Roberta motioned to approve the accounts payable and payroll manifests, Sam seconded, and all were in favor.

MOTION: Roberta motioned to accept minutes of July 11<sup>th</sup> and Jed seconded. Sam recused himself because he was not present for the July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

MOTION: Roberta motioned to accept the minutes of July 25<sup>th</sup> and August 8<sup>th</sup>, Sam seconded, and all were in favor.

Charlie Eicher introduced Jurg Jenzer, the new Rindge Memorial School Principal. Jurg lives in Windsor, VT and has 18 years' experience as elementary school Principal. He was warmly welcomed and we're glad to have him on board.

Roni Hamilton asked whether questions will be accepted from the public regarding the police chief selection process, and Jed said yes.

John Kauer suggested regionalizing the ADA Compliance Officer, Emergency Management, and Building Inspector functions. Fire Chief Rick Donovan was recently appointed ADA Compliance Officer for Rindge, adding responsibilities without compensation to his role.

John then asked for an update on where we stand in getting an exhaust system for the Public Works garage. Carlotta said it's one of the Highway Department's Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) requests, and the CIP Committee will be meeting soon. John asked why it can't be paid through the surplus, and Carlotta said she's not confident there will be surplus since there are overages in Elections (four elections, not one, this year) and Legal (for the defense of our Boards in the Hunt / Sunridge neighbors case). Betty Commerford suggested searching for grants that might pay for the exhaust system, and everyone agreed that's a great idea.

John said he was told there's no money for overtime, etc. to fix potholes. Carlotta invited John to attend a Roadway Committee meeting since that's the type of thing they discuss. Jed said the Conservation Commission is discussing oversizing some culverts to defragment the habitat of critters that can't cross the roads safely. Unfortunately, the Town would have had more money to work with under a default budget than the lower-than-default budget that was passed. If the public feels we haven't kept up with our infrastructure, then we can address it in a warrant.

Jed said the Conservation Commission has done a remarkable job and it's one of the best ConComms in the state. Holly Koski mentioned the Wednesday, September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting at 7:00pm at the Christian Outreach Church to discuss solutions to the loitering/vandalism/speeding issues.

Veronika Patty of the Clark YMCA in Winchendon presented plans for their Saturday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> Road Race. Bike riders will ride over 15 miles, including into Rindge, and traffic will need to be stopped on 119/202. Interim Police Chief Frank Morrill is aware of this, and Veronika will talk to him about the possibility of donating the detail, although the money for this race does not benefit the YMCA. Last year, there were 60 biking participants and 100 are expected this year.

MOTION: Roberta motioned that we endorse and allow the Road Race of the Clark YMCA to travel through Rindge on Saturday, September 22nd, Sam seconded, and all were in favor.

Tom Horne was reappointed as our Health Officer—he was the Health Officer even before joining the Police Department. Dave DuVernay was reappointed as the Deputy Health Officer, and it's been helpful to have someone in the office that can take health issue calls. We'll submit the signed appointment forms to the State.

MOTION: Jed motioned to approve the appointments of Tom Horne as Health Officer and Dave DuVernay as Deputy Health Officer, Sam seconded, and all were in favor.

Carlotta sent an RFP for the Police Chief recruitment process to four firms and it's posted on Town website. Of the four, two opted to submit proposals and two opted not to. The Local Government Center (LGC) did not submit a proposal since they are rethinking the value of having a professional recruitment division. Mike Pardue, our former consultant, decided not to submit a proposal either given the other projects he has right now and the travel time, which he said would cost us an extra \$2,000 on top of his original estimate of \$2,500. Of the three proposals, the one from The Waters Consulting Group (a national firm) was way out of the ballpark - \$22,000. But the other two proposals were solid. Jacques Personnel bid \$4,475 plus advertising and expenses, and Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI) bid \$6,400 but noted they could do a scaled-back recruitment effort for as little as \$3,500.

Jacques Personnel is a small firm run by a husband and wife, neither of whom has a background in law enforcement. They did not list any completed NH Police Chief searches, although they've conducted searches for other NH municipal officials. Municipal Resources Inc. is a larger firm registered in nine states which uses its own panel of experts to evaluate candidates. Their references list recruitment of nine NH Police Chiefs. The Town did use MRI services to conduct an internal controls review and was generally pleased with their work. They have a reputation as a hatchet firm because they're often called in for difficult situations. They do offer a satisfaction guarantee, meaning that if a Town hires one of their candidates and that person quits or is fired within 18 months, they will conduct another search for free. Carlotta offered to discuss the feedback from the two firms' references in a nonpublic session for reputation. She recommended awarding the project to Municipal Resources because, although their base price is higher, their references are very good and they're willing to work with the Town to reduce the scope of work and subsequently the price. Jed thanked Carlotta for getting the proposals and following up with the reference checks. Jed said he knows there are a lot of citizens in Rindge in favor of appointing Frank and he's also been approached by others who think that the townspeople and officers will respect Frank even more for going through the process.

Available funds for the recruitment include the \$2,500 allotted for the Police Department study that remains unused because the consultant declined to charge us due to a conflict of interest. There also may be additional savings from the four-tier prescription drug plan the Town switched to which is less expensive. So, there may be somewhere around \$4,000 to work with, and MRI indicated a willingness to scale the project back. Someone referred to a recent article mentioning that a local Police Chief was paid \$175,000 to leave and said this investment to get the right Chief will be well spent. Roni asked whether the search firm will just pick a candidate

or there will be citizen input. Jed said it's important to have citizen input in selecting the Chief that will best serve the community, and the recruitment firm will be asking citizens for their thoughts. Someone said you have to consider the revenge factor if the police stop you, and Roberta said that's one reason why having a citizen's committee by itself without other input isn't the best way. There's also the fact that citizens may not know everything it takes to run a Police Department, and while no one she's talked with has anything negative to say about Frank, they do want a professional search, one done properly. Carlotta noted that Chief Sielicki was hired solely by a citizen's committee, and Jed said the Town would be better served by going through the process since this is not an elected position. He voiced support for Frank but said that the recent articles Frank put in the paper did not serve the Town well, and it was a tactic that Chief Sielicki used. Jed added that, although Rindge is known as a small town, we have more calls than Jaffrey or Peterborough, and the new Chief needs to be someone who, like Frank, is able to maintain a good relationship with the University. Charlie Eicher noted that he's heard good things about Frank over the years.

John: I'm a process person but the people who are saying go through the process, would they still want to if they knew it would cost \$6,000? Sam: If we go through the process, will we end up having to pay more for a Chief because of it? Carlotta said the Town has an established pay range for this position, and the incumbent's pay will be in line with salaries of the other Department Heads. It could be that that limits us in who would be interested in this position, but the salary won't be a surprise to anyone. She recommended awarding the search to MRI provided they can scale their proposal back to \$4,475 to match the lowest bid.

MOTION: Jed motioned to hire MRI to research and develop candidates for the Police Chief's position at \$4,475 with the total cost not to exceed \$5,000, excluding the polygraph test. Roberta seconded, and all were in favor.

Bob Van Dyke's Abatement: Bob distributed an appraisal by Powers and Smith and a spreadsheet he'd created showing four columns of values. There was talk about using a 10% cap and a 10% vacancy rate. But Powers & Smith had a 5% management rate and Bob said the norm (his third column) is 8.5% which is one month of management fee to rent and advertise. The fourth column showed Todd's valuation that was adopted by the Town, and Bob believes his third column is fair. Roberta: I don't disagree with these numbers. The land was mistakenly assessed at the commercial rate for the last five years.

MOTION: Sam motioned to go along with Roberta's recommendation to accept Bob's numbers, which proposed the assessed value of Map 50 Lot 44 to be \$526,640, Map 50 Lot 45 to be \$582,339, Map 50 Lot 46 to be \$590,175, and Map 50 Lot 47 to be \$590,175. Roberta seconded, and all were in favor.

MOTION: Roberta motioned that the abatement be credited towards Bob's other taxes due on the Route 202 property, Sam seconded, and all were in favor.

#### TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

The NHLGC is conducting the annual Municipal Volunteer of the Year nominations. Each town in the state can nominate someone who has given many hours to their community. Richard Mellor has received the award before. Ted Covert has served on a number of Town committees over the years and is also involved with the Contoocook Lake Property Owners' Association (CLAPA), Monadnock Country Club, and Cathedral of the Pines. It was thought that Ted could be a role model for young people who might look at volunteering as a time commitment rather than a civic obligation. The board agreed to nominate Ted for Municipal Volunteer of the Year.

Budget season is here, and Carlotta proposed a timeline of budget-related activities leading up to the Town Meeting. She is also distributing to the Department Heads forms they'll work on to submit proposals for both a 12-month and a six-month budget in light of the contemplated switch to a different fiscal year, which will entail one year of an 18-month budget. Pam Brenner, the Town Administrator of Peterborough, has offered to share some insights on how their fiscal year conversion worked.

According to the proposed timeline, on Oct. 3<sup>rd</sup>, the Capital Improvements Projects Committee (CIP) would present its recommendation to the Selectmen, and the Department Heads would submit their budget proposals by

Oct. 4<sup>th</sup>. Last year, we held numerous Selectmen's Meetings incorporating a few of the Department Heads' budgets at a time; these meetings were long and ran late, and it was disjointed to hear them weeks apart. Carlotta proposed returning to the marathon Saturday session in which the Selectmen and Budget Advisory Committee would jointly hear from all the Department Heads who'd appear at designated times that day. This format would also allow cancellation of the Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> Selectmen's meeting so that folks can be at home for the kids on Halloween. Then everyone would have the following month to hash through it all to share their thoughts and, on Dec. 12<sup>th</sup>, the Budget Advisory Committee would present its recommendations on the budgets and on which method to use to transition to the new fiscal year.

Transitioning could be accomplished by absorbing the tax impact one year, switching to quarterly tax bills and adding a fifth quarter, or bonding the difference. We hope that Pam Brenner can advise us. The BAC advised against bonding in their minutes, but the rates are very low now. Sam said that switching to the new fiscal cycle will mean changing from paying taxes in arrears to paying one bill ahead which won't be refunded. One benefit is that the Town will start the year with half a year's revenue in the bank, and Jed said that aligning our fiscal year with the County and School year will help us budget a lot more accurately. Paying 18 months' municipal taxes in a 12-month period means that, on a \$200,000 house, a person would pay \$500 more in the transition year. Again, this change will just be on the municipal (town) portion of a resident's tax bill, which is 14% of the total bill.

#### INFORMATIONAL ITEMS / COMMUNICATION

The Board okayed the Rindge and Jaffrey Fire Departments' Annual Boot Drive for Muscular Dystrophy on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Dave DuVernay, Assessing Clerk, submitted a memo regarding some parcels on Pearly Pond that were taken by tax deed. These parcels have right of ways to the pond, but some individuals have gated them off because they don't want the public to use them, and they're storing their kayaks there. No one has the right to chain off public/town property. Carlotta compiled a list of all town-owned parcels, and the Town might consider holding a sale for these since the last sale was held in 2004. She will be reviewing the list with the Department Heads soon.

Nonpublic Sessions per RSA 91-A:3, II(d), (a), (c) were held, and at 8:18pm, Roberta motioned to leave nonpublic sessions, re-enter public session and adjourn, Jed seconded, and all were in favor.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Linda Stonehill, Administrative Assistant.*