

Minutes
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Tuesday September 23, 2014 @ 7:00 PM

Selectmen Present:
Colin Stubbings, Robert Lang and Ernest Hartley

The meeting was called to order @ 7:05pm 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.

Senator Jeanie Forrester – Senator Forrester thanked the Board for giving her the opportunity to give them an update as to what happened in Concord during the last legislative session. She also wanted to let the Board know that she was available to them if they had any questions for her. She noted that during the last session they heard over 700 pieces of legislation and they passed 242 new bills. The major topics under discussion were energy, infrastructure (4.2 cents gas tax) and healthcare. The Town of Piermont will get approximately \$77,000 from the new gas tax over the course of the next 18 years. Starting in 2016 the Town will received \$4,390.00 from this new tax. Senator Forrester is the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and when the gas tax bill came before their committee they made some changes to it to make sure that the money went towards roads and bridges. The problem that Senator Forrester has with the bill is with how the money is being spent. It seemed to her that the money being spent was not being spent on roads north of Concord. That’s why she voted against the bill. When she asked why the money wasn’t spent in Northern NH she was told that the roads in our area are not a priority. Chairman Lang asked if the impetus of the gas tax was to pay for finishing Route 93 and Senator Forrester stated that a large part of the money would go towards completing that project. She noted that she wants to see more of a comprehensive solution to what is going on with New Hampshire’s infrastructure, which is why she agreed to sit on the Finance Committee. She also noted that her committee is meeting with the DOT on almost a weekly basis to find out why they are spending more and more money with less effect on what is getting done. Why are they not seeing huge improvements with the infrastructure?

Another bill that was passed had to do with Federal Emergency Management Funds. The Town of Piermont had applied for a FEMA grant several years ago that was for approximately \$12,000. The State will send the Town a check for \$2,668.00 for the State’s portion of the grant that was never sent to the Town. Senator Forrester noted that the town’s have started to see that in the past couple of years the State is now owning up to the commitments that they had previously made to the town’s, but had never followed through on. The Town of Piermont will also be receiving funds back from the State Aid Grant that we had applied for and been approved for, but never received funding for. The first payment from that grant was received

this year in the amount of \$13,643.00. In total the Town will receive approximately \$97,000 from this grant, to be received over the next several years.

Senator Forrester stated that she is running for reelection and if reelected there are several issues that she wants to work on. The first issue concerns the Northern Pass. She feels very strongly that if this project is going to move forward it will have to be done underground. Another issue that she is concerned with is the State's rainy day fund. Currently there is \$9M in the fund, but according to the State Treasurer that figure should be at least \$140M. The current fund balance would only run the State government for approximately 2.2 days. Senator Forrester is also concerned with the problems with drugs and alcohol in the State. A drug and alcohol fund was created back in 2001 and was supposed to be funded by a percentage of the alcohol sales in the State. However, that fund has never been fully funded. Senator Forrester stated that she feels that the State has to either start owning up to all its financial commitments and promises or they need to get rid of the laws.

Resident Rob Elder wanted to know where the money that is supposed to fund the drug and alcohol fund went to instead. Senator Forrester said that it went into the General Fund. Resident George Mertz questioned the Senator about an article that he had read in Forbes magazine regarding raising the minimum wage. Senator Forrester stated that she had not read the article, but noted that the minimum wage bill had been brought in front of the legislature during the last session and she did vote against it. She noted that New Hampshire is a tourist economy and she saw a lot of restaurant owners come in front of the Finance Committee and state that the bill would cause them a lot of issues. She provided him with some statistics regarding employees within the State that were working for minimum wage and stated that if he was willing to send her the article, she would love to see it.

Selectman Lang commended Senator Forrester on her response to the Town's needs. She has been very receptive to the Town's needs. She stated that this is why she ran for office in the first place. She wants to help the communities.

Emergency Management – Bernie Marvin noted that E-911 is shaping up. He stated that there is a new committee being formed that will be responsible for mapping, remapping, naming and renaming roads in Town. Mr. Marvin will be meeting tomorrow morning (09/24/14) with Casey Gordon, who is the Town's E-911 contact with the State. Randy Subject will also be a part of the meeting. Mr. Subject has agreed to be the secondary E-911 liaison for the Town. Mr. Marvin stated that Carl Nystrom will be cleaning the Police Department on Sunday (09/28/14). Mr. Marvin will be attending a 3 day seminar at Twin Mountain for supervisors/managers relative to several emergency management issues such as Hazard Response, Developing Field Leaders, Working with Local Fire Departments, Active Shooters and Employee Safety.

Highway Department – Frank Rodimon stated that the Rodimon Lane Bridge Project is almost complete. They will be seeding and mulching tomorrow (09/24/14). He has contacted CWS to have them come in and take a look at the guardrails on the bridge and give him a quote for

replacing them. They should be in Town next week. Mr. Rodimon hopes to have the excavator to the Fire Department tomorrow so that he can start digging the ditch around the back of the Fire Department on Thursday. He said that the cost of the project should be small. He would like to discuss the drainage issue on Thursday to see what would be the best way to move it away from the building. Selectman Hartley would also like to see a sealing applied to the slab. Mr. Rodimon said that he wants the project completed by Tuesday since the excavator is only rented until then. Mr. Rodimon noted that he wants to get in contact with the DOT in Orford concerning the grades between the Fire Department and Bedford Road. He hopes that the State will work with him to clean the ditch out, which would eliminate water running over the bottom of Bedford Road. Mr. Rodimon informed the Board that he had offered \$1,600 to Mr. Taylor for the decking that Mr. Taylor had used on the bridge at the bottom of Cole Hill on Bean Brook Road. He is waiting to hear back if the offer was accepted. Mr. Rodimon asked the Board where things stood with the water easement of Stacey Thomson's property. The Board said that they hadn't heard anything and Ms. Collins will contact Byron Kidder tomorrow to find out the status.

Treasurer – Erik Wagstaff noted that the reconciliations have been completed and are up to date. A school check will be going out this week and the next one won't be until December. After that, the Town will need money so he hopes that tax bills will be going out soon. Chairman Stubbings stated that we will get the tax bills out as soon as we get the tax rate from the State. He also stated that we will need to get the sewer bills ready for the next Selectmen's meeting. The Board asked Ms. Collins to stay on top of Jamie Dow at the DRA to make sure that we can get our tax rate set as soon as possible.

Fire Department – Tim Cole reported that the tanker will go back up to Barre tomorrow to have the springs re-torqued. He also stated that at the last meeting they had some potential new members. On October 5th they have been invited to a large mutual aid drill in Wentworth. Chairman Stubbings noted that he had forwarded the corrected by-laws to Mr. Cole so that he could forward them to Chief Bruce Henry.

Recreation/Sewer/Cemeteries- Abby Metcalf was reporting for John Metcalf. She stated that they had been able to clean out the Bean Brook Pool some more. The manholes have been pumped and there were a few that had been recemented. The fence at the cemetery has been completed and they have started the fall clean-up.

Executive Assistant – Jennifer Collins stated that she had the financial reports. August has been reconciled. She has received a number of requests for property record cards from real estate agents and appraisers as more properties seem to be going on the market. She also mentioned that she has been working on filing in the office. She also noted that the budget revenue figures has been entered into the system, but the figures that she had were lumped together into general descriptions. There were not individual figures for the subcategories. Chairman Stubbings noted that he might have more detailed figures that he would provide to Ms. Collins if he had them.

Manifests – The Board reviewed and signed the manifests.

Old Business

Response Times Lakes Area – Prior to tonight’s Board of Selectmen’s meeting, the Board met with Senator Jeanie Forrester and Carol Miller from the State regarding what could be done to improve response times in the Lakes area as well as communication in the area. Chairman Stubbings reported that they didn’t get very far, but it would be the Town’s responsibility to make any changes happen. In regards to changing the ambulance service, the Board would need to bring that before the Town at the Annual Meeting. The Board will continue to work on this issue with the Lake Armington Association and Lake Tarleton Association. Resident Helga Mueller mentioned that the cellular issue is actually a town wide issue not just an issue at the Lakes Area. She also noted that a cell phone company had wanted to put a tower up in Town about 10-15 years ago, but the residents in the lakes area didn’t want it to go up.

Police Department Update – Last Wednesday (09/17/14) the Board held a meeting to get the public’s opinion about the future of the Police Department. Chairman Stubbings noted that it appeared that the consensus of the Town is to have a full-time Police Chief. Based on the resumes that were received by the Police Advisory Committee, there was only one resume submitted that would meet that criteria. He had received a resume for another potential candidate and he gave the other two Board members a copy of it tonight. He would like to place an advert in the paper to see if they can get some more resumes. Selectman Lang stated that he had spoken with Sheriff Doug Dutile and he asked if the Sheriff’s Department could have access to the Town’s Police Department so that they can do procedural things when they are working in Town. Chairman Stubbings said that he didn’t have any problem with that. Selectman Lang also noted that during that conversation they had talked about the meeting on the 17th. Sheriff Dutile recommended that the Town get in touch with the Police Chief’s Association to help the Town in its search for a new chief. Selectman Lang stated that he had made a suggestion a while ago that the Board should possibly explore options to have other agencies present the Board with candidates and that the impetus of the Police Advisory Committee was that they would act completely independent of the Selectboard so that the Board would be able to objectively look at the candidates, but that didn’t happen. He thinks that the Town needs a broad search and Sheriff Dutile recommended that the Board get in contact with the Police Chief Association’s president to see if they would be able to assist the Town in our search. Chairman Stubbings noted that he would like to hear what they have to say. Selectman Lang moved to have the Board contact the Police Chief Association to see if they will work with the Town in the search for a new Police Chief. Selectman Hartley seconded the motion. The Board voted all in favor of this motion. Selectman Lang will contact them.

Camp Walt Whitman Court Update – Selectman Lang said that the Camp Walt Whitman abatement case had been heard today in Superior Court and he had been in attendance. He had originally been subpoenaed to testify but was later unsummoned. Judge Vaughn presided over the case. Selectman Lang was very pleased with how our attorney handled the case. He noted that in his opinion Attorney Mitchell did a great job during the cross examination of the Camp’s appraiser. The Camp’s appraiser had used insurance information in determining their

appraisal value. The trial concluded today and hopefully the verdict will be issued within 30 days. Erik Wagstaff asked what would happen with the Town's relationship with the Camp if the Town won. The Board said that the court case was strictly a business issue and that our relationship won't be damaged by the outcome.

New Business

August Financial Statements – The August financial statements for the General Ledger were available on the front table tonight. The Treasurer's reconciliation for August was also available. Chairman Stubbings asked if a correction had been made to the coding of an expense that had been coded to the 250th expenses in error. Ms. Collins said that she still needs to process this. There was also some discussion on the outstanding invoices that still need to be paid for the 250th Anniversary Celebration. Ms. Collins stated that she has paid all the bills that she has received. Abby Metcalf will get Ms. Collins bills for what still needs to be paid out.

Acceptance of Unanticipated Funds – Abby Metcalf gave the Board a check from the Piermont Mutual Fire Insurance Company in the amount of \$2,000. These funds are for the cemetery trustees to spend on the completion of the new fence and for work to be done on the main road into the cemetery. The Board approved the acceptance of these funds.

Intent to Cut – The Board signed an Intent to Cut for Chris Jacobs on Map R18 Lot 05-02.

Glebe Lot – Selectman Hartley noted that the Town had fallen out of the Tree Farm Program due to lack of activity on the Glebe Lot. However, we can get back into the program once the Board meets with John O'Brien and Mr. O'Brien completes the paperwork for the Town. A small cut was done on the property this year which will allow us to re-enter the Tree Farm Program and next year the Board plans on doing a large cut. The Town has to access this land through a right of way over property formerly owned by David Patten. The Board will need to meet with the new owner to discuss accessing the Glebe Lot for the cut to be done next year.

Abatement Appeals- Chairman Stubbings stated that he had been served with paperwork for Superior Court abatement appeals for Camp Walt Whitman and Fairpoint Communications. The Board also received an abatement appeal through the BTLA for Charles and Diane Interbartolo's property.

Public Input – Helga Mueller had some questions about the Town's assessing company, Avitar Associates. She was confused about some information that she had received from Avitar's representative when he was reviewing her property. The Board and Ms. Collins answered her questions.

Erik Wagstaff wanted to know where things stood with the Recreation Committee. Chairman Stubbings said that nothing was currently being done with the Recreation Committee and he thought that Mr. Wagstaff was going to be presenting something to the Board. He also commented that he would like to see Rob Elder be a part of the Committee to help organize

activities for the older folks in Town. Mr. Wagstaff said that for the past few years the Recreation Committee had put together a soccer tournament, but since there was no Committee the school was trying to put something together through Greg Vogel. Mr. Wagstaff stated that the recreation shed needed to be cleaned out. He also expressed some concerns about what would happen in the Spring when the baseball/softball season started. He didn't want things to be rushed and thrown together at that last minute like they were done this past Spring. Chairman Stubbings would like to get the committee resurrected. Mr. Wagstaff wanted to know what the Board wants to see happen to get it going again. The Board wants someone who is willing to make a commitment to the Town and not just one program; someone who is willing to step up and take charge of organizing and running the committee. Mr. Wagstaff noted that he would like to possibly see the committee take over the school sports program if the school was agreeable, which he thought they would be. This would hopefully eliminate some of the issues that the school has putting together teams for soccer and basketball. Selectman Lang offered to help the committee since he anticipates having some more free time in the near future. The Board asked Mr. Wagstaff to come up with a list of individuals and present it to them.

Suzanne Woodard said that she wanted to see a Treasurer's report being done. Chairman Stubbings had his copy of the August 2014 reconciliation, which Ms. Collins copied and gave a copy to Ms. Woodard. Chairman Stubbings read the report to the public.

There were several comments from George Mertz, Abby Metcalf, Helga Mueller and the Board regarding the column in the Valley News. Mr. Mertz stated that he had called the Valley News and had asked for a reporter to come up and cover the Police Department meeting not a columnist.

Minutes – The minutes from the 09/09/14 meeting were reviewed and changes were made. Selectman Hartley moved to accept the minutes as amended. Chairman Stubbings seconded the motion. The Board voted all in favor of this motion.

Selectman Hartley moved to adjourn from the regular meeting at 8:50 PM. Chairman Stubbings 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:
A. Metcalf, S. Woodard, R. Elder, T. Cole, F. Rodimon, B. Marvin, E. Wagstaff, G. Mertz, T. Mertz, S. Belyea, D. Mitchell, H. Mueller, and J. Collins