

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**Minutes of February 23, 2009**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Vice Chairman Bruce Breton called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Selectmen Galen Stearns, Charles McMahon and Roger Hohenberger were present, as was Assistant Town Administrator Dana Call. Chairman Dennis Senibaldi was delayed and arrived at 7:15 PM, and Town Administrator David Sullivan was excused. Mr. Breton opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance; then read the agenda into the record.

**LIAISON REPORTS:** Mr. McMahon advised the Board that the State of NH would be doing a series of presentations regarding their budget; including one scheduled for March 9<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM at the Salem High School Media Center. Mr. McMahon indicated that representatives would be on hand from the NH Ways and Means and House Finance committees to discuss the 2009-11 budget. Mr. McMahon asked that the Board members try to attend.

Mr. Stearns inquired whether Mr. McMahon had any information regarding the Governor's proposal to cut the rooms and meal tax to municipalities. Mr. McMahon replied in the negative, noting that Windham receives approximately \$570K from this tax and any impacts from its elimination would be felt at year-end. Brief discussion ensued regarding the stimulus estimates and retirement contributions.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:** None.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Mrs. Call discussed the previous week's correspondence from Rockingham Economic Development Corporation requesting communities to identify local projects designed to advance/promote regional goals. Mrs. Call noted that projects discussed had included the Depot improvements, By-pass landscaping, Castle Hill Road bridge, and the Lowell Road Bike paths; and inquired whether the Board had any other suggestions. Mr. Hohenberger noted that the Salt Shed and Londonbridge Road should be included, as well. Brief discussion ensued regarding the criteria and forms for submission, and Mrs. Call indicated she would follow-up to complete the latter.

*Letter of retirement* received from Planning Director Al Turner, effective March 31, 2009. Mr. Stearns moved and Mr. McMahon seconded to accept with regrets. Mr. Hohenberger extended the Board's thanks to Mr. Turner for his twelve years of service to the Town, and wished him the best of luck, and Mr. Senibaldi echoed his sentiments. Passed unanimously.

*Protest Petition received/Article 3, Amendment 1:* Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. Senibaldi seconded to accept the petition. Passed unanimously. Mrs. Call indicated the document will now be posted at the polls.

*Mr. Senibaldi* assumed the Chairmanship.

**FINANCIAL UPDATE:** Mrs. Call presented her year-end financial update to the Board, highlights of which included:

- End of year unexpended budget, excepting unanticipated revenues, is approximately \$223,000; a significant portion of which represents salary savings in the Maintenance, Police, Fire, Planning, and Transfer Station budgets.

Mr. Senibaldi inquired what effect this savings will have on the tax rate setting for next year. Mrs. Call replied that it will depend on the revenues and the available fund balance, the latter of which will be determined after the annual audit in April. Brief discussion ensued regarding the impacts of the School District increases and the possible loss of the rooms and meals tax.

- Brief discussion ensued regarding the 2008 Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) expenses. Mrs. Call explained that it remains a timing issue with the School District and the tax billing. Mr. Hohenberger requested that Mrs. Call speak to Mrs. Clairmont about ways to improve the coordination.
- Final revenues were up \$229,000 over 2007 (99.54% of the 2008 revenues estimated at tax rate setting). Mr. Breton noted the increase in property tax interest received, and inquired whether the Board would consider moving to quarterly billing to ease the taxpayer burden and increase the Town's cash flow. Discussion ensued regarding the current past due taxes, added cost to the Town to do quarterly billing, and whether or not it would be more convenient to the taxpayer.

Mr. Stearns indicated he would like to see a comparison of the increased interest versus increased properties, and Mr. Senibaldi concurred. Further discussion ensued, and Mrs. Call indicated that the apparent increase in interest over the years may actually reflect timing differences in the bill due dates/receipt of payments, which may push the interest into the following year.

Mr. Hohenberger requested that the State statutes be researched regarding the earliest the taxes could be billed and, if they cannot be due earlier than July 1, then the State Representatives be urged to draft a bill for 2009 to that effect. Brief discussion ensued regarding the differences in the Town and School fiscal years.

- Revenues from motor vehicle registrations and the Transfer Station are both trending down. Discussion ensued regarding the Town Clerk pay structure of fees versus salary. Mrs. Call indicated that the primary driver between the two, as to which was more cost effective, was the benefits.
- Conservation Funds available, including January payments, is currently \$255K
- Route 28 Emergency Fund: after a brief discussion, Mrs. Call explained that these funds were initially earmarked for a substation, however, precedent had been set with the purchase of the Forestry vehicle to utilize these funds for other response needs/services. Mrs. Call advised that there are still a small number of lingering payments from the original subdivision due.
- Mr. Breton requested that Mrs. Call look into the Fire and Police Impact fees collected for 2008, which he believed were too low. Mrs. Call will follow-up.

- Revenue collected from the new Special Police Contracted fund was \$24,100. Mr. Breton noted that, prior to establishing this program that money went to out of town entities. He commended Chief Lewis, the Specials, and the Board of Selectmen for exploring and implementing this program.

**OLD/NEW BUSINESS:** Mr. Scott Priestly, Jr. approached at the Chairman's behalf to note that he was in attendance to observe the meeting for his "Communications" merit badge.

*Mrs. Call* inquired whether the Board wished to exercise the third year option for the chemical toilet services in the amount of \$6,199, which is a decrease in contract price with Dave's Septic. She advised that the service has been satisfactory, and neither Mr. Barlow nor Ms. Haas have any issues.

Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. McMahon seconded to exercise the third year contract option with Dave's Septic in the amount \$6,199. Passed unanimously.

*Mrs. Call* advised the Board that she is currently working on another round of bid invitations that will include alarm services and cemetery groundskeeping.

*Mrs. Call* advised that staff had met with representatives of FEMA to discuss ice storm damage claims submitted by the Town and School district. Mrs. Call noted that \$71K in town expenses had been submitted, but what will be reimbursed has yet to be determined. She further noted that FEMA will allow additional submissions for further cleanup and inspections conducted once Spring arrives. Mrs. Call noted that claims for Fire, Police and Highway operations had been submitted, as well damages to the Nashua Road fence. A brief discussion ensued regarding the lack of insurance coverage for fencing, which the Town does not have as it has historically not been cost effective. Mrs. Call will look into pricing/benefits for same.

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION:** Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. Stearns seconded to enter into a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3-II a, b, and c. Roll call vote – all members "yes". The topics of discussion were personnel, hiring and reputations and the Board, Mrs. Call, and Ms. Devlin were in attendance in all sessions.

*Mr. Hohenberger* moved and Mr. Breton seconded to seal the minutes of the non-public session. Passed unanimously.

Mr. Breton moved and Mr. Hohenberger seconded to adjourn. Passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted, Wendi Devlin, Administrative Assistant

*Note: These minutes are in draft form and have not been submitted to the Board for approval.*