

Minutes of Meeting CONWAY BOARD OF SELECTMEN

November 20, 2007

The Selectmen's Meeting convened at 4:25 p.m. in the Meeting Room of Conway Town Hall with the following present: Selectmen C. David Weathers (Chair), Larry Martin, Gary Webster, Mark Hounsell and Howard C. Dickinson; Town Manager, Earl W. Sires; and Recording Secretary, Karen Hallowell

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Weathers led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

SIGNING OF DOCUMENTS

The Board reviewed and signed various documents contained in the signature folder.

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

The Board reviewed and signed the manifest dated November 21, 2007.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Webster moved, seconded by Mr. Dickinson, to approve the regular and non-public minutes of 10/9/07 as written. The motion carried unanimously.

BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Assessing – Assessor, Tom Holmes, joined the meeting. Mr. Holmes reviewed the proposed 2008 Assessing budget with the Board. Mr. Holmes discussed the part time and full time positions in his department. Mr. Holmes advised he would like to keep the part time person as this person is now trained.

Planning and Zoning - Planning Director, Tom Irving, joined the meeting. Mr. Irving provided a brief overview of the proposed 2008 Planning and Zoning budget to the Board. Mr. Irving explained the budget was reduced \$1,000 due to the fact he will not be able to attend some of the conferences that are now scheduled in distant cities. Mr. Irving further discussed a possible warrant article to review the sign ordinance and suggested it be outsourced for review and revision.

Emergency Management – Emergency Management Director, Ed Duffy, joined the meeting. Mr. Duffy first reviewed the emergency operations plan created over the last year and the costs for doing same. Mr. Duffy reviewed grants that were applied for, emergency exercises that were performed and other plans that the town is working on such as the All Health Hazards Plan, Hazard Mitigation Plan, etc.

Mr. Duffy next reviewed the budget requested for 2008. Mr. Duffy reviewed the budget request is for salary, travel, supplies and training. Mr. Duffy advised the training

is usually reimbursed. Mr. Martin suggested the training be listed under a separate line. Mr. Sires and Ms. Philbrick advised this could be done.

Mr. Webster stated that it is obvious that Mr. Duffy is putting in more time than the 2 days per week. Mr. Webster questioned if we should look to putting more time into the budget for this position in the future and also, should benefits be considered for the position due to the amount of time Mr. Duffy is putting in. Mr. Sires stated this is something that could be looked at for the future. Mr. Sires also pointed out that Mr. Duffy puts in time for the grant process as well.

Fire Pond Maintenance – Mr. Weathers advised that he and Fire Chiefs looked at the fire ponds and are making recommendations for improvements on some of the fire ponds. Mr. Weathers stated there is a need to hire a diver to look into the ponds. Mr. Weathers stated a special article will be proposed for this work.

Finance – Finance Director, Lucy Philbrick, reviewed the proposed 2008 Finance Department budget with the Board. Ms. Philbrick reviewed that this budget covers the finance office as well as the tax collectors office. Ms. Philbrick reviewed there is less than a 2% increase in the proposed budget and this is due to the audit cost increasing as well as the costs for tax liens and tax billing.

Legal – Mr. Sires reviewed the proposed 2008 Legal budget with the Board. Mr. Sires reviewed the proposed budget is down \$5,000 based on activity and expectations for the coming year.

Employee Benefits – Ms. Philbrick reviewed the proposed 2008 budget for Employee benefits with the Board advising the increases are in health insurance, workers' compensation and retirement.

Mr. Sires also reviewed insurance discussions with the school, etc. The recommendation is to stand with the insurance as we have now for next year. Mr. Sires added the Board could make a decision this evening or if need more time or information, this could wait a week or two. Mr. Hounsell stated he supports keeping what we are familiar with and let the school do what they are doing for now. **Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Mr. Webster to keep the insurance status quo. The motion carried unanimously.**

Insurance – Mr. Sires reviewed the proposed 2008 Insurance budget with the board. Mr. Sires reviewed this budget item covers liability insurance and increases 9%. Mr. Sires further reviewed that the Town had a flat rate for several years. We can look at a bundle rate to see if any savings.

Inspections - Mr. Sires briefly reviewed the proposed 2008 Inspections budget with the Board. Mr. Sires advised this is David Pandora's budget and if the Board would like him to come in to discuss, this could be scheduled.

Mr. Hounsell stated he feels there needs to be a discussion on residential inspections in the future and feels this would take a warrant article. The Board agreed this should be an agenda item in next few weeks.

Parks and Recreation – Recreation Director, John Eastman, joined the meeting.

Mr. Sires reviewed the matter of the use of the revolving funds has not yet been resolved. Ms. Philbrick distributed a breakdown of the 2007 revolving fund and reviewed same with the Board. Mr. Sires asked that the Board entertain allowing the Town to use \$55,000 of that fund. **Mr. Hounsell moved, seconded by Mr. Martin, that the Board of Selectmen authorize the use of \$55,000 from the Recreation Revolving Fund to offset expenditures of the Parks and Recreation Department.** The Board held discussion regarding the success of the fund and how the fund alleviates the burden to the taxpayer, etc. Mr. Webster questioned if all special event fees go into the fund. Ms. Philbrick advised that only fees from events in town parks go into the fund. The Board next discussed a number to transfer that would be sufficient but would also protect the funds rather than lose any to the general fund. There was discussion of stating an amount up to but not exceeding \$55,000. **Mr. Martin withdrew his second and Mr. Hounsell withdrew his motion. Mr. Webster moved, seconded by Mr. Martin, to authorize the transfer of up to a maximum of \$55,000 from the Recreation Revolving Fund to offset expenditures to the Parks and Recreation budget for year end 2007. The motion carried 5-0-0.**

Mr. Hounsell next distributed a proposal he would like to make regarding recreation revolving funds and reviewed same. There was a discussion. Mr. Webster suggested moving the discussion to the Budget Committee. Some Board members felt the money should be left in the fund to accumulate. There were also questions about how much to accumulate each year and what would be a comfortable amount with the Budget Committee. There was no action taken on the proposal.

Mr. Eastman next reviewed the proposed 2008 Park and Recreation budget with the Board. Mr. Eastman reviewed that the collapsible fence needs to be replaced.

Patriotic Purposes – Mr. Sires reviewed the proposed 2008 Patriotic Purposes budget with the Board. Memorial Day and Veterans Day amounts stay the same but the request for the 4th of July celebration increased. Mr. Eastman explained the increase is due to fireworks costs. Mr. Eastman advised that we can charge the increase to the vendors, who are all non-profits, or we can also ask the other sponsors. Mr. Eastman stated the response to fundraising from sponsors has not been the same recently as in the past but this may have been due to the construction in North Conway and Arts Jubilee moving. Mr. Eastman noted that the Air National Guard band has been locked in for 2008. Mr. Eastman next noted there is a cost for the stage and sound system. Mr. Eastman next added that if the Board wants the event could be downsized or we could continue as is and just send more letters out for sponsorships. Mr. Sires stated that we will also have people going around during the event next year to collect money for the event. Mr. Sires advised that this is being brought to the Board's attention as we can't be sure we will match dollar for dollar but will try.

Mr. Webster questioned where the parade will be held as there has been talk from North Conway that they would like to have the parade back. Mr. Sires stated that the idea is that the Fourth of July is a townwide event with the parade in Conway Village and the fireworks in North Conway; however, this can be brought back for discussion if the Board would like.

Executive - Mr. Sires reviewed the proposed 2008 Executive budget with the Board. The Executive budget increases 1%. There are no major changes.

Mr. Webster questioned the GPS receiver Tom Irving had asked about. Mr. Sires advised that this can be taken out of the proposed budget as we were able to take care of it this year instead.

Elections and Registrations – Ms. Philbrick reviewed the proposed 2008 Elections and Registrations budget with the Board. Ms. Philbrick advised the increase in this propose budget is due to the amount of elections that will be held next year. There was one election in 2007 and there will be four elections in 2008.

Long Term Debt – Mr. Sires advised this will be reviewed next week.

Other – Mr. Hounsell stated he would like to increase the Board of Selectmen salaries by \$200 or so this year. Mr. Hounsell stated a lot of work goes into being a Selectman and the salary amount has not been raised in years. He would like to propose the salaries be raised from \$3,000 per selectman to \$3,200 per selectman yearly and would like the rest of the Board to give this some thought.

FUND ENCUMBRANCES 2007/2008

Ms. Philbrick reviewed the Board of Selectmen received a request from the Conservation Commission to encumber \$500 of the Conservation Commission budget. (See attached memo). **Mr. Martin moved, seconded by Mr. Webster to allow the Conservation Commission to encumber \$500 of the 2007 budget for the purposes stated. The motion carried unanimously.**

TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Campaign Coverage – Mr. Sires reported that he has asked around the state regarding charging for police coverage of campaigning candidates. Mr. Sires advised that sometimes the campaign pays or the sponsoring agent pays a fee. Also, a fee for the facility could be charged. Mr. Dickinson stated he feels the same fee should be charged to a candidate as officers receive for special duty detail. Mr. Webster stated he feels there should be a set fee. Mr. Sires advised he will do more research and report back.

10 Year Highway Plan – Mr. Sires advised the deadline is coming up and if the Board wants to forward a position he will need to know this soon. Mr. Dickinson next reviewed a letter he received from Ralph Wiggin regarding the southern section of the Bypass. There was brief discussion by the Board. **Mr. Hounsell moved, seconded by Mr. Webster, that we begin looking at the process of litigation against the NHDOT for breaking promises and commitments to us regarding the Bypass.** Mr. Webster suggested looking into what other communities have done this also and see where they have gotten with it and Messrs. Weathers and Dickinson agreed. **The motion carried 5-0-0.**

Live Signage – Mr. Sires reported complaints have been received regarding the live sign holders with the going out of business signs in North Conway. Mr. Sires reported that we have been advised that a federal judge in Texas told the Bombay Company they could do this notwithstanding local ordinances. We have the opportunity to file a protest and say this is not acceptable if the Board chooses to do so. The

Wamsutta store has also been using live signage but does not have the same court order and we have asked them to stop and they have done so. Mr. Dickinson suggested contacting the Local Government Center regarding the order issued by the federal judge and maybe asking the NH Attorney General to look into this as well.

Electronics Recycling - Mr. Sires advised that Mr. Webster has brought up concerns that many times recycled electronic items are shipped overseas to China, etc and wanted to know how we know that is not happening with our recycling. Mr. Sires advised that the company the Town contracts with is supposed to certify that this is not happening with the electronics recycled here.

BOARD REPORTS AND COMMENTS

Birch Hill Street Light – Mr. Dickinson questioned if the Town received the thank you letter from the Birch Hill residents regarding the street light. Mr. Sires advised this has not been received to date. Mr. Dickinson asked that staff follow up with Mr. Shakir on this as much time and effort was put into getting signatures for same.

Thanksgiving – Mr. Webster stated he hopes everyone has a good day Thursday, Thanksgiving. Mr. Martin also wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

Dump Store – Mr. Hounsell questioned when the dump store matter will be on the agenda. Mr. Sires advised this can be on the next agenda.

Tax Sale – Mr. Sires reported the tax sale is scheduled for December 5, 2007.

Shoreline at First River Bridge – Mr. Weathers advised that he and Paul DegliAngeli looked at the shoreline on the river at First Bridge upstream on the east side regarding erosion. It looks better than they thought at this point and they will continue to monitor and inspect this over the next couple of years.

PUBLIC COMMENTS / MEDIA QUESTIONS

Casey Conley of the Conway Daily Sun asked about municipal hours for the rest of this holiday week. Mr. Sires advised that Town Hall will be open regular hours tomorrow (until 5 pm), November 21, 2007, and closed for Thanksgiving, Thursday and Friday, November 22 & 23, 2007.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen J. Hallowell
Executive Secretary