

Board of Selectmen February 24, 2016

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

Mr. Edwards called the posted meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. **Ms. Twombly moved to enter Non Public Session, seconded by Mr. Paul. Roll call vote: Ms. Twombly – ‘aye’; Mr. Paul – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’. The motion passed unanimously, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.**

The Board returned to public session at 7 p.m., at which time Mr. Edwards led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Those present at this time included: Tom Beeler, *The Granite State News*; Donna Martin (videographer); Ed Comeau (videographer); George MacDonald, Dean Giffin and Dave Tibbetts, Sanbornville Water Precinct Commissioners; Steve Libby; Michael Leck and Kurt Pearson.

1. Appointments

a) Dean Giffin, Dave Tibbetts and George MacDonald – Mr. Edwards invited the Commissioners to update the Board on the status of the Precinct. Mr. Giffin acknowledged that his license has expired; however, the Precinct already has a contracted licensed operator on board. They hope to eventually have a licensed operator within the precinct. Mr. Tibbetts has a lower level license. Mr. Edwards stated that the Board is trying to plan for the future when the Town may take over the Precinct. Mr. Giffin does not foresee that happening.

Mr. Tibbetts presented a proposed 2016 budget for the Precinct. Mr. Paul noted there are no funds budgeted for new construction. He added that the Town cannot fix streets until we are assured that the water lines are in good shape. Mr. Paul stated that if the Town does take over the Precinct, user rates will increase dramatically. Mr. Giffin advised that they expect to have a new, younger, individual elected as a Commissioner in April. Each year the Precinct tries to address the worst section of the water line. In 2016 there is no new construction planned. In 2015, the Precinct had to deal with a number of emergencies on Meadow Street and Wakefield Road, as well as construction on St. Anthony’s Road. The result was the Precinct expended more than expected. The Commissioners expect to pay off their loan in 2016 in order to avoid further interest charges.

Mr. Edwards suggested the Commissioners and the Board communicate better in order to address road construction projects. Mr. Giffin stated that they have been communicating with the Highway Department. Mr. Edwards stressed that the Board wants to be prepared for the eventuality that the water system will come under the jurisdiction of the Town.

Mr. Giffin referred to work done on Summer Street, as well as in the area around the Paul School. They need to tie the system together at the end of Rines Road in order to form a loop. Mr. Giffin is working on a manual of service connections, which he hopes to complete prior to April. Eventually that information would be included in the Town’s GIS. Mr. Giffin stated that the Town of Wakefield will eventually need a water system for the rest of the town. He suggested the Board consider setting aside a site and establishing a fund for same. Mr. Paul believes it is more likely that the existing precinct would need to expand. Mr. Edwards suggested quarterly meetings in order to keep each other informed.

Ms. Williams received clarification that the listing for “504 Water Rents” on the proposed budget refers to 504 livable units that get charged the \$50 base rate. The Precinct installs 1 meter per curb stop. Properties that support multiple dwellings have only 1 curb stop and, therefore, 1 meter. Property owners can install their own meters to more accurately track usage of multiple dwellings should they so choose.

Reference was made to the budget distributed by Mr. Tibbetts. He clarified that the budget will be reviewed/approved by the Sanbornville Water Precinct voters. Only those living in the Precinct can vote, similar to taxpayers needing to live in the Town of Wakefield in order to vote.

A scenario was discussed whereby base rates were increased. Ms. Williams believes that would guarantee more revenue for the Precinct. Mr. Giffin stated it would not be fair to those who have not actually connected onto the system. Those who use the system currently pay the operating costs.

b) Michael Leck and Steve Libby re: Redemption of 1954 Wakefield Road – Mr. Libby is interested in purchasing the property, which was taken by the Town in October 2015 for non-payment of property taxes. Mr. Libby referred to the back taxes owed, as well as liens on the property by Profile Bank and the Sanbornville Water Precinct. He noted that it would be helpful if the Board could reduce the 15% penalty assessed as part of the redemption process. Mr. Libby confirmed that he and Mr. Leck previously had a conversation about this issue with Ms. Williams. Mr. Edwards stated that the Board has recently gone through a similar situation with another resident, which resulted in no waiver of the penalty and receipt by the Town of the full redemption cost. Mr. Libby spoke to the condition of the property. He noted that Mr. Leck plans to live with a relative; however, if the Board could waive the penalty, Mr. Libby could purchase the property and allow Mr. Leck to remain in the home for some amount of time. Mr. Edwards advised that State law requires the Town to assess the 15% penalty. He personally does not care to set a precedent by waiving the penalty for one without waiving it for all in similar situations.

Mr. Leck advised he has been moving things out, but it is a slow process. However, Mr. Paul pointed out that extending this process puts the Town in a difficult situation. The Board agreed that Mr. Leck needs to vacate the property by March 1, 2016, as previously agreed.

2. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #1

--Mr. Comeau questioned the 15% penalty previously discussed. Ms. Williams advised that State law requires the Town to assess a 15% penalty (based on the assessed valuation adjusted by the current equalization ratio) as part of the redemption process. Mr. Comeau wonders how the State determined what percentage should be assessed. He also questioned whether the previous discussion should have been held in non-public session. Ms. Williams noted that previously such discussions were held in non-public session. However, counsel has now informed us that whenever taxpayer’s money is at stake, the discussion must be in public session.

3. Unfinished Business – None scheduled.

4. New Business

a) CE₂ Scope of Services – Mr. Paul spoke with Robert Saunders of CE₂, who has done engineering work for the Town, about designing a layout to improve operations/traffic flow at the Transfer Station. This scope does not include a final design, permitting costs or survey work. The purpose is to develop a conceptual design of the facility. Mr. Paul had hoped to have a design available for the March vote, but that is unlikely to occur. Funds for this portion of the project are available within the relevant capital reserve fund. CE₂ is very familiar with our Transfer Station and is familiar with potential necessary equipment. **Mr. Paul moved to accept the Scope of Services submitted by CE₂. Ms. Twombly seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

5. Proposed Capital Reserve Expenditures – None forthcoming.

6. Correspondence

a) Cody Nason Resignation – Ms. Twombly read aloud Mr. Nason’s letter of resignation as a firefighter/EMT for the Town of Wakefield. **Ms. Twombly moved to accept with regret the resignation of Cody Nason. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

b) Fraud Questionnaire from Auditors – According to Ms. Williams, the Town’s auditors have asked that we complete a questionnaire regarding the potential for fraud. **Mr. Paul moved to authorize Ms. Williams to complete this questionnaire as she determines appropriate. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

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

8. Administrative Matters

a) Town Administrator’s Update

--The Annual Town Report for 2015 is available and features the new Town seal on the cover. This report will be available on the Town’s web site soon!
--At the last meeting, the Board considered a couple of requests to add links to the Town’s web site. One was authorized (AWWA), while another was not (Cornerstone Christian). It has been suggested that any/all area schools could be listed under a general tab for “Schools” under Community Links, similar to the tab for “Churches.” The Board agreed to this solution by consensus.
--After a number of phone calls, Ms. Williams was forced to have Rooter Man address the 2 plugged toilets in the connector. The technician stated that the toilets had been purposely filled with paper towels that had been forcefully jammed into the toilets. He actually broke industrial strength equipment in attempting to work through the blockage. Ms. Williams is seeking permission to install air hand dryers in each of the 2 restrooms, at a cost of around \$500 each. **Ms. Twombly moved to authorize the purchase of 2 air hand dryers, as suggested. Mr. Paul seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

While working with the toilets, the technician noted that a rubber ring had deteriorated, which has now been replaced. Hopefully, this will take care of the recent odor.

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--Chuck Murray has advised that he plans to retire at the end of May 2016. Chuck is currently the General Foreman at the Highway Department. We will advertise for a general foreman with the understanding that current employees are certainly eligible to apply.

--Does the Board wish to post Town roads? Mr. Paul noted that since we spend money to fix the roads, we should post them during the thawing season. Posting does not preclude use of the road; but it requires communication with the Highway Department to ensure proper use. Mr. Edwards stated that a posted road should apply to all, not just to loggers and dirt haulers. Mr. Paul and Ms. Twombley are in favor of posting, while Mr. Edwards is not.

b) Letter of Appreciation – It was agreed that this month’s letter would be sent to Dean Giffin.

c) Building Permit Releases – Mr. Paul moved to approve the building permit release for Colbath on Daniel Drive. Ms. Twombley seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

d) Payment Manifests – Ms. Twombley moved to approve AP #5 in the amount of \$45,218.17. Mr. Edwards seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

e) Minutes – Mr. Paul moved to approve the minutes of February 10, 2016, as presented. Ms. Twombley seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Ms. Williams stated that the Town received a Notice of Deficiency from the State regarding missing weight limit signs on the Maine side of the Canal Road bridge. Mike Gingras has met with the Acton Highway Department, who has agreed to post the necessary signs. Both departments will meet again in the spring to develop a plan for the bridge.

Ms. Williams attended an NHMA Board meeting last week, as well as a class on dealing with various types of management styles.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Toni Bodah, Secretary

Approval of Minutes:

Richard C. Edwards, Chairperson

Kenneth S. Paul

Connie Twombley