

MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 11, 2017 BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

MEMBER'S PRESENT: Board Members Bruno Federico, Michael Houghton, Joe Lovejoy and Town Administrator Paul Deschaine.

At 7:31 Chairman Federico opened the general meeting of the Board of Selectmen. He then held a moment of silence in remembrance of 9/11/01.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Town Treasurer Deb Bronson indicated that the current fund balance was \$7,010,522.64.

NEW BUSINESS

Selvi Lampman and Karen Vivathana from the Cornerstone School requested permission to have a cross country meet at Stratham Hill Park on Tuesday, September 19th. They are expecting 8 schools to be involved, with approximately 250 boys and girls participating. They have arranged for a police detail and EMTs to be there. Parking was discussed. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to allow the Cornerstone School to hold a cross country meet at Stratham Hill Park on Tuesday, September 19, 2017 and to waive the fee. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

HIGHWAY DEPT.

Public Works Director Colin Lavery reported that forest management work at Stratham Hill Park is wrapping up. He also reported that sink holes at the park were due to stumps and loosely packed boulders. He is working with Parks & Recreation Director Seth Hickey to put together proposals to fix them next year. Mr. Lavery reported a large yellow jacket nest in the ceiling tiles in the library activity room which will be taken care of tomorrow. A manhole ring at the Fire Dept. has broken and will be fixed over the next month and a half. Mr. Federico asked about the shutters on the Bartlett-Cushman house. Mr. Lavery responded that the project is half way done and will be completed when the Highway Dept.'s busy season winds down. Mr. Deschaine noted that one of the window panes at the house had fallen out and now weather was getting in. Mr. Lavery said he will address the problem in the morning. Mr. Houghton asked who was responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the Bartlett-Cushman house. Mr. Deschaine responded that the Heritage Commission is. Mr. Houghton thought that town maintenance resources under Colin Lavery's direction working in collaboration with the Heritage Commission and approval of the Selectmen was the more appropriate manner to oversee this property. He will bring it up with the Heritage Commission when they meet on Wednesday.

Mr. Federico had a concern that when Auto Fair starts development, they might damage the soon to be paved River Road. Mr. Lavery said he will work with Town Planner Tavis Austin when the time comes.

Mr. Federico motioned to go into a non-public session at 7:58 pm to discuss personnel issues. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Mr. Houghton motioned to come out of the non-public session at 8:24 pm and seal the minutes. Mr. Federico seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

PARKS & RECREATION DEPT.

Parks & Recreation Director Seth Hickey said that Mr. Laverty had already addressed two of his first items, test pits and tree work at the park. Both went well. All trails are now open.

Next, Mr. Hickey said that currently we have two Bobcat mowers. He'd like to trade them both in and replace them with one mower which is more reliable and efficient. He's consulted with Mr. Laverty who will also use it. He is proposing to use the money from the trade in, plus field rental money and the balance from his reserve fund. Mr. Lovejoy made a motion to allow Mr. Hickey to trade in the two Bobcat mowers and acquire a single Scag mower and to finance that purchase in part with money from the field rental fund in the amount of \$9,842.48 and the reserve fund for the remaining \$207.19 for a total purchase price of \$13,349.67. Mr. Houghton seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Hickey is working on proposals to renovate the bathrooms at the Scamman and Front Pavilions next year. They are both in need of repair.

Mr. Hickey said that some residents have contacted him to propose building a skateboard park at Stevens Park. A meeting will be held September 20th to discuss the possible project. Mr. Hickey went on to discuss various programs being held at Stevens Park.

Mr. Hickey reported the bike rodeo wrapped up. It was a huge success, with approximately 120 participants. The program was done in conjunction with the Police Department. Mr. Hickey said Parks & Recreation Assistant Cantrece Forest did an excellent job organizing it.

Mr. Hickey said he was in the process of reviewing the Ordinances as they pertain to Stevens Park and Stratham Hill Park. Mr. Deschaine said that although they had planned on reviewing the ordinances, certain recent events have provided an impetus to do it sooner. Mr. Deschaine gave background regarding the event. Mr. Lovejoy asked what the process would entail. Mr. Deschaine explained the rules regarding changing an ordinance.

Mr. Hickey reported on upcoming Parks & Recreation events. They have a Community Trip to Portland in December which has been sold out for a month. They are looking into options for future trips. They are hosting a High School Mountain Bike Race on October 4th. EMTs will be present. He expects no more than 70 kids. Family Fun Day will be October 14th. American Thunder will be putting on the fireworks show. Mr. Federico suggested getting a sponsor to pay for the show.

Mr. Lovejoy asked if we were to build a skate park, would we need hire someone to ensure the users safety. Mr. Hickey said that because there is not a charge, it is open and free use; there is no requirement to have someone monitoring the safety.

POLICE DEPT.

Police Chief John Scippa agreed with Mr. Hickey, that Officer Amanda Bibeau and Ms. Forest did a wonderful job with the Bike Rodeo. He has also been working with Mr. Hickey on reviewing the Town Ordinances.

On September 8th, Chief Scippa said that he went to a conference at the Rockingham County Sheriff's Office relative to the radio dispatch situation. The Sheriff's Office upgraded their equipment last fall. In order for it to work optimally, each town is being required to make a small update to their radios. However, some of the Stratham radios were so old, the update was incompatible with the new system. Motorola (the company that did the upgrade) offered to sell the upgraded radios at 40% off and they will pay for the installation. The Police Dept. needs to replace four of the radios. The Fire Dept. needs to replace six, as every one of the vehicles has an old radio. Motorola offered a 50% discount for one year. Although the Town has established in the CIP allowance to replace the radios, Chief Scippa is not asking to make the purchase at this time. He would like to talk to Fire Chief Matt Larrabee first to get his thoughts on the matter. The switch wouldn't be made until all the other towns were upgraded as well. However, once that is done, the increased coverage would provide greater ability for the officers to communicate allowing for more safety and efficiency. It was suggested that Chief Scippa also talk to Mr. Laverty regarding the Highway Dept.'s radios. Chief Scippa said that after discussing the issue with Chief Larrabee and Mr. Laverty he would come back with a proposal.

Chief Scippa said that he receives monthly expenditure statements from Finance Director Val Kemp. He then gives them to Executive Assistant Stacey Grella to confirm the amounts. He was surprised to find there was an \$11,000 discrepancy in building maintenance fund this month. He is sure it is a simple decimal misplacement. However, he is looking into the matter and will report back with his findings.

Next, Chief Scippa said that it had been a few years since the wage scale for the Police Dept. has been looked at. He has asked one of the officers to assist him in surveying the surrounding towns' police wages to do a comparative study. Coincidentally, the NH Chief of Police also did a study. In the near future Chief Scippa hopes to present a proposal to the Board to begin discussions on possibly making some adjustments.

Mr. Houghton asked about solar panels on the roof of the Police Station. Mr. Deschaine said he was working on the details of the power purchase contract with Revision and legal counsel.

RESERVATIONS

Newmarket Junior and Senior High School requested use of the Front Pavilion on 9/28/17 for a Team Building event and requested that the fee be waived. Mr. Houghton moved to approved the request and waive the fee. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The Cub Scouts requested use of the Morgera Room at the Fire Station for their regular meetings and to waive the fee. Mr. Houghton moved to approved the request and waive the fee. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

MEETINGS: The Chair then reviewed the meetings scheduled for the coming week and reviewed the meetings held this past week. Mr. Deschaine reported that Planning Board member Jamie Paine volunteered to be on the Pedestrian & Cyclist Advocacy Committee. Mr. Federico made a motion to appoint Jameson Paine to the Pedestrian & Cyclist Advocacy Committee as a Planning Board representative. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Deschaine gave an update on the tax deeded property. A Writ of Possession has been filed and will be acted on shortly. Lienholders have been notified. Two of them have responded.

Mr. Deschaine said that Town Planner Tavis Austin completed a revised job description for the Land Use Assistant I position. He gave it to the Board for their review.

At 9:31pm Mr. Houghton made a motion to go into a non-public session to discuss personnel matters. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously. At 9:48 Mr. Houghton made a motion to come out of the non-public session and seal the minutes. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

At 9:50 Mr. Federico made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lovejoy seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Richard
Recording Secretary