

**Minutes
Nottingham Selectmen's Meeting
October 19, 2015**

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 and Mark Carpenter

Others: Town Administrator Chris Sterndale, Secretary Dawn Calley-Murdough, Sean Therrien, Joe Clement, Raelene Shippee-Rice

MANIFEST SIGNATURE:

Motion: by Ms. Danis, second by Mr. Carpenter to approve the October 12, 2015 accounts payable and October 13, 2015 payroll manifests.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

OUTSTANDING MINUTES:

Motion: Mr. Carpenter, second Ms. Danis to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2015 meeting as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Motion: Mr. Carpenter, second Ms. Danis to approve the minutes of the October 12, 2015 meeting as amended.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

SELECTMEN BOARD/COMMITTEE/LIASON REPORTS:

Budget Committee: Mr. Carpenter stated he reported the latest expenses to the Budget Committee, which only included an additional four weeks of data.

Three questions were asked during the meeting: when was the last time the Fire Department Stipend amount was increased, what expenses are in the overage for the Fire Department Miscellaneous account, and is the Highway Grader a lease/purchase vehicle.

Mr. Reed provided an overview about the preliminary CIP data, provided information about the requests from the Fire Department a Quint, which is a new fire truck, with aerial ladder, water tank, water pump, and storage for all ground ladders and other needed fire appliances. Mr. Reed reported discussion also took place about Highway department vehicle replacement, as well as some of the roads issues.

Mr. Carpenter stated the Fire Chief would speak to the Budget Committee about his proposed Quint vehicle purchase during upcoming Town 2016 budget meetings.

Ms. Levenson reviewed attendance counts, including current Coe Brown student attendance, information was presented about the current 2015/2016 budget, and the school was also asked a question about encumbrances for 2014/2015 surplus funds.

Planning Board: Ms. Danis reported it was a short meeting for a lot line adjustment for a property located on Sachs Road. Mr. Colby and Ms. Arendarczyk have been updating department forms, instructions, and checklist information to help modernize the planning and zoning processes. The Board requested some minor changes to the forms and information before they would be use.

Chair Bonser thanked the work of department staff for the hard work they do.

Ms. Danis stated staff will continue to look for someone to assist the Planning Board in completing a study of the Impact Fees. In the meantime, the Board decided they would start to review Impact Fee information on their own to determine continued use.

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Ms. Danis stated the Planning Board has asked for a response to their letter to the Board of Selectmen in July 2015, which asked the Selectmen to acknowledge receipt of the letter and how the Selectmen would correct/clarify misstatements about the open space development and septic failures in open space design. The Planning Board indicated in the letter that septic systems are installed according to code.

Chair Bonser stated that she made the statements the Planning Board referenced and reviewed her original concerns about Open Space development and septic systems.

After discussion regarding the matter Ms. Danis would request an appointment for Chair Bonser at a future Planning Board meeting and Chair Bonser would be able to address the issues specifically.

Ms. Danis stated she received an answer regarding the building height question expressed during the October 12th CIP meeting and use of the new proposed Quint (fire ladder truck). Mr. Colby indicated story height it is based on national building code with a complicated formula.

Thank you: Mrs. Shippee-Rice and her husband expressed their great appreciation for the installation of the handicap entrance button on the front door. It will make gaining entrance to the Community Center building much easier for all citizens; making a big difference.

Mr. Carpenter thanked the Shippee-Rice family for bringing the issue to the Selectmen. Ms. Danis and Chair Bonser thanked them for coming in.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR/DEPARTMENT REPORTS, MAIL & SIGN ITEMS:

Election: Mr. Sterndale reported the Town Clerk, Supervisors of the Checklist and Moderator requested possible use of the Nottingham Elementary School for the Presidential Primary, but the specific February or March date is still unknown. They previously received a positive answer for school use during the November 2016 General Elections. Mr. Sterndale reported he submitted a request to the Chair of the School Board about possibly using the school for the primary, but previous concerns were expressed about closing the school on short notice and parents having to find alternative places for students to go.

Alternate solutions have been considered for tents and heaters, or even using an alternate entrance into the building that will eliminate the need for a very crowded hall way. This may help eliminate the hazards seen during the previous presidential election in 2012. Work will continue about finding a solution as a date is determined.

Community Center: The handicap access door is installed and available for use when the building is open.

Recreation: the Halloween Party is taking place on Saturday, October 24th. Trick or Treating in town will take place on October 31st from 5 pm to 7 pm.

CIP: Mr. Sterndale requested feed back about the next step for the CIP Committee. Mr. Carpenter stated the group did not finish discussion on the roads issues, and did not include any discussion of other department needs – Recreation, Marston,

Marston Property Exploratory Committee: Ms. Danis reported the committee will meet on October 22nd at 6:30 pm in conference room #1.

APPOINTMENTS: NONE

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GENERAL BUSINESS:

Septic Loading Easement – Swan Drive: Mr. Sterndale stated he was seeking approval on a received request from Mr. Joe Clement, of 17 Swan Drive Map 24 Lot 37, for a “septic loading easement” on Town owned land on Map 24 Lot 36, a beach lot for Fire Department water access. Mr. Sterndale reported formal documents could be ready for the next meeting.

Mr. Sterndale reviewed the easement would allow Mr. Clement to include town land in the loading calculations for an updated septic system. The new septic system, and easement, would not disturb the Town owned land or sub-surface.

Chair Bonser asked about the well radius that was also identified on the map on the Town owned property. Mr. Sterndale reported it belongs to the abutter on the other side, Mr. Mello of 21 Swan Drive. Mr. Mello was contacted and expressed his comfort with the Town granting the easement.

Ms. Danis asked about an easement end date. It was stated the easement would be in perpetuity. Mr. Carpenter asked if there was any reason why the Town would not agree to the easement. Mr. Sterndale reported the only other concern would be limit the other abutter, but that has been determined not be the case.

Mr. Therrien stated he is trying to purchase the property, and the easement will allow him to upgrade the house from a two bedroom septic to a three bedroom septic.

Mr. Clement asked if he needed to hire a lawyer to write up a deed. Mr. Sterndale reported he has been looking for a draft format but hasn't found one yet, and asked Mr. Clement to determine if the surveyor might have possible deed language that could be used.

Motion: by Chair Bonser, second by for the Board of Selectmen to approve the granting of a septic loading easement to Joseph Clement, on town-owned land on Swan Drive, tax map 24, lot 38, pending attorney approval.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Mr. Clement thanked the Selectmen.

Sale of Town Property: Mr. Sterndale reviewed the modified bid for property located on Rogier Place and Water Street, with an increased amount.

After discussion the Selectmen agreed to the sale, as the properties can not be used for any other purpose and it will get the properties back on the tax rolls.

Updated deeds will be coming to the Selectmen soon for their signatures for all recent sales.

Overlay for tax rate setting: Mr. Sterndale reviewed the answer received from Avitar Associates, about clarification of the overlay amount requested. However they did not provide any additional supporting documents for the amount selected. The Selectmen reviewed the summary of overlay amounts used in prior years, as well as the amounts of overlay that were used for repayment. Legal council was questioned about a possible settlement year for the Fairpoint appeal case and the reply was that the case would most likely not be during 2016.

After discussion the Selectmen agreed with the recommendation of the Town Administrator and set the overlay at \$35,000.00.

Mr. Sterndale reported the last question the Selectmen will need to answer about the 2015 tax rate is using any of the fund balance to lower the tax rate.

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1st Draft Budget Review: Mr. Sterndale reviewed the 1st draft worksheets for the 2016 operating budget which was currently 0.6% higher than the 2015 operating budget; the 2015 expenses were through to September 30th. Mr. Sterndale reported he has talked with some, but has not sat down with each of the department heads for an individual review, but initial amounts look good.

Ms. Danis asked if anything may have been left out of the 2016 budget to reach such a low increase. Mr. Sterndale reported nothing has been left out; the department heads are predisposed to buy only what is needed, eliminating unnecessary spending.

Mr. Sterndale reviewed some of the specifics of the worksheets.

All departments are currently fully staffed. The 2015 Salary Merit Compensation Pool has been distributed and the raise amounts for each employee will be seen in the separate department salary line accounts. The 2016 Merit Compensation Pool amount is currently estimated at 3% of the total payroll for merit eligible employees.

The Town Server will need to be replaced in 2016; the Police Department had a new server in 2015.

Ms. Danis asked Mr. Sterndale to make sure he is very clear and concise in the narrative section of the worksheet, to include providing specific details about the amount being requested when available. Ms. Danis and Mr. Carpenter expressed the thought that the Budget Committee will have many question the amount, as many have a lot of computer tech experience.

Executive Website account includes the annual support maintenance and the Town website redesign cost of \$1600.00. The redesign cost is spread out over three years; 2016, 2017 and 2018, for a total cost of \$4800.00.

Work continues on the Election Salary budget amount and there was a shift in what account held the funds for programming the ballot machine; now it will be in the Election Printing account.

Mr. Sterndale reported the bookkeeper is investigating the cost to provide employees with a direct deposit option for their wages. This could mean purchasing a new module for the accounting soft and possibly additional bank fees.

Avitar Associates has been contacted for an updated contract proposal. The Selectmen asked to meet with the Board of Assessors after the contract has been received but before a decision is made. There is also a 2016 warrant article to save for a future valuation update, as seen prior years.

Health Insurance premiums have gone up higher than expected, approximately 6%, and the amount also includes two additional employees that have chosen to utilize the health insurance offer. Mr. Sterndale asked if the Selectmen have ever considered a higher deductible plan with a Health Savings Account; the Selectmen asked Mr. Sterndale to review the possibilities.

The proposal to study continued use of Impact Fees is included in the Planning Board Planner account.

Re-roofing the Police Department portion of the building is in the building maintenance section of the budget, the CC Bldg Maintenance account, along with other siding and painting issues that should be repaired.

Electric rates have been locked in for the Town, which will last until approximately December 2016. Oil and propane amounts have also decreased, to hopefully allow for possible higher budget savings. However, the Town has cut it very close for 2015 and Mr. Carpenter expressed

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concern about decreasing it further for 2016. Mr. Sterndale reported the town has locked in a great price for 2016.

Mr. Sterndale made recommendations for demolition of two tax deeded properties, as it should be considered necessary with dangerous and unsafe building conditions. These properties could also be considered for town sale in 2016, which would off set the demolition expenses.

Workers Compensation did not have the increase as expected because of another holiday payment, which off sets the expected increase, and requests for new policies has not yet been sent out to bid.

A very minimal increase is seen for the Police Department. The increase seen in the Salary P/T includes a pay increase and use of the part time staff for the full year, which wasn't seen in 2015. The intent is to purchase a new Ford Taurus, a lower costing vehicle than from 2014 and 2015.

The Fire Department has an overall small decrease, with significant savings in repair for Hydrant Maintenance.

The Highway Department also has minimal budget changes, but does include higher costs for salary and expected increases for road salt. Mr. Carpenter asked to consider future salary changes as highway employees consider retirement.

Recycling Center has an overall budget decrease. Mr. Carpenter stated staff has completed a lot of positive improvements for 2015 at the center with the new door and new equipment; a lot of changes have been made.

Recreation will be reviewed in further detail once the Recreation Revolving sub-committee has completed with their tasks. Mr. Sterndale reported software changes for Recreation are being considered, which may help with staff changes and allow for easier accounting and tracking of department programs.

Further discussion should be expected after the completion of the Recreation Revolving Committee work.

Library has a small increase but more details will come during the review from the Library staff.

The Selectmen expressed positive comments on a great first draft.

The first draft budget will be presented to the Budget Committee on November 5th. Mr. Sterndale asked when the Selectmen would want to meet with department heads to be comfortable with the first draft being presented.

After discussion the Selectmen decided they would review the current draft and submit questions to Mr. Sterndale. The Selectmen expressed the idea of having the current budget presented to the Budget Committee, with more detailed narratives to be included prior to the presentation.

Mr. Sterndale reviewed the proposed warrant articles, stating additional changes are expected as discussion continues with the CIP Committee. The Selectmen requested two separate warrant articles for the possible Fire Department truck purchase and would wait to determine how much they would consider for continued funding of the capital reserve fund.

Mr. Carpenter stated he is uncomfortable keeping the HVAC ETF at \$3000 per year since it doesn't provide enough savings for the coming boiler replacement. The Selectmen agreed that \$6000.00 per year would hold closer to what might be needed if the boiler did need replacement within the next 3 years.

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Mr. Carpenter asked about Social Services, specifically Ready Rides and the agreement to support the program for only one year, but it has been now funded for three years. Ms. Danis asked for clarification about the use of the program for continued support. Chair Bonser stated it is a service that is needed and should be supported.

Mr. Sterndale recommended a change from the traditional PLIA Fundy Boat Launch support to a higher funded Invasive Species Fund to help keep the lake safe. Discussion took place between the Selectmen for the amount and continued and/or additional monitoring, including State of NH funding. Ms. Danis stated she is getting an opinion about this request from the PLIA with a recommended method for the needed support and additional monitoring for invasive species.

Mr. Carpenter asked to have help explaining the differences between the schools contingency emergency funds and the Town Fund Balance. Mr. Sterndale reported he would gather the information for further clarification.

The Selectmen agreed to include the Library Roof and Police Department Roof repair as warrant articles; only to be consistent.

Mr. Sterndale reported the Selectmen may want to have a discussion about when, how and what should be considered as a warrant articles versus becoming part of the general budget.

Mr. Carpenter stated he would like the Selectmen to discuss whether or not they would consider changing to a SB2 voting system.

Mr. Carpenter asked if Ms. Danis has been working with the School Board, as they made a statement that she is helping them with the school CIP and giving them updates on the work of the Selectmen. Ms. Danis stated she isn't working with the School Board, and would look into the statement.

Mr. Carpenter stated it could be good if Ms. Danis is working with the School Board as he wished the communication between the School Board and Selectmen were better.

ADJOURNMENT: Having no further business,

8:41 PM Motion: by Chair Bonser, second by Ms. Danis to adjourn.

Vote: 3 – 0 in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dawn Calley-Murdough