

Selectmen's Meeting 3/20/2013

Present: Sam Seppala, Dan Aho, Carlotta Pini, Town Administrator
Roberta Oeser arrived at 6:30

Carlotta: We really need a vote on the manifests on the off week, so we'll bring them in the following week to be ratified.

The Dept. Heads sign off on their individual dept. head bills and their employees' payroll.

The Hunt case was heard and the attorneys on both sides have one week to present a memorandum to present their specific legal arguments to the judge, and then they'll be making a decision.

Carlotta: second agenda item: I sent to the Board members via email a draft of operational guidelines in a handbook for the Board of Selectmen. Our planning and zoning boards both have extensive guides of procedure but this board has never had that and I thought it might be a useful tool for everyone. re: their role, responsibilities, and what the expectations are.

Votes of the board are made by majority vote. It goes on to explain that the authority of the Board comes from the state statutes or RSAs. And then there's a list of the RSAs governing the BOS. It talks about how the new board should get organized and I'll ask tonight that the board take up the delegation of officers and appoint not only a chair but a vice chair if the chair is absent and also a clerk who can come in and sign documents if just one signature is required. We'll need to talk about who on the board will be the ex-officio to the planning board, required by state law, and who will serve on the BAC, Meeting House Oversight, Town Gown, Recreation Committee, etc.

Number 4: Voting on the establishment of goals and objectives which might be ambitious for our first meeting, so I would suggest tabling it until we can meet with Don Jacobs and discuss the performance management process the board had decided to implement. It goes on to discuss what the duties are of the vice chair, chair, and clerk. And we have some sections on business protocols on conducting public meetings under the Right to Know Law, the keeping of minutes and consultation with legal counsel, and also emergency meetings, a section on public hearings (different from a public meeting in that we actually invite input from the public and we'll advertise it in the newspaper in advance), personnel hearings and what we do if we don't have a quorum, remote participation of the selectmen. Can't vote by email, when a member should disqualify him/herself due to a conflict. Voting procedures, role of the town administrator and there's a job description attached so the board understands how the Town Administrator works with and for the Board. Section 4 is a code of conduct talking about the expectations of the board, general rules for relationships, and there are some appendices such as the Right to Know Law, a draft of agenda procedures, code of ethics guidelines. It may ask the board to adopt this at a later meeting as a guideline for the board, but the first place to start could be the election of officers. It's a starting point.

Roberta: Here is a humongous list of our duties.

Carlotta: I would go through and reference which warrant articles authorized that particular duty for reference in the future.

Roberta: we're supposed to check the borders of the town physically—Art Fiorelli was the last to do that.

Roberta MOTIONED to nominate Sam as the Chairman of the Board, **Dan** seconded, and all were in favor.

Dan MOTIONED that Roberta be the Vice Chair with the authority to sign on behalf of the Board when so authorized by them.

Selectmen Liaison Assignments:

Planning Board – Roberta since we are in the process of still interviewing, for continuity, I would like to remain on the planning board for now.

Dan MOTIONED that **Roberta** continue on the Planning Board for the year, **Sam** seconded and all were in favor.

Budget Advisory Committee—

Roberta MOTIONED for **Dan** to be the BAC representative, **Sam** seconded and all were in favor.

Town Gown Committee – I'm hoping to have the TG Committee present to the board at the next meeting.

Roberta MOTIONED to nominate **Sam** for Town Gown, **Dan** seconded and all were in favor. Roberta hoped to hear what happens at those meetings.

Economic Development – meets the first Monday of the month at 8:30am – the charge of the task force is to keep the economic devmt initiative alive and to continuously monitor the goals and plans to make sure they're being implemented.

Roberta MOTIONED to make **Dan** the representative to the Economic Dev. Task Force, **Sam** seconded and all were in favor.

Meeting House Oversight Committee – bids on the windows are due next Thursday; \$12,000 from LCHIP, \$17,000 from Ward Fund; we'll have to see what we can accomplish with those monies. We are meeting next Thursday at 3:00pm. Sam's been serving for the past year and he's been contributing a lot.

Roberta said the church needs to pay half – whatever is left after the Ward Fund, the remainder is split between the Town and the Church.

Sam said he would like to stay with the Meeting House.

Carlotta: all the projects come before this board.

Roberta MOTIONED that **Sam** remain on the Meeting House Oversight Committee, **Dan** seconded and all were in favor.

Recreation Committee –

Roberta: I was impressed with what goes on in Rec. Monday evening at 5:30pm.

Dan MOTIONED that **Roberta** remain on the Recreation Committee, **Sam** seconded and all were in favor.

Carlotta: I serve on the Town Gown Committee, Economic Dev. Committee and Meeting House Oversight Committee but we can certainly talk about it further in the future if you'd like. In terms of the meeting schedule, is every other Wednesday at 6:00 a good time for you folks?

Roberta: I know it's difficult for people to eat dinner and get here by 6:00pm.

Carlotta: we used to meet at 7pm and I think that the prior board thought the meetings ran too long.

Sam: we're used to 6pm; and it works for me.

Roberta: The Chamber has its meetings on Wednesday nights occasionally. I noticed on p. 11 about the signing of manifest and payroll; I don't think it's legal the way we do things on off weeks; these things are supposed to be signed in public.

Carlotta: there's a bill for them to be signed in the off weeks. And if we ratify the prior week's manifests the current week, it's better than what we're doing.

Roberta: if the bill passes, I'm okay with it, but if not we should revisit this.

For the selectmen to come in and sign the manifests without a public meeting and a vote. I think that to have an hour's meeting every other Wednesday morning to sign the manifests

We'll stay with meeting every other Wednesday at 6:00pm.

Roberta MOTIONED to approve the payroll and accounts payable manifests for March 14th, **Sam** seconded and all were in favor.

Roberta MOTIONED to approve the payroll and accounts payable manifests for March 21st, **Sam** seconded and all were in favor.

Citizen's Forum:

Roberta said she mentioned this a couple of weeks ago – we need to look into getting flags that are a proper size for our flagpoles – they do cost \$50-\$60 for the right size but I have difficulty with the current size; I'm appalled at the size. I think we're talking about six flags – fire, police, town office, and the meeting house, west Rindge common, recreation. They're too small because they're cheap. They're supposed to hang down 1/3 of the pole—10 feet. **Carlotta:** I ran into Mike Krygowski from the Veterans' Association and they are interested in purchasing flags for Memorial Day, so I have a catalog. We were very fortunate to have a flag donated and we're very grateful for that, but I understand the scale is off.

Roberta: it may be in the town buildings' budget.

Pat Martin: the Memorial Day fund usually includes flags for the cemeteries and I thought it included the flags you fly but I'm not sure. I think there is about \$1,000 in the fund.

Carlotta: it was just the fund for the program.

Sam: we'll take that under advisement.

General Business:

Presentation on North Country Sustainability Center – Audrey Labrie came to present.

It was founded in November 2010 by Pat Stewart, a nonprofit. The main goal is to open a regional sustainability center in the area, regional – to serve people of all of central MA and southern NH and perhaps over to VT. Sustainability – board of 6 and 50 paying members and we feel the basic skills of sustainable living have been lost. We have become a very disposable society – the goal would be to be a place where people could bring the fiber from their sheep to learn how to spin it; we have a woodworking shop; we have a commercial kitchen that would be available for small farms and would use our license to produce value-added products – provide people a place that's licensed to make cheese. Artist exhibit space, dog training and trails, livestock shows, fairs, classrooms and workrooms and a retail space for handmade products that have no outlet for them. Work with disabled veterans and autism spectrum for therapy. It is within our grasp. We are hopefully hearing back tonight on the Ray plastics property – 100,000 square feet with 53 acres. Then we'll be ready to start offering classes and implementing these programs. I'm trying to make the rounds in the region to let people know what we're doing. We need to get more people to know about it.

Roberta: you're aware that we have a local Farmer's Market here?

Audrey: Yes, I am. We'd like to get your approval to hold an informational meeting in Town to meet residents. We're information-gathering at this point. We have fundraisers planned and have talked about the raw milk and politics – backyard bee hives, the last weekend in April we'll be hosting a sustainable lives exhibit at the Winchendon historical society – people will show smaller things you can do to be more self-sufficient and less dependent on the big box stores: Milling grain, spinning, small hothouses and cold frames. Winchendon is very much behind us; we started looking at properties last fall. Peggy Crister has rabbits and llamas and garlic. The building offer is contingent on funding. We've applied for a substantial amount and we have submitted grant applications not only for the purchase of the building but also for the installation of solar panels, the pond and the dam are part of the property. I would like to have a meeting in town; the Selectmen were receptive. She will get in touch with Kim McCummings and Pat Martin

Chris Bernier: Monadnock Half Marathon

Last year's event was very successful. It comes down the rail trail to Rindge and across Woodbound Road and up Drag Hill—I'm just looking to make sure we have the selectmen's approval. The police chief is suggesting having 2 paid officers this time. Last year, I lost a pile of cones and a mile marker. We're not looking to the town for anything

really but moral support, participation. I just wanted to make sure there are no surprises – it will be on August 10th with water stops every two miles. We had one last year at Cathedral of the Pines. The Selectmen granted permission to hold the event as long as Chris hammers out the details with the Police Chief. The marathon pays for the officers through sponsors and registration fees. Carlotta had spoken with Craig Fraley and his race is the previous weekend so there's no conflict. Chris has race insurance indemnifying the Town of Rindge. Last year we had about 300 runners. If it gets over 500, I'll circle back and let you know because we may need more coverage.

MOTION: Roberta motioned that we allow and support MHM to run in town with appropriate police detail, Dan seconded, and all were in favor.

Results of the bids for the used vehicles.

Carlotta: we advertised the surplus equipment stored at the highway site—the old fire truck, dump truck and two cruisers. We're recommending that the Board approve awarding to the highest bidders (see attachment). So if the Board approves, we'll bring in around \$11,000 in revenue.

MOTION: **Dan** motioned that we accept the bids as presented, **Roberta** seconded and all were in favor.

Carlotta: we did set minimum bids so I feel good about it.

Carlotta: I did not write up a formal administrator's report but I wanted to briefly discuss with the board but I think it might be valuable over the next few meetings to bring in the various committees and departments so you could hear what they're working on and it could be integrated with the performance management plan that Don Jacobs is working on; if that seems appropriate, I'll ask them to come in and limit their comments to 15 minutes or so. For example, the Telecommunications Committee would like to come in and talk about the Argent franchise and the FastRoads initiative, and the Town Gown Committee wants to come before the board, in the interest of communication. In terms of this letter from the NH Dept. of Safety, this is a preliminary – Rick said he would be analyzing this and come before the board. He will be talking about Reverse 911 and will present to the Board a proposal for the command vehicle. He's been obtaining pricing and will have a recommendation in two weeks.

There was no request for a recount – the vote on the new command vehicle passed by one.

Dan: the Ford had a recall on that particular engine and we might even get something back out of it.

Carlotta: in light of the vote that was taken at the Town Meeting to rescind the optional fiscal year as well as the vote to approve the optional fiscal year budget – we're in a position where those two votes cannot exist simultaneously. The LGC advise that the board vote to petition the Superior Court for a special Town Meeting. If the board so votes, within 24 hours we would post a notice of the vote and we would have to wait 10 days to file that petition with the court. Ellen and I sketched out a rough timeline of how it would go. When the Ella Dale property behind the Library came up for sale, we held a special town meeting.--based on that timeline, we could hold a public hearing on the warrant April 29th, post it May 8th, hold a deliberative session on June 1st and hold our

town meeting on June 30th. But that gives us only 40 days to develop a budget. Last year, we started our budget on Sept. 5 and held a meeting in January.

Dan: we had a budget established and it shouldn't be a big problem.

Roberta: Gary said he might waive Deliberative because they do allow for having deliberative and vote in one session.

Carlotta: we were required to have a deliberative session on the Ella Dale property and it's my understanding that it can be waived for certain circumstances. We'll find out; this is very preliminary and this is uncharted territory; there is no other town in NH that has gone through this specific situation before. The advice from the DRA is that "you should do this—I think." There was some conversation between Roberta, Rep. Hunt and I whether there was a legislative solution to this with a 12/18 budget, but it looks like there's not.

Carlotta: I think we're going to have to go through this budget process and don't think it's so simple as it appears; we're already three months into the year, the Highway has had a severe winter; with the healthcare costs, etc. it's a whole new ball game. We'll have to start from square one, and Ellen has started, and has begun inputting the forms. We have to do this in tandem with the court process. Our attorney thinks it's likely that the court may grant our petition but it's not guaranteed. By the time we meet on April 3rd, it will be posted, send a certified copy to the DRA.

Roberta: You have six months' of a budget done?

Carlotta: the first six months.

Roberta: Highway—the budget's not going to be flat with last year; I don't see how it can be.

Dan: we'll just have to go down elsewhere, make it work.

Roberta: we might be able to cut some things without cutting the services. We can print our own ballots and not program the voting machine.

Ellen: I'm more worried about coordinating all the people – coordinating the BAC, the Dept. Heads, and Selectmen.

Dan: you'll just have to fast track it; it will be done.

Carlotta: I think you need to think over the next few weeks, how do you envision this process? What does better this time look like? At what point are presentations made and to whom? At what point is input shared from the BAC to the Selectmen?

Sam: Suppose the new budget doesn't pass? It would go to a default budget which will be higher than the proposed budget.

Carlotta: we can get to work on the default budget right away. DRA advised us to propose a date.

Ellen: the Court needs to know why you're asking for a special meeting and then they want a date.

Carlotta: we'd want it before June 30th.

Ellen: the other question I did have is if any of you have vacations coming up – any scheduling issue we may have to work around. Dan and Sam have one in April. Sam out April 9-16th so he'll be here for the meetings.

Sam: I would like to motion that we shoot for June 1st not June 30th.

Roberta: it depends on whether we have to have Deliberative. And Gary is going to ask to waive that. We'll have to have a budget hearing which will be the same as Deliberative.

Pat Martin: in your motion couldn't you say "no later than June 30th"

Charlie Eicher: at Deliberative, people have the opportunity to amend the budget.

Ellen: Shelley specified Deliberative as one of the steps so I would be interested in what the Attorney says.

Carlotta: the attorney didn't think this was a procedural defect.

Ellen: I wonder how the taxpayers would feel about waiving the Deliberative.

Sam: I don't think it would fly. I'd like to see the Town Meeting happen before the end of May.

Carlotta: I don't think the time frame needs to be decided for this vote. If the time frame works, to do it by the end of May, but if it has to be the end of June, it will be.

MOTION: **Roberta** MOTIONED to petition the Superior Court to hold a special Town Meeting to establish a 12-month budget, **Dan** seconded and all were in favor.

Public session ended at 7:45pm.