

Minutes  
Board of Selectmen Meeting  
**Tuesday August 26, 2014 @ 7:00 PM**

Selectmen Present:  
Colin Stubbings, Robert Lang and Ernest Hartley

The meeting was called to order @ 7:09pm by Chairman Stubbings.

Chairman Stubbings announced that the meeting was being recorded solely for the purposes of preparing the minutes and that others inside the meeting may also be recording the meeting.

**Treasurer** – Erik Wagstaff reported that he is training Susan Belyea on how to do the reconciliations and Ms. Belyea said that the training was going well.

**Emergency Management** – Bernie Marvin noted that the alarm system at the Police Department is complete. Mr. Marvin will be attending a hurricane class at the Fire Academy. This year we have been very lucky with hurricanes. Mr. Marvin stated that the rug at the Police Department needs to be shampooed. Chairman Lang suggested that he contact John Pollack to see if he can clean it. The Board said that the whole office could stand to be cleaned. They would like to see if that can be clean prior to being shampooed. Ms. Collins also suggested that Rich Clifford might be another source. She noted that Mr. Clifford cleaned the Haverhill Office Building including their Police Department. Mr. Marvin will look into getting everything taken care of.

**John Metcalf** – Mr. Metcalf noted that mowing continues on all areas that he is responsible for.

**Cemetery** – Mr. Metcalf stated that they are currently putting up the new fence in the South Lawn Cemetery.

**Bean Brook Pool**- Mr. Metcalf noted that they are starting to drain the pool to get at the algae that is growing there. He suggested to the Board that they consider closing the pool at this time and that they can put the pipes away for the season. Mr. Metcalf also stated that the port-a-potty was no longer at the pool. Ms. Collins questioned why the port-a-potty was not there. She said that she hadn't called them to have it removed. The Board would like her to find out what happened to it. The Board agreed to close the pool for the season. Mr. Metcalf will close up the pool. The Board asked Mr. Metcalf if he had a padlock key for locking the pool area. Mr. Metcalf said that he did not have one. The Board asked Ms. Collins to issue Mr. Metcalf a padlock key. They also asked Mr. Metcalf to put a sign up stating that the pool is closed.

**Landfill** – Mr. Metcalf said that they are checking the knotweed and when it flowers then they will contact the gentlemen at Northeast Ag to come it and treat the individual plants. Mr. Metcalf also said that 10 woodchuck holes have been bombed at the Landfill.

**Executive Assistant** – Jennifer Collins stated that she has been working on getting the July reconciliations finished as well as the state reports that need to be completed by September 1<sup>st</sup>. These reports are needed to help set the tax rate. Ms. Collins also gave the Board a form to sign for Jennifer Ruger’s rate of pay. Ms. Collins noted that the state reports should be done by the end of the week.

**Manifests** – The Board reviewed and signed the manifests.

### **Old Business**

**Lake Armington Association Annual Meeting** – Chairman Stubbings attended the Annual Meeting for the Lake Armington Association on August 16<sup>th</sup> along with Tim Cole from the Fire Department. They were invited by the President Alice Wellington. The intent was for them to be part of the discussion on the emergency response time to the lakes area in Piermont following an incident on Cape Moonshine Road in September 2013. In previous Board of Selectmen meetings Carlos Manrique had mentioned the incident and the long response time. The Board also received a number of letters from property owners on the Lakes requesting that the Board look into switching the ambulance service to Warren/Wentworth Ambulance. Chairman Stubbings explained to the group that the Board is only allowed to do what the Legislative Body has authorized them to do. At this time the Board has only been authorized to contract with Upper Valley Ambulance for services. Piermont is one of the founding members of the Upper Valley Ambulance service. Any changes would need to go before the Town for their approval at Town Meeting. Chairman Stubbings also explained to the group that the dispatcher that handled the call for the incident in September 2013 would have asked the caller a number of questions about what was happening to the injured party and based on their knowledge and training would have determined the severity of the situation and then dispatch the ambulance accordingly. It was noted that not all calls are responded to with flashing blue or red lights and sirens. It was also noted that Grafton County Dispatch needs to call Hanover Dispatch whenever Upper Valley Ambulance needs to be dispatched. The Association members were surprised at that statement. Chairman Stubbings then told them that if Warren/Wentworth Ambulance had been called, then the call would have been dispatched through Laconia, NH. The Association members had no idea how the Dispatch worked and that the ambulances were only dispatched through certain call centers.

Chairman Stubbings noted that a large part of the problem is the lack of cell service in the area. A large number of the letters received by the Board noted the large recreational usage of the Lakes. The Association members started to realize that the issue was larger than they originally thought. Chairman Stubbings informed them that he had contacted the major wireless carriers in the area, but had received no response from them. Chairman Stubbings stated that he did a

summary of his presentation at the end of the meeting and then they were asked to stay for the potluck supper that followed, which they did.

Chairman Stubbings noted that at times it seems like an “us and them” situation with the property owners on the Lake, but the owners do a lot for the Lakes area and it was good to hear all the things that they do to maintain the Lakes and take care of the invasive plants in the area. Chairman Stubbings suggested that the Association write something up for the Annual Town Report so that the rest of Town could see what they do.

At the Annual meeting the members brought up the idea of a boat parade and Chairman Stubbings said that this might be a way to get the rest of town involved up at the Lakes.

Since Chairman Stubbings attended the Annual meeting, he has since had an e-mail back from Verizon Wireless and it appeared that the responding gentleman was low on the totem pole at Verizon, but none the less he stated that he doubted that there was much that the company could or would do for the Town since there would be no benefit for the company. Chairman Stubbings then noted that he had sent an e-mail to Senator Jeannie Forrester about the issue, but had not received any response back from her at this time.

Helga Mueller just asked for clarification about the dispatching of the ambulances and where they were dispatched from. Chairman Stubbings noted that Warren/Wentworth Ambulance is dispatched from the Lakes Region in Laconia, NH and Upper Valley Ambulance is dispatched out of Hanover, NH.

Chairman Stubbings did note that he had told the Association members that he would find out the average response time for the ambulance, but he has not had a chance to follow up with Tom Andross in regards to this.

Terri Mertz asked Chairman Stubbings what cell companies he had contacted. He stated that he had contacted Verizon Wireless, AT&T and one other. Verizon’s response to the issue was that it would not generate revenues for them so they probably wouldn’t do anything.

There were discussions about setting up a pay phone or possible call boxes at the Lakes area to help solve the issue. A pay phone would probably not happen since most phone companies are getting rid of them do to lack of use and vandalism.

There was talk about possibly putting in a repeater in the area. The Board is working on the issue to reach a solution that will be acceptable to everyone.

**Police Department Update** – The Police Department Advisory Committee has continued to meet and they are looking at the end of September to have their report into the Board. On Monday September 15<sup>th</sup> the Committee will have a meeting open up to the public at 6:00pm in the Old Church Building. The Committee will be looking for constructive feedback from the public regarding what they would like out of the Town’s Police Department. George Mertz

asked if the meeting could possibly be moved to 6:30 PM so residents who work late and have long commutes would be able to attend the meeting. Chairman Stubbings would pass that request along to Rich Dion. Helga Mueller asked if the Committee was still interviewing candidates. The Board said that they were.

The new Tasers are in. We received two Tasers for the cost of one do to the failure of the old one. It was noted that Officer Blanchard is a Certified Taser Trainer. Ms. Mueller asked if Officer Blanchard was still on duty. The Board noted that he was an interim stop gap until the Board receives the recommendation of the Committee.

It was noted by the Board that the response time to a very recent incident was unacceptable. Chairman Stubbings asked the Board to consider in the interim allowing Officer Blanchard to take the cruiser home so that he can be on call and would be able to respond to calls more timely. It was noted that the response time to the incident was over an hour and a half by the State Police. Officer Blanchard was not called because he was not on duty. Selectman Lang would like it to be put in writing. There was a lot of discussion on why the lengthy response time occurred and what the Board can do to stop this from happening in the future. It was noted that the Town does have mutual aid agreements with neighboring Towns and there was some discussion as to how mutual aid worked and who was responsible for requesting the mutual aid.

Selectman Lang moved to allow the cruiser to be taken home by Officer Blanchard during his off hours so that he could respond to calls. Selectman Hartley seconded the motion. The Board voted all in favor of this motion.

Mr. Mertz had a question on the legal fees for the Town. He noted that according to the financial reports the legal fees were over budget and he wanted to know if that was all due to the Garvin situation. Chairman Stubbings noted that the Town paid a retainer to another legal firm to handle a number of different issues. Chairman Stubbings gave Mr. Mertz a spreadsheet summarizing the legal fees that the Town has incurred and he then gave a verbal summary of what the spreadsheet showed. It was noted that Mitchell Municipal Associates is the Town's Attorney. Gardner, Fulton and Waugh handle the Camp Walt Whitman Zoning case. Gallagher, Callaghan and Carroll handled the Garvin situation and the \$7,500 retainer that was paid to them was to cover that issue as well as others. Chairman Stubbings noted that they were retained as a back up to Mitchell Municipal Group since the Board is not 100% pleased with everything that Mitchell has done at this point. The Board has not received an invoice from Gallagher for the work that they have done for the Town at this point.

Mr. Mertz wanted to know if the Board knew why they were over budget on legal fees and what fees caused the over budget. Mr. Mertz asked the Board is the settlement agreement with Mr. Garvin had been filed with the Town Clerk's office yet. Chairman Stubbings noted that it was to be filed at the Town Office and he would have it there by the end of the week.

Mr. Mertz noted that he had talked with Mr. Garvin's attorney and he stated that the agreement need to filed with the Town Clerk, but the Selectman said that he needed to be filed at the Town Office.

**2013 Audit Update** – Last week Chairman Stubbings complete the questionnaires for the auditors and the auditors have since forwarded the draft financial statements and a management letter. Chairman Stubbings was still in the process of reviewing the financials and said that he would have them done for Thursday morning's work session so that the Board could sign the Management Letter. The response to the Management Letter would probably not be done by Thursday, but should probably be done by the next meeting. The MS-5 has also been received and will be reviewed and signed this Thursday as well.

The Tax Collector asked if the MS-1 will be completed by September 1<sup>st</sup>. Ms. Collins said that she should have it finished by the end of the week and if not then the Board can sign the extension. Ms. Stubbings also gave the Board some papers that they needed to sign. The Board hopes to have everything into the DRA by September 1<sup>st</sup> so that we can be put into the queue for our tax rate to be set.

**Town Owned Property** – Chairman Stubbings noted that a property that the Town had previously tax deeded has since had all the back taxes and penalties paid on it by the former owner and the Board has signed the necessary paperwork to deed the property back to the previous owner. Selectman Hartley needs to know when the deed is recorded so that he can change the locks and give the keys back to the former owner.

The Board also noted that an eviction notice has been served on another property owner that the Town's anticipates taking possession of the property shortly. Another eviction notice will be signed by the Board and issued to another property owner shortly.

Chairman Stubbings noted that the Town had considered selling the flat filing chests in the Town safe, but the Historical Society has asked the Board if they can have them to use for storing some of their records. The Board agreed to give the filing chests to the Historical Society.

**North Country Scenic Byway Council Update** – At the last meeting the Board had asked Susan Belyea if she was interested representing Piermont on this council. She has since gotten back to the Board and said that she wouldn't have the time to do this. George Mertz volunteered to represent the Town. The Board approved and Ms. Collins will draft a letter to the council informing them of who our representative will be.

### **New Business**

**July Financial Statements** – The July financial statements for the General Ledger were available on the front table tonight. The Town Clerk's and Tax Collector's reports will be available at the

next meeting, but if anyone wants them before the next meeting they can contact the Town Office and have a copy run off for them.

**Record Retention Policy** – After last meeting Mr. Mertz forwarded the Board a Records Retention Policy that he had drafted for the Board to review and sign into effect. The Board has no problem with the policy as presented. Mr. Mertz summarized what the policy said. Selectman Hartley moved to accept the policy as presented. Selectman Lang seconded the motion. The Board voted all in favor of this motion.

The Board will make copies of the policy available for the Department Heads and the Board will sign the policy on Thursday.

**Indian Pond Bridge Funding Letter** – The Board received a letter stating that their request to move the funding for the Indian Pond Bridge to FY15 has been approved.

**Insulation at the Fire Department** – Selectman Hartley noted that he and Tim Cole met with Superior Spray Foam about the insulation at the Fire Department and they looked at the whole building. The estimate came in at \$7,780. Selectman Hartley has another company to have them come in and give the Town another quote.

**Public Input** – Helga Mueller noted that the Library had hired Terry Robie to put in four new windows in there. John Metcalf noted that Asplundh will be taking down the maple tree in the Cedar Grove Cemetery at no cost to the Town. Selectman Hartley noted that one of the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Flags that has gone missing.

**Minutes** – The minutes from the 08/12/14 meeting were reviewed and changes were made. Selectman Hartley moved to accept the minutes as amended. Selectman Lang seconded the motion. The Board voted all in favor of this motion.

Selectman Hartley moved to adjourn to executive session under RSA 91-A:3-2c at 9:16 PM. Selectman Lang seconded the motion. The Board adjourned from executive session at 9:42 PM. The minutes were sealed in executive session. Selectman Lang moved to adjourn from the regular meeting at 9:42 PM. Selectman Hartley seconded the motion. The Board voted all in favor of adjourning from the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jennifer L. Collins

Board of Selectman  
Colin Stubbings, Chairman

Approved:

Members of the Public Present at the general meeting as recorded by “sign-in sheet” included:  
B. Marvin, E. Wagstaff, G. Mertz, T. Mertz, S. Belyea, D. Mitchell, J. Metcalf, H. Mueller, C. Stubbings and J. Collins