

Minutes
Board of Selectmen
Tuesday January 10, 2017

Members of Selectboard present: Randy Subject, Colin Stubbings, Teran Mertz

Chairman Subject called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM. He announced the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of accurate minutes.

Mr. Marvin led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Subject stated that he had changed up the order of the agenda; Public input will be by motion only. The reason for the change is due to the change in dynamic in part because of the pending lawsuit by Selectwoman Mertz and the constant verbal attack on the Administrative Assistant and the other Board members. Chairman Subject explained that public input will be by a motion of the Board only. Selectwoman Mertz asked for Chairman Subject to explain what 'by motion only' means. Chairman Subject further clarified what he meant and that only new topics for discussion will be allowed. Selectwoman Mertz stated there was a letter from Sam Rounds, a taxpayer that should be read. There was a contentious discussion between Chairman Subject and Selectwoman Mertz regarding public input. Chief Bruce Henry stated that he will send his fire department report to the Board, he thanked the Board for their time and left the meeting. The discussion between Selectwoman Mertz and Chairman Subject continued.

Selectman Stubbings made a motion to accept public input. Selectman Stubbings also stated that the public input has deteriorated, he would like to see constructive input. Motion was seconded by Chairman Subject. Selectwoman Mertz abstained from the vote. Motion passed 2-0. Public input was allowed.

Public Input:

Mrs. Abby Metcalf asked the Board of Selectmen if they have goals for the year 2017 and if so, what they are. Chairman Subject responded that his first goal is getting through this court case. The second goal would be getting a budget that we can all live with and third, he would like to see some sanity brought back. Selectwoman Mertz responded that she does not have any goals at the moment. Selectman Stubbings responded that he would like to get the budget done and to get the outstanding items list down to a workable size. Abby Metcalf commented on the loss of community spirit and the disarray of the town. Mrs. Metcalf would like to see 2017 take a considerable upturn. Diane Stelzner voiced her opinion regarding the tone of the meeting. Another contentious discussion ensued between Chairman Subject and Diane Stelzner regarding public input. Helga Mueller requested that we get down to Town business. Suzanne Woodard stated that she feels there is an issue with her tax bill because it has gone way down.

Selectwoman Mertz again mentioned a letter written by a taxpayer, Sam Rounds. Selectwoman Mertz told the Administrative Assistant to read the letter. Chairman Subject responded that if Selectwoman Mertz wants the letter read, she can read it. Sam Rounds stated that the letter did not need to be read, she had some questions and they seem to have been answered. Mrs. Rounds wanted clarification on allowing public input at future meetings. Chairman Subject stated that he tried it out this time having public input by motion of the Board; he will see how it goes. Mr. Ed Wood stated this was the first Selectmen's meeting he had come to, he saw no reason for it not to be civilized, as we are all adults.

Chairman Subjeck agreed. Mr. Hal Covert suggested we have public input at various times throughout the meeting. Perhaps we could discuss a few items and then allow public input. Selectwoman Mertz agreed that it is a good idea and Chairman Subjeck stated he was taken under advisement. Selectwoman Mertz wanted to make a motion on it and Chairman Subjeck responded that it was taken under advisement, no need to make a motion on it. Mr. Rob Elder stated that he has a letter for the Board regarding use of the Old Church Building for Recreation Department activities to be held on Tuesdays to include lunch and board games. Chairman Subjeck asked about insurance forms and stated that he does not have a problem with it.

Department Head Updates:

EMD- Mr. Bernie Marvin stated there will be a Hazard Mitigation Meeting held on February 27, 2017 at 10 am in the Old Church Building to discuss possible hazards throughout the town. All department heads will be getting notices. The public is welcome to attend. Mr. Marvin also stated that he has submitted his reports for the Town Report to the Administrative Assistant. The funds for the ambulance service are in, Mr. Marvin will be working with Robert Clay, Director of WWAS, to talk with Lakes Region Dispatch to complete the agreement for additional ambulance coverage in the Lake Armington region prior to the start date of February 1st. Chairman Subjeck inquired as to WWAS having already responded to a call in that area. Mr. Marvin responded that WWAS did respond to a medical call at Lake Armington. As it happened, there was a call placed at a time when Upper Valley Ambulance and Woodsville Ambulance were unable to respond. The call went out to Mutual Aid and WWAS responded, as well as Piermont Fast Squad, in good time.

Road Agent- Frank Rodimon reported there is a huge amount of sand being used; he may need to add money to his budget to cover the cost of additional sand. There seem to be some people taking sand by the truckloads so he may reduce the size of the pile that is left available to residents for their own use. Mr. Rodimon stated that he has new tires to be put on the grader.

Police Department- Chief Hebert provided his December stats and also his Year-End reports to the Board. Overall, calls through dispatch are down. There has been a decrease in accident and fire calls, but there was an increase in calls to the PD for service.

Fire Department- Tim Cole reported that calls to the fire department are also down. The Fire Department had their election of officers last week. A list was provided to the BOS. The FD is expecting a bunch of equipment that is being donated from Corinth. The Piermont Volunteer Firefighters Association voted to buy a solar light for the flag in the Memorial Garden.

Treasurer- Heather Subjeck reported that we need to repay the TAN by the 27th of January. Selectwoman Mertz asked how much we borrowed, when did we borrow it and why did we borrow it? Mrs. Subjeck answered that we took out the TAN in the amount of \$200,000 on December 28, 2016 to cover expenses until we have revenue from property taxes. Selectman Stubbings stated that we should put a TAN in place for this year so we have it.

Administrative Assistant- Jen Rugar stated that she is working on the Town Report. All reports from department heads need to be in by January 20th. Mrs. Rugar thanked Mr. Marvin for already submitting his. There was a brief discussion regarding the price estimates and amount of Town Reports to consider for this year as there is a full box of last year's in the office.

Manifest- The Board reviewed and signed the payroll manifest. The accounts payable manifest was also reviewed and signed by the BOS. Selectman Stubbings and Chairman Subject had a brief discussion regarding some of the charges on the credit card bill, specifically the charge for Carbonite subscription we have cancelled. They would like clarification as to the dates of the service.

Letter of Complaint- The Board of Selectmen received a letter of complaint at the Work session last week from Administrative Assistant, Jen Rugar, regarding the attitude, disrespect and behavior towards her from Selectwoman Mertz. The Board had asked to wait until this meeting to discuss it to give the board members a chance to review the letter and attached emails.

Jen Rugar stated that she had the audio recording ready to play from the December 16, 2016 meeting; in which a clearly audible conversation took place between herself and the BOS regarding a Selectboard member that is absent from a meeting not having any input for the minutes of that meeting. During that meeting Selectwoman Mertz stated there was a paragraph in the minutes that was not on the audio CD provided to her by Jen Rugar. Selectwoman Mertz stated that she listened to the entire CD and that conversation was not on the CD that Jen Rugar provided to her. Jen Rugar stated that is not possible, she does not even have the equipment to alter a recording. Selectwoman Mertz again stated that it was not on her CD. Selectman Stubbings clarified that the recording given to Selectwoman Mertz went from our recorder to the disc; we do not have editing software so it would be an identical copy. Selectwoman Mertz stated that she still has the disc and can bring it in for Selectman Stubbings and Chairman Subject to listen to. Selectman Stubbings stated that we can bring both to the work session on Saturday and listen to them to clear this up.

Jen Rugar stated that is only one example of the hostile treatment she receives from Selectwoman Mertz. When Jen Rugar attempted to give more examples, Selectwoman Mertz interrupted and gave several examples of demands she has placed on the Administrative Assistant; stating that the Administrative Assistant works for her. Mrs. Rugar replied that she works for the Board of Selectmen, not Mrs. Mertz personally. Selectwoman Mertz stated that Jen Rugar was keeping her from doing her job by not providing all legal invoices from Mitchell Group. Selectwoman Mertz questioned being sent an invoice for the 68 pages of copies that she requested. When Chairman Subject was clarifying why an invoice was sent in response to a request for 68 pages of documents, Selectwoman Mertz stated that she does not have to discuss doing her job.

Selectwoman Mertz asked what the point of discussing the letter of complaint is. Chairman Subject stated that nowhere in the United States can an employer ignore a letter of complaint by an employee. Chairman Subject stated that in light of hearing the recording on Saturday, this will be discussed further. Selectwoman Mertz disagreed with discussing it on Saturday at a budget meeting. Selectwoman Mertz asked what Jen Rugar can do about her being asked to do her job. Chairman Subject stated that there has already been a letter written regarding an employee complaint. Selectwoman Mertz denied knowing of any letter. Selectman Stubbings explained to Selectwoman Mertz that in the past when he has asked for things from the office, it has taken a couple of days and sometimes more than one request to get the needed documents. The constant interruptions in the office make it difficult to get the necessary work done so he did not usually receive documents requested very quickly, sometimes not at all. Selectman Stubbings stated that if the Board cannot work together maybe they should all resign and let the Town vote in three people that can work together.

Chairman Subject brought the meeting back to the topic at hand; the employee letter of complaint. Selectman Stubbings asked that we give it a month to see if things improve. Jen Rugar stated that she

did not know how to respond to that because one of the biggest issues is that there is no clarification as to her job description. Selectman Stubbings agreed that personnel policies and job descriptions have not been worked on as planned. The frequency of work session was reduced causing work to not get completed.

Jen Rugar attempted to substantiate her letter of complaint and her expectation that writing a letter to the Board would have an impact. There were several interruptions made by Selectwoman Mertz. Chairman Subject suggested that a letter be written by town counsel to Mrs. Mertz telling her that they will not represent her should Mrs. Rugar seek legal action. Selectwoman Mertz asked if Chairman Subject would have another letter written to her costing more taxpayer money. Chairman Subject responded by saying if that's what it takes to safeguard this town., then that is what he will do. Selectman Stubbings stated again that perhaps the Board members should resign. Selectwoman Mertz stated that she has no intention of resigning. Another contentious discussion ensued between members of the Selectboard, resulting in Selectwoman Mertz packing up her video recorder and abruptly leaving the meeting at 8:17 PM.

Diane Stelzner made comments regarding the lack of respect at meetings.

Mrs. Abby Metcalf commented that maybe each employee should write up their own job description and submit to the Board for review. It would save the Board from having to do each one and the employees have insight on what work they actually do.

New Business:

Intents to Cut- Christopher Jacobs submitted Intent to Cut for R18 L5 02. Selectman Stubbings made a motion to approve the Intent to Cut. Chairman Subject seconded the motion. Motion passed 2-0. The Intent was signed.

Intent to Cut-John and Abby Metcalf submitted Intent to Cut for R01 L12. Selectman Stubbings made a motion to approve the Intent to Cut. Chairman Subject seconded the motion. Motion passed 2-0. The Intent was signed.

Intent to Cut- Town-owned Glebe Lot was submitted. Selectman Stubbings made a motion to approve the Intent to Cut. Chairman Subject seconded the motion. Motion passed 2-0. The Intent to Cut was signed. There was also an agreement between landowner, Ellen Simpson and Town of Piermont Conservation Commission, for a temporary lease to provide a landing for the logs signed by the Board, as corrected. Chairman Subject thanked the Conservation Commission for their work on this project.

Discussion of Minutes Transcription- At Selectwoman Mertz's request, this item was added to the agenda with transcribed minutes from Town of Haverhill as an example. After a very brief discussion, it was decided to hold off on any further discussion until Selectwoman Mertz is in attendance.

There was a discussion regarding the possibility of having volunteers or an Intern helping out in the office with filing and other tasks that may need completing.

Minutes from December 27, 2016 were reviewed. Corrections were made. Selectman Stubbings made a motion to approve as corrected. Chairman Subject seconded the motion. Motion passed 2-0.

Rob Elder submitted a request to use the Old Church Building for recreation purposes. The Board reviewed the request and approved it. Mr. Elder also submitted a proposal to use the PVS gym for recreational purposes. The Board reviewed the letter and signed it.

Selectman Stubbings made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:31 PM. Chairman Subject seconded the motion. Motion passed 2-0.

Others present for the meeting (from sign-in sheet)- Abby Metcalf, Ceil Stubbings, Bruce Henry, Ed Wood, Walter Rodimon, Rob Elder, Sam Rounds, Kelly Monahan, Helena Saarion, Diane Stelzner, Gary Hebert, Frank Rodimon, Bernie Marvin, Tim Cole, Helga Mueller, Suzanne Woodard, Alex Nuti-de Biasi

Respectfully submitted,

Jen Rugar,
Administrative Assistant

Board of Selectmen:

Randy Subject, Chair

Colin Stubbings

Terri Mertz

Approved: 01.26.17