

**Board of Selectmen
October 23, 2013**

Present: Kenneth S. Paul, Chairperson; Richard C. Edwards; Connie M. Twombly; Teresa A. Williams, Town Administrator; and Toni Bodah, Secretary.

Mr. Paul called the posted meeting to order at 5 p.m. The Board proceeded to review the proposed 2014 municipal budget

Ms. Williams shared a proposed plan for renovation of the Code/Land Use area. 3 proposals for the work will be obtained. Funds for this project may actually be available within the 2013 budget.

Ms. Williams has adjusted the salary lines for both Town Clerk and Tax Collector. Originally, the new pay rates had been calculated for 52 weeks, while in actuality the old rates will be in effect for 13 of those weeks.

The Board recently amended the mileage reimbursement rate for 2014 to \$0.56. This results in changes for several mileage lines within the budget. The mileage line for the Supervisors of the Checklist was increased to \$200. The mileage line for the Assessing Department was increased to \$452. The mileage line for the Code Department was increased to \$2100.

Ms. Williams has received a proposal for painting the front exterior of Town Hall. Discussion followed as to whether this should be part of the operating budget or the CIP. Mr. Paul believes it should be part of the Town hall maintenance line. This line could be reduced if the anticipated work in the lower level can be accomplished with 2013 money. It was decided to remove the cost of lower level renovations and add an estimated cost for painting, with a new section total of \$48,250.

Mr. Paul moved the Debt Service Bond Payment section at \$12,154, and the Tax Anticipation Interest line at \$1. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Capital Reserves

The Board agreed to the following appropriations for capital reserve funds:

--Ambulance CRF - \$25,000

--Bridge CRF – The Road Agent suggests that Maple Street is the next bridge to address. Mr. Paul does not agree, as those residents have another access. However, it is important to keep adding to the CRF as any project will cost many thousands of dollars. It is difficult to add to the fund without an actual plan in place. **Mr. Paul moved to appropriate \$10,000 for the Bridge CRF. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

--Fire Truck CRF – About \$143,000 is needed to purchase a truck in 2014. A portion of that total could be appropriated, with the balance being financed. Or, a portion could come from the unreserved fund balance. It was eventually decided to have one warrant article that would appropriate \$75,000 from taxation and another \$75,000 either from the unreserved fund balance or via a loan. A final decision will be made after the tax rate has been set.

--Public Safety Building 2nd Floor CRF – No appropriation will be sought for 2014.

--Transfer Station Facility – **Mr. Edwards moved to appropriate \$10,000 for the Transfer Station Facility CRF. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

--Transfer Station recycling – No appropriation will be sought for 2014.

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- Highway Heavy Equipment CRF – Ms. Williams advised she is waiting to hear from LGC regarding changing the intent of the original warrant article to include purchase of tractors, etc. It was agreed to appropriate \$10,000 for the Highway Heavy Equipment CRF.
- Aquifer Protection CRF – Ms. Williams will discuss this CRF with Nathan Fogg, Conservation Commission Chair. No appropriation is anticipated for 2014.
- Town Hall Improvement CRF – Ms. Williams proposes moving the tax collector's door, adding a hallway door, as well as some minor renovations to the tax office. Mr. Paul stressed we should have a smoke vestibule. Discussed the most recent plans for renovations; however, a number of changes will be made to those plans. It was agreed to appropriate \$25,000 for the Town Hall Improvement CRF.
- Police Cruiser CRF – \$35,000 was estimated for the anticipated purchase of a new vehicle.
- Town Cemetery CRF – This CRF was established to create the new Town cemetery. Now that it has been created, this CRF will be dissolved.
- Invasive Species CRF – Mr. Edwards suggested adding \$13,000 in order to bring the balance back to \$32,000. Mr. Paul suggested that a warrant article be written to amend the land use change taxes be directed to this CRF instead of towards purchase of conservation land. Ms. Williams will investigate this possibility. \$13,000 will be appropriated for the Invasive Species CRF.
- Wastewater Treatment CRF – This CRF has a healthy balance and does not require an appropriation.
- Technology Fund CRF – Ms. Williams stated there are 10 computers (between the Police Department and Town Hall) that need to be replaced, as Windows XP will not be supported after April 2014. \$26,000 will be appropriated for the Technology Fund CRF.
- Landfill CRF – No appropriation necessary.
- Parks & Rec Park/Field Maintenance CRF - \$20,000 will be appropriated for this CRF. Wayne Robinson is also seeking a warrant article for \$40,000 for purchase of a vehicle.
- Emergency Management CRF - \$1750 will be appropriated for this CRF.
- Forest Fire Management CRF – No appropriation will be sought for this CRF.
- Cemetery Well, Pump House CRF - \$5000 will be appropriated for this CRF.
- Salt Shed CRF - \$20,000 will be appropriated for this CRF.

At this point, Ms. Williams calculated the proposed 2014 budget reflects an increase of 2.7%, without several warrant articles, firm insurance numbers, or firm janitorial costs. **Mr. Edwards moved the 2014 budget at \$4,604,327. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

Ms. Twombly moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Edwards seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Ms. Twombly – 'aye'; Mr. Edwards – 'aye'; Mr. Paul – 'aye'. The motion passed 3-0 and the Board immediately (6:30 p.m.) entered Non Public Session.

The Board returned to public session at 7 p.m. Those also present at this time included Tom Beeler, *The Granite State News*; John Blackwood; Jim Miller; and Donna Martin (videotaping). Mr. Paul led all in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Appointments – None scheduled.

2. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #1 – None forthcoming.

3. Unfinished Business

a) Time Warner Cable Contract – Ms. Williams reviewed the status of negotiations as outlined in Attorney Kate Miller’s September 24, 2013, memo (attached hereto). This includes a 10-year contract term, a requirement of 15 dwellings per mile for expansion, no requirement that TWC build-out at a rate of 1 mile per year, a change in bandwidth requirement, removal of language indicating NH schools are state-accredited, cost of digital converter boxes being the Town’s responsibility (other than for converters in the school), and the cost of a \$10,000 capital grant being passed on to subscribers. Mr. Miller stated that cable companies used to give out “starter costs” to establish PEG stations. This is no longer being done. ClearView originally hoped to upgrade their equipment to equipment capable of hosting a second channel. Ms. Williams quoted Exhibit D as indicating the cost of this grant would cost each subscriber \$0.06 per month for 10 years. She referred to TWC being willing to reduce the requirements in order for the Town to obtain a second channel. Franchise fees would be equal to 2% of the television portion of the cable bill for each subscriber. We may be able to reduce this in the future when the station is up and running.

A second channel could be obtained after the first year of the term of the contract. Mr. Paul noted this is likely a good deal as the Town is going to get. He suggested we establish a public hearing on the contract. Mr. Miller stated that all involved should be commended for doing their best in trying to get the best for the residents of town. He did, however, express confusion regarding Channel 3 only being broadcast in digital format, as well as when the cost for the converters will actually be effective.

b) Sand Use Policy – The Road Agent has estimated that private contractors generally use about 740 yards of winter sand each year, at a total cost of about \$3000. Mr. Paul reviewed the current procedure for private contractors to obtain sand at the Highway garage. If this procedure works for those on private roads, and as long as the appropriate information is on file with the Town, he has no problem with this system, as long as the sand goes where it belongs. Mr. Edwards has heard concerns regarding the Town’s liability in the event a private vehicle is over-loaded by the Town’s personnel/equipment.

Mr. Blackwood spoke to the need to sand the private roads so that they can be traveled safely. He added that most private road associations make their plans in July, and this is very late to be making any changes. Referring to comments made at a previous Selectmen’s meeting, Mr. Blackwood stated that the Town should not take on any more roads. He further stated that roads should be addressed in their entirety, rather than doing sections of a road over a number of years.

Mr. Edwards has no problems with the current procedure for winter sand; however, the Town is breaking the law. If the Town sells the sand, we may assume some liability in over-loading the privately owned trucks. Perhaps the Town could open an account at Ossipee Aggregates for these contractors to be loaded. Mr. Blackwood stated that process would cost the taxpayers even more money. He added that the procedure should be kept as is.

Ms. Williams has mentioned this issue to Town Counsel, who indicates that if the Town is going to sell the sand, it should be sold at fair market value. He cautioned that the Town should not issue permits at a minimal cost. Mr. Edwards suggested using the scales at the Transfer Station.

Various scenarios were considered, including the Highway staff needing to keep track of roads serviced by vehicles loaded, and issuance of invoices. It is already policy that private trucks will not be loaded during a storm. Each contractor is expected to submit a list of roads to be sanded, to include the signature of each association president. Mr. Paul suggested that the contractor could prepay for a certain amount of sand. It would make bookkeeping easier if no funds were collected at the Highway garage. Should the contractor confirm the number of yards loaded by the Town? Much discussion followed.

Mr. Blackwood suggested leaving the process as-is for now, and start in April 2014 to make changes. Mr. Beeler suggested selling coupons good for 1-2 yards of sand, with no expiration date. Mr. Miller indicated that he previously heard a concern that the sand was going out of town. He also expressed concern that as a taxpayer, he is paying taxes, which pay for the sand. If the Town charges the private road residents for sand, those taxpayers are actually paying for the sand twice. Much more discussion regarding many relevant (and some not-so-relevant) issues.

Back to the coupon idea! Coupons could be purchased at Town Hall. One yard per slip; 25 or 50 slips/yards to a booklet. No expiration. The Highway crew would only collect coupons (which would be purchased at Town Hall) and would not need to deal with funds. The coupons would need to be numbered and tracked, and would be non-refundable. No change will be made to the 5-gallon bucket policy for property owners. This process could be given a chance, and we can then determine whether it works. **Mr. Edwards moved to sell coupons at \$4 per yard, to the private contractors, to include all documentation regarding the private roads and necessary signatures are on file. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

c) E911 Data Capture and ENS Participation – Mr. Paul would like to take the information home to review and then discuss again at a future meeting.

7. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #2

--Mr. Blackwood asked whether a new highway truck is in the 2014 budget. Mr. Edwards stated it is not and added that the trucks were repaired this year. Mr. Blackwood stressed that if trucks are properly taken care of, they could last 30 years. Ms. Williams advised that the original warrant article allows for purchase of either new or used trucks.

8. Administrative Matters

a) Liaison Reports – Mr. Paul: There has been much work on the budget, and meetings with the Budget Committee will begin next week.

Mr. Edwards: The Chamber of Commerce did a remarkable job on the Fall Fest in East Wakefield. Another is planned for Union in the spring. The event was free this year, and Mr. Edwards hopes it remains so.

Ms. Twombly: The Heritage Commission held an open house over the weekend which was well-attended. The Greater Wakefield Resource Center is looking for volunteers to paint this Friday. Planning Board is still working on the Master Plan.

b) Selectmen's Letter of Appreciation – It was agreed that this month's letter would be sent to those businesses that participated in the Fall Fest in East Wakefield.

c) Administrator's Update
--Ms. Williams has been working with the Road Agent on a Winter and Inclement Weather Policy. She will send this to the Board for review and adoption.

d) Building Permit Releases – None received.

e) Payment Manifests – Mr. Edwards moved to approve AP #45 in the amount of \$55,718.81. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Mr. Edwards moved to approve AP #46 in the amount of \$72.30, which represents a check voided and reissued. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Ms. Williams noted that the Town Clerk is now accepting credit/debit cards. The Building Department can send people upstairs to use this system as well. The Town Clerk hopes to begin with some evening hours in the near future.

f) Minutes – Mr. Edwards moved to approve the minutes of October 7 & 9, 2013, as presented. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Toni Bodah, Secretary

Approval of Minutes:

Kenneth S. Paul, Chairperson

Richard C. Edwards

Connie M. Twombly