

**Board of Selectmen
September 26, 2012**

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

Mr. Paul called the posted meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. **Mr. Paul moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a) & (c). Mr. Kasprzyk seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Kasprzyk – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Paul – ‘aye’. The motion passed unanimously, and the Board entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 7 p.m. Those present at this time included: Andrew D’Agostino, SAU #64 Business Administrator; Judy Nason and Steve Brown, School Board members; Fred Clough, Road Agent; Tom Beeler, *The Granite State News*; Craig Farley; John Blackwood, Dave Tibbetts and Phil Twombly, Cemetery Trustees; Fred Elliott; Chief Ken Fifield; Paul Morrill; Chuck Murray; Rusty Loring; Dan Davis; Ed Comeau (videotaping); Jerry O’Connor (videotaping); and Andy Pitts. Fire Chief Todd Nason joined the session in progress.

Mr. Paul led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Appointments

a) Vehicle Maintenance Committee – Ms. Nason stated that members of the VMC are here this evening to see if the Board of Selectmen has any interest in joining with the School on repair/maintenance issues for School buses and Highway equipment, perhaps adding Police and Fire vehicles in the future. She shared a graph of expense regarding the School’s transportation budget. The School Board has attempted to address the gas/diesel line and is now hoping to address the bus repair line. Ms. Nason has included a list of buses, as well as the job description of a Bus Maintenance Supervisor from another school system and pay rates of that position from various organizations. The high estimated average of the position is \$50,000. Considering other costs of employment, the total cost would be around \$75,000. Ms. Nason asked if the Board is interested in the Committee continuing to investigate this option.

Mr. Kasprzyk noted that Rusty Loring used to handle this type of work at the Highway Department. A new hire would also be expected to handle a plow route. Mr. Edwards asked what it would cost for the necessary equipment to accomplish this maintenance. Ms. Nason stated that a diesel mechanic would bring much of his own tools; however, the Town would need to supply some specialty tools. (Chief Fifield provided a list of said tools.) Mr. Edwards spoke to the cost of sophisticated equipment at Crowell’s. Ms. Nason noted that last year’s \$75,000 expenditure for maintenance was for tires, oil, batteries, electrical work, etc., with approximately ½ of that expense representing labor. Mr. Kasprzyk stressed that the intent was to start slow and build up if the plan works.

Mr. Edwards noted that we would need a qualified mechanic in view of the liability involved with school buses. Mr. Brown agreed that the Town might need increased liability insurance. Mr. Paul stated that it could be an issue if the bus had an accident and did not meet safety standards. Mr. Edwards wondered whether Chuck Murray is certified to take care of buses and whether he would care to do so (because of the liability). He does not believe that DOT will provide a one-year inspection. Ms. Nason stated that DOT will be doing spot inspections and any garage doing bus inspections would require added certification.

According to Mr. Kasprzyk, Chief Fifield had noted that although the Police Department vehicles are being maintained, he would be interested in seeing this happen to a greater degree. Chief Fifield agreed that regular maintenance is getting done and takes most of that budget line. If we were to do more in-house, then he could use that budget line for other maintenance issues. Ms. Nason noted that an oil change on a larger bus is between \$300-\$400. She spoke to the high number of miles put on the buses every day. She added that minor items that are taken care of right away do not develop into larger problems.

Discussion followed as to an appropriate percentage of employment to be assessed to the School vs. the Town. Mr. Kasprzyk stated that the School would still have its own accounts for parts; the Town would pay for the employee with the School providing an amount of reimbursement. Mr. Blackwood asked at what mileage an oil change is done. Ms. Nason guessed that occurs at about 5,000 miles. Mr. Blackwood noted it shouldn't be needed until 10,000 miles. Mr. Kasprzyk stated that although it is all taxpayers' money, the Town's budget might see a little bit of savings if the School contributes.

Mr. Murray stated that spot inspections by DOT could be expensive if the bus is taken off the road. Mr. Edwards noted that it could result in the Town being more vigilant. Mr. Paul consulted the Pay & Classification schedule and indicated the range of pay for this mechanic to be between \$16 and \$22 per hour. Mr. Edwards does not believe we would find a qualified individual in the area of \$16, suggesting that we expect to pay between \$22 to \$25 per hour.

Chief Nason advised that the local DOT crew is able to do small things, but otherwise they send the equipment to the DOT garage. He is not against the concept presented; however, he is not anxious to jump on board. Chief Nason referred to other services provided by Crowell's, who has treated the Town very well. He referred to several instances when Crowell's was called to tow emergency equipment in the middle of the night, for which the Town did not receive a bill. Ms. Nason stressed that this is a reason to begin with the Highway equipment and School buses. She suggested such a mechanic might also service the Town's generators.

Mr. Edwards stated that we need a mechanic at the garage. We need to expand the current crew. Ms. Nason had been asked about the cost of a computer for computerized inspections. She will not have that information until Friday; however, she noted that the Town has not required such a computer to inspect Highway equipment. Mr. Murray stated that over a certain weight limit you do not need to hook up to a computer for inspections.

Mr. Kasprzyk stated that the issue this evening is whether we want to share this position with the School. Mr. Paul questioned how a warranty might be affected if the mechanic does work on a vehicle. Mr. Murray noted that if we are dealing with a CAT engine, we must use CAT parts, but we do not need a CAT employee. Ms. Nason would expect any vehicle still under warranty to be serviced by the dealer.

Mr. Morrill questioned whether the Board has discussed with the existing crew as to whether they can take on these issues. He added that it sounds as though the existing crew can handle this, although they cannot do this, plow snow and clean culverts at the same time. He also asked the status of the School's idea to lease buses.

Ms. Nason advised that First Student quoted \$750,000, so that issue is moot. Mr. Morrill noted that the Town might not need to hire a mechanic if the Board decides to outsource the plowing and not maintain the existing fleet. Mr. Paul agreed and tabled this discussion until after the next appointment.

b) Fred Clough, Road Agent, re: Plow Routes – Mr. Paul noted that the Highway Crew has been reduced from a 5-man crew to 3. The Board has looked at the possibility of privatization. Total cost of two fulltime employees, plus the cost of vehicles to drive, would be around \$200,000 per year. The Town could get a lot done for that amount of money. However, it will not work if the Road Agent is not in favor of the plan. Mr. Clough confirmed that he still believes it would be best for the Town to maintain a full crew, year-round. He stated it is difficult to accomplish projects with 3 men, and they are not able to work efficiently. The Board briefly discussed whether there are any other projects that could be subbed-out. Mr. Edwards stated that creating jobs in Wakefield might assist our residents in paying their taxes. **Mr. Edwards moved to advertise to hire two fulltime employees for the Highway Department, in accordance with the Pay & Classification schedule. Mr. Kasprzyk seconded the motion.** Mr. Kasprzyk stated that the Board should consider at what level these positions will be advertised. **The motion then passed 2-1.**

Mr. Blackwood stated the Board should advertise for an equipment operator, not just a truck driver. Mr. Kasprzyk stated that he would rely on the Road Agent's advice. Discussion followed regarding a heavy equipment operator and a chief maintenance engineer. Mr. Kasprzyk clarified that this hiring process would include the potential of cooperating with the School district.

c) Dave Tibbetts, John Blackwood and Phil Twombly, Cemetery Trustees – Mr. Twombly advised that the Trustees have selected Fred Elliott for 2013 cemetery maintenance. Two bids were received, with the other bid coming in lower. However, the Trustees are very comfortable with the work of Fred Elliott over the past several years. **Mr. Edwards moved to enter into agreement with Fred Elliott for 2013 cemetery maintenance in the amount of \$31,000. Mr. Kasprzyk seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.** Ms. Williams reminded Mr. Twombly to notify the other bidder in writing of this decision.

Discussion followed regarding Lovell Lake Cemetery. Those lots are owned by individuals, who are responsible for maintenance (other than mowing grass, trimming vegetation, etc.). Mr. Twombly noted he has just located a "new" cemetery on Pray Hill, known as the Abbott Cemetery, where a mother and daughter are buried. Mr. Kasprzyk stated there is another cemetery at the intersection of Pray Hill and Campbell Roads.

Mr. Elliott referred to the sandy conditions at Lovell Lake Cemetery. The Trustees had previously requested use of compost stockpiled at the Transfer Station, to be used as free fertilizer, but the Town has not yet delivered that to the cemetery.

2. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #1

--Ms. Nason requested clarification as to whether the Board is interested in sharing the expense of the new mechanic with the School. Mr. Paul personally believes it would be best to share the service without the School paying the Town. Mr. Kasprzyk believes the School should ante up their share.

Either way, Ms. Nason would suggest a 1-year pilot program to determine whether or not it works. Ms. Williams noted that tasks should be tracked for the first year. Discussion followed regarding appropriations for 2013, with an aim of starting this effort as of January 1, 2013. The advertisement will include the need to obtain bus certification by January 1, for a certified diesel mechanic with a CDL. Mr. O'Connor does not believe diesel certification is necessary as there is no plan to rebuild motors. Mr. Kasprzyk noted this position may develop into other duties. Discussion followed as to whether existing staff may be able to handle this position.

Mr. Kasprzyk moved that 20% of the cost of the new mechanic be borne by the School District for 2013. No second—motion fails.

Ms. Nason suggested this be discussed with the Budget Committee during the upcoming meetings. Mr. Elliott asked what would happen if the mechanic were out plowing and a school bus needed repair. Mr. Kasprzyk stated that in such a case the repair would be outsourced. Mr. Elliott is hopeful that any new hire would not be too close to retirement.

3. Unfinished Business – None scheduled.

4. New Business

a) Safe Routes to Schools Project Agreement – Ms. Williams advised that this is a 100% funded start-up grant for education, crosswalks, guards, bike rodeo, etc. Mr. Edwards is in favor of safety for children; however, he wonders who would maintain sidewalks once constructed. Ms. Williams stressed that this grant does not include construction of sidewalks. The Committee has put the idea of constructing sidewalks on hold. **Mr. Paul moved to accept the grant in the amount of \$4846, in accordance with RSA 31:95-b. Mr. Kasprzyk seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

5. Proposed CRF Expenditures

a) Technology Fund \$930.62 – This expenditure represents several invoices from CCS for maintaining the Town's computer system. **Mr. Kasprzyk moved to approve this expenditure as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

6. Correspondence

a) Joseph Luis – Mr. Luis has expressed an interest in purchasing tax acquired property that abuts his property. A response will be sent explaining the auction process. Ms. Williams noted that the Board should consider disposal of some property in the near future.

b) T. Kevin O'Connor – Mr. O'Connor is grateful for the recent efforts and attitude of Officer Michael Fenton. Atta boy!

7. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #2

--Mr. Brown asked about the purchase of signs through the Safe Routes grant. Ms. Williams advised they will be getting a solar-powered sign for Forest Street, with other smaller signs to be posted on Taylor Way.

--Mr. O'Connor referred to the path from Paul School that crosses Route 109 near the Branch River. He noted that many students use that path and suggested the possibility of extending the school zone to include the path area. Mr. Edwards stated that use of that path is discouraged. Mr. Kasprzyk noted that the area near the guardrails is dangerous, and there is no room for children to walk.

--Ms. Nason announced they will have a Walk-to-School day on October 15 to encourage walking to school. Buses will drop off students at both the Parks & Rec building and St. Anthony's. She added that the Highway and Police Departments have agreed to identify a walking lane (with paint) on Burroughs Avenue. Mr. Kasprzyk wonders about the Town's liability in that regard.

8. Administrative Matters

a) Liaison Reports – Mr. Kasprzyk: Heritage Commission has voted to oppose any sign/message board on Town Hall property. They continue to work on the interior of the Heritage Centre, which is closing for the season on Columbus Day weekend. The Conservation Commission is reviewing the Natural Resources Inventory as part of the Master Plan. They continue to address the conservation easement for Union Meadows.

Mr. Edwards: Parks & Rec will have its golf tournament tomorrow to benefit the fireworks display. The Planning Board meeting was cancelled.

Mr. Paul: The Budget Committee met last evening to review year-to-date information. Ms. Williams will review several over-expenditures. Expenditure reports will be sent to Department Heads once a month. Funds will get tighter over the next several months.

Mr. Kasprzyk noted that work at the site of the new Food Pantry is going well. He has discussed the water line with the Road Agent.

b) Selectmen's Letter of Appreciation – The Board agreed that this month's letter will be sent to Deb Wilson at Paul School.

c) Administrator's Update

--We hope to begin the Brackett Road project with AWWA on October 2. We are still collecting drainage easements, with one being available for the Board's execution this evening. The Board agreed by consensus to execute the drainage easement with Tinkham Revocable Trust, as presented.

--It's time for the Board to meet with Department Heads to establish the proposed 2013 budget (yippee). It was agreed the meeting schedule will be as follows: October 3, 15, 17 and 22, all beginning at 6 p.m. in the Town Administrator's office.

--Trick or Treat will be on October 31 from 5-8 p.m.

--Ms. Williams expects an estimate for plowing roads abutting with Brookfield. Given this evening's previous discussions, there will be no need for such an estimate.

d) Building Permit Releases – Mr. Kasprzyk moved to approve two building permit releases for Linstrom on North Desmond and one for Plante on Chandler Lane. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

e) Payment Manifests – Mr. Kasprzyk moved to approve the Accounts Payable warrant in the amount of \$60,368.84. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

f) Minutes – Mr. Kasprzyk moved to approve the minutes of September 12, 2012, as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

All were reminded that the November 6 election will occur at **Paul School**. The Police Department can assist with creation of name tags for election officials.

g) Non Public Session – Mr. Kasprzyk moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (e). Mr. Paul seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Kasprzyk – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’; Mr. Paul – ‘aye’. The motion passed unanimously, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.

The Board returned to public session at 9:07 p.m., at which time the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Toni Bodah, Secretary

Approval of Minutes:

Kenneth S. Paul, Chairperson

Peter M. Kasprzyk

Richard C. Edwards