

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of December 28, 2009

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Galen Stearns called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. Selectmen Bruce Breton, Charles McMahon, and Roger Hohenberger were present, as was Town Administrator David Sullivan. Selectman Ross McLeod was excused. Mr. Stearns read the agenda into the record followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

LIAISON REPORTS: None.

CORRESPONDENCE: Letter of resignation received from Chairman Galen Stearns, effective February 7, 2010.

WBSL PRESENTATION: Mr. McMahon prefaced the presentation by providing a brief history of the origins of Griffin Park and, in particular, his impressions of Andy and Mary. He added that it was the goal of the WBSL from the outset to build the finest facility possible in honor of the Griffins. Mr. McMahon then noted there is no visual evidence of Andy and Mary at the park for future generations, and unveiled a large plaque with a laser etching of the couple. Mr. McMahon noted that the plaque will be placed on the Wall of Thanks at Griffin Park, and then presented an identical, small scale plaque to Representative Griffin.

Representative Griffin approached and extended her thanks to all and to the WBSL, noting how special it will be to her to be able to stop and say “hi” to Andy each time she visits the Park.

MOSQUITO CONTROL GRANT: Mrs. Call advised that \$981 had been received from the State of NH in reimbursement of the Town’s annual mosquito control expenses. Mr. McMahon moved and Mr. Breton second to accept the \$981 in reimbursement. Passed 4-0.

HISTORIC COMMITTEE: Chairman Marion Dinsmore approached to advise the Board that the current event coordinator for the Searles Chapel facility, Jeanette McMahon, has indicated that she would like to retire. Mrs. Dinsmore noted that the Committee has been unable to find anyone to assume these duties, however, she had received a letter from Mr. David Kolifraith of Searles Castle Event Management expressing an interest in taking over the marketing/operation of the Chapel.

Mr. McMahon indicated he did not believe the Board had been adequately advised in advance, and he was not properly prepared to discuss this matter. Brief discussion ensued, and Mr. Sullivan clarified that the Committee was not looking for a decision that evening, but rather input from the Board regarding the concept itself or alternatives.

Mr. Kolifraith approached noting that his company often receives inquiries about the Searles Chapel facility which people are mistaking for the Castle. He noted that he often has to turn away bookings for the Searles Castle that could be booked at the Chapel. He noted that he felt his company could have the same success as it has with the Castle management over the last eight years, noting that in that time over \$1M had been garnered toward the restoration and his lease will soon be renewed through 2020. Mr. Kolifraith indicated that the logistics of the arrangements would need to be worked out and that he and the Committee were simply trying to ascertain if the Board had any interest in the concept.

Mr. Stearns noted that the facility had been restored with taxpayer dollars, and felt that access by Windham residents must be maintained. Discussion ensued, and Mr. Kolifrath indicated that he would need to be in charge of the facility and suggested that days could be reserved for use by residents only. He then expressed concerns with the current state of the facility and its oversight, i.e. the lack of presence by personnel during events.

Mr. Hohenberger indicated he felt it was important to not view the Searles Chapel as a business, noting that the facility is well respected and appreciated for what it is. Mr. Kolifrath indicated his interest in the facility as a business offered a win/win situation, however, he reiterated he would need to be in charge of the facility per an agreed upon contract.

Mrs. Elizabeth Dunn, Historic Committee member, approached noting that the use and income of the Searles as a function facility has increased tremendously since it first began, and was currently at a crossroads. She noted that someone is needed who can run the facility in a more business-like fashion, and that Mr. Kolifrath's proposal can offer increased income which is very attractive. Mrs. Dunn noted that a solution was needed, and that Historic Committee had found Mr. Kolifrath's proposal to be a viable alternative.

Discussion ensued regarding the percentage of calls turned away for the Castle and the marketing/income potential for the Searles. Mr. McMahon inquired what other uses would be acceptable for the Chapel other than weddings. Mr. Scott Robb approached and replied such functions as baby/bridal showers, wedding rehearsal, christenings and the like. He indicated that such details could be worked out with the Board. Discussion ensued regarding the potential number of bookings and liability/insurance. Mr. Kolifrath indicated that his company carries both general and liquor liability coverage and a \$2M rider.

After further discussion regarding the soccer field, current maintenance needs of the facility, and lease of the facility versus contracting the service, it was the consensus of the Board that the Historic Committee and Mr. Kolifrath work to draft a proposal for submission to the Board.

YEAR-END BUSINESS: Assistant Town Administrator-Finance Director Dana Call advised the Board that an extended 5-year/300 hour warranty was being offered on the replacement Police Department generator at a cost of \$1,350. After a brief discussion regarding the factory warranty and the potential for reimbursement of this cost as part of the grant from the State, Mr. Hohenberger moved and Mr. McMahon seconded to approve the expense of up to \$1,350 for an extended warranty on the Police Department generator; subject to submission of the expense as a potential part of the grant application. Passed 4-0.

Mr. Breton inquired as to the status of the Planning Department replacement windows. Mr. Sullivan noted that the windows are currently on order, and will be installed upon their arrival.

Mr. McMahon inquired of Mrs. Call as to whether the final fund balance figure was available. Mrs. Call replied in the negative, noting that the books generally remain open until the first or second week of January.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Sullivan advised that ten (10) bids had been received for the Salt Shed project, and the results will be available on the Town's website the following day. He stressed that much analysis of the submissions will be required, however, based upon the raw data they appear to range from \$562K to \$1.3M with some exclusions to be factored in.

Mr. Sullivan noted that the deadline for receipt of Citizen petitions for the warrant was January 12, 2009. Deadline for Board articles is the same day.

Mr. Breton noted that the Board had not taken any action on Mr. Stearns' resignations, and moved to accept with regrets and gratitude for his service. Mr. McMahon seconded and the motion passed 3-0-1, with Mr. Stearns abstaining.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION: Mr. Breton moved and Mr. Hohenberger seconded to enter into a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3-IIa and d. Roll call vote – all members “yes”. The topics of discussion were personnel and land acquisition.

The Board, Mr. Sullivan, Ms. Devlin, and Conservation Commission members Jim Finn and Dennis Senibaldi were in attendance in the first session.

The Board discussed a potential land purchase, and it was the consensus of the Board that there was no interest in acquiring the property in question.

The Board, Mr. Sullivan, and Ms. Devlin were in attendance in the final session.

Mr. Sullivan updated the Board on personnel matters relative to compensation and disability. No decisions were made.

Mr. Hohenberger motioned and Mr. Breton seconded to adjourn. Passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendi Devlin, Administrative Assistant

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