

Minutes
Nottingham Selectmen's Meeting
February 15, 2016

6:30 PM Chair Bonser opened the meeting and asked all those present to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members Present: Mary Bonser, Donna Danis, Mark Carpenter

Others: Town Administrator Chris Sterndale, Secretary Dawn Calley-Murdough, Jennifer Phillips, James Taylor, Shannon Taylor, Anthony Dumas, Suzanne Edin, Sandra Vilchuck, Herbert Calvito, Jaye Vilchuck, Dawn Fernald, Miska Hadik

Alternate Library Trustee Appointment: The Selectmen reviewed the information from the Library Trustees recommending Jennifer Phillips as an alternate member to the trustees.

Ms. Phillips reviewed her history, including prior service on the Barrington Library Trustees, and her understanding of the duties required of her as an alternate to the trustees.

Motion: by Ms. Danis, second by Mr. Carpenter to appoint Jennifer Phillips as an Alternate to the Library Trustees from February 15, 2016 to March 2017.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

MANIFEST SIGNATURE:

Motion: by Ms. Danis, second by Mr. Carpenter to approve the February 16, 2016 accounts payable and February 16, 2016 payroll manifests.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

OUTSTANDING MINUTES:

Motion: by Mr. Carpenter, second by Ms. Danis to approve the January 11, 2016 meeting minutes as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Motion: by Ms. Danis, second by Mr. Carpenter to approve the January 18, 2016 meeting minutes as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Motion: by Mr. Carpenter, second by Ms. Danis to approve the February 1, 2016 meeting minutes as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

SELECTMEN BOARD/COMMITTEE/LIASON REPORTS:

Gile Road Petition: Mr. Carpenter asked to provide a written response to Mr. Jim Robinson regarding his request to pave a portion of Gile Road; expressing concern that an answer wasn't provided timely to allow the petition citizens to determine if they would submit a citizen petition warrant article for Town Meeting.

Chair Bonser stated there has been verbal communication between Mr. Robinson and the Town Administrator about the prior Selectmen decision, there had also been additional discussion by the Selectmen and Town Administrator about the town trying to find funds in the existing highway road budget to work on the corner portion of the road; putting that information in writing was acceptable. Ms. Danis agreed that the Board of Selectmen could respond in writing, but wasn't 100% sure about the Selectmen deciding that if funds were available they would pave the corner of the road.

The Selectmen asked Mr. Sterndale to provide a written answer to Mr. Robinson regarding his petition to pave Gile Road.

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Mr. Sterndale reported the 2016 paving plan can be reviewed and revised depending on the cost of materials to pave the corner of Gile Road. Chair Bonser stated citizens can go to Town Meeting and increase the Highway Budget if it is such a significant concern.

Planning Board: Chair Bonser stated the committee reviewed a subdivision request on Case Road, as well as discussing the board planning to work on the Master Plan, but no specific details were provided at this time; it was a short meeting.

MPEC: Ms. Danis reported she heard positive feedback about the final development plans from the people who saw them in the hall way during the election.

Election Day: The Selectmen stated there was minimal feedback about the new election day traffic process. Chair Bonser stated there could be safety concerns for the Police Department with the new entrance method, if they needed to bring someone into the department through the back entrance of the building.

It was stated every ballot was counted twice due to a problem with scanning the ballot.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR/DEPARTMENT REPORTS, MAIL & SIGN ITEMS:

Town Administration: Mr. Sterndale reported there is a possible problem with frozen pipes and no water in the building, but hopefully the problem has been resolved in a timely manner without causing other issues. There is also a problem with the phone lines, but a solution has not yet been found. The phones are a mix of hard wired and internet connection, there has been a number of dropped calls on multiple lines, and work is taking place to resolve the issue. Additional help is being requested, but there may be problems with the actual phone system. Mr. Sterndale reported he would bring more information to the Selectmen once a solution has been found.

Election Day: A meeting would be held with the Election officials to recap the day and processes, to determine what, if any changes need to take place for future elections.

Ms. Danis expressed her concern about the election officials being at the building until after 1:00 am and wondered if there wasn't a way to improve that process for the election officials. Chair Bonser stated a big part is the exit process, which helps eliminate error during the registration process.

Mr. Sterndale reported the town should not see anything like that number of people, possibly until the next primary election in four years. The November 2016 Presidential Election will be held at the Elementary School.

APPOINTMENTS:

7:00 pm: Fire Truck Bond Hearing: Chair Bonser opened the hearing at 7:01 pm. Mr. Sterndale reported no new information was available regarding the bonding process and the bond hearing is a required step in the process where the bond amount is over \$100,000.00.

Chair Bonser reviewed the process for applying for a bond with the bond bank. The proposed amount of the bond is \$425,000.00 a term length of six years, and an approximate interest amount of 2%. The first payment would be due in 2017 and would be part of the next budget cycle.

Chair Bonser asked for public comment. There was no public comment.

Chair Bonser closed the public hearing.

Motion: by Mr. Carpenter, second by Ms. Danis to close the public bond hearing.

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Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

7:30 pm: Board of Selectmen from 3 to 5 (members): Mr. Tony Dumas spoke to his reasons for submitting the citizen petition to increase the Board of Selectmen from three members to five members. Mr. Dumas stated Nottingham is growing and there is a greater commitment needed from the Board of Selectmen with needed duties for service to other boards and committees and the increase of people can help share the load. The demographics of Nottingham have also changed from mainly farmers to now more professional citizens, providing a larger pool of available expertise. The increase could help remove potential conflict on difficult votes or when one member must step down from a vote due to a personal conflict. Mr. Dumas stated he was asked by some about recommending the creation of more government and he feels adding two more members isn't creating additional government, but

Chair Bonser reported the Selectmen can choose to elect an alternate individual to serve on the required board and/or committees if needed, and doesn't see the concern having only two members vote on an issue. Chair Bonser stated she feels having additional Selectmen would cause additional burden on the Town Administrator and the office staff by having to answer to additional people and tasks.

Mr. Dumas stated he feels the technology changes can help increase communication and work flow for the change. The Selectmen will need to make a decision about the budget line, to further divide the existing budget amount or to increase the budget by an additional \$7,200.00, which would be a minimal increase to each household. Mr. Carpenter stated the current Selectmen budget is split evenly between the three members.

Ms. Danis reported there are only a few committees the Selectmen are required to serve on; Budget Committee, Planning Board, and CIP Committee.

Mr. Hadik stated the current board has done a great job but feels there should be a broader group of people making decisions and feels that distributing the workload between more Selectmen wouldn't cause more work for the Town Administrator or staff, it is just dividing the same amount over five people, and nothing would be missed. The increase also means major decisions aren't made by two people.

Mr. Carpenter stated he does not believe the current board is missing things, and doesn't agree that a higher number of board members mean the same amount of work; increasing the number of people means a higher amount of communication, review and requests with more people.

Ms. Danis stated she is worried about the number of members requiring a quorum, currently two people mean a quorum and no discussion and/or communication can be held. Having a five member board creates a greater risk of holding a meeting and making decisions when a meeting hasn't been posted. Chair Bonser reviewed the Selectmen are very regulated about having outside discussion.

Chair Bonser stated she has reviewed information about other towns that have changed from three members to five members, which has given the appearance of a significant increase of in fighting between board members. Chair Bonser stated she does not support increasing the number of Selectmen.

Ms. Danis reported as the only returning member of the Selectmen, while she will work with whatever board is created. However, she is concerned about the potential for increased communication and work issues. The other fear she has is an initial interest that is expressed

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when new positions are created and there are enough volunteers to fill those seats, but then typically membership wanes and people need to be appointed.

Mr. Dumas stated the town has the option of changing from five to three if it doesn't work out.

Mr. Carpenter supported the current number of Selectmen and did not feel a change to five members was needed. The current number of Selectmen prevents the possibility of creating decision being made outside a posted meeting.

Ms. Fernald stated there are some cases where the concerns expressed by the current Selectmen are reasons why they changed from a three member board to a five member board.

Chair Bonser closed the public hearing to hear the petition warrant article to change the Selectmen from three members to five members. The item will be on the ballot on Tuesday, March 8, 2016 voting from 8 am to 7 pm.

GENERAL BUSINESS:

Municipal Liability Legislation: Chair Bonser reviewed there is a proposed change by the NH legislators to the liability municipalities could face if they are sued.

Chair Bonser stated she was attempting to get further clarification about when the town is considered extremely negligent. Ms. Danis reported there may already be a distinction about the difference between negligent versus an accident.

Mr. Carpenter asked if there is current indemnification that prevents someone from being sued as they act on a municipal board, committee, or is an employee of the town.

Mr. Sterndale reported the town will have trouble under the current law if it is found that they ignored a known problem.

After discussion the Selectmen determined they would provide a written objection to the statute change.

Flagpole at Town Square: Ms. Taylor reviewed the current poor condition of the flag and flag pole, stating it should be replaced. Shannon Taylor and her husband are responsible for lowering and raising the flag to half mast when needed, in addition to making needed repairs when they can.

Mr. Sterndale reviewed the information he found for a possible replacement of the flagpole. Ms. Taylor reported she has found some information about the type of pole that would be needed to withstand the high winds seen at the location.

Ms. Danis reviewed the information about proposed new flag pole. There would be an estimated \$2300.00 replacement cost for a 30 foot pole. General discussion took place about what might be needed for a pole with the high winds found at the square. Ms. Taylor also brought up that the flag should also be lighted. Mr. Sterndale responded he also asked about lighting, but more research will be needed to find a good source of power, which isn't currently available.

Additional information will be needed to determine the exact specifications for the flag pole.

The Selectmen expressed their support for replacing the flag pole and to provide lighting. If the Selectmen determine the needed amount exceeded what might be found in the existing proposed budget they would consider requesting an increase to the budget at Town Meeting.

Ms. Taylor asked the Selectmen to continue working toward having an annual celebration for Veterans.

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Recreation Revolving Purchase and Sale Request: Chair Bonser reviewed a request from the Recreation Department to purchase new floor mats and sell some of the older mats by bid.

The Recreation Department is also recommending sale by bid two of the bounce houses because of a change in insurance coverage.

Motion: by Ms. Danis, second by Mr. Carpenter to authorize the purchase of floor mats from the Recreation Revolving Fund, for a cost not to exceed \$1,300.00. The Board also authorizes the Town Administrator to sell up to eight floor mats and two bounce houses, proceeds to be deposited in the Recreation Revolving Fund.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION: The Board entered non-public under RSA 91-A:3 II(a).

7:59 PM Motion: Motion by Mr. Carpenter, second by Ms. Danis to enter non-public under RSA 91-A:3 II(a).

Vote: Bonser – Yea/Nay, Danis – Yea, Carpenter – Yea. 3 – 0 in favor.

8:25* PM Motion: by Ms. Danis, second by Mr. Carpenter to exit the non-public session.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Motion: Mr. Carpenter, second by Ms. Danis to seal the non-public minutes of February 15, 2016.

Roll Call Vote: Bonser – Yea, Carpenter – Yea, Danis – Yea. 3 – 0 in favor.

The Selectmen approved the naming of Kortney Dorow as Acting Recreation Director during their non-public session.

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business,

8:25 PM Motion: by Ms. Danis, second by Mr. Carpenter to adjourn.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Calley-Murdough