

TOWN OF DIXFIELD
Minutes of Meeting
Board of Selectmen
Monday, February 9, 2009
5:00 p.m., Dixfield Town Office

Board Members Present: Bettina M. Martin, Norine H. Clarke, James L. Desjardins, Raymond E. Carlton and Brad E. Dyer

Board Members Absent:

Administration Present: Eugene R. Skibitsky (Town Manager), Charlotte M. Collins (Minutes), Leo Jolin (Public Works), Jim White (Water Department Superintendent)

Citizens Present:

Others: Attorney Paul Dumas Representing the Estate of Lyman and Lucille Holman, Jeffrey Dill, Heir to Holman Property, Larry Benoit and Stephenie Swiezynski from CMP's Maine Power Reliability Program

Press: Eileen Adams, Lewiston Journal

1. Chair Martin opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Dyer, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of 1/26/2009.
3. **Approval of Warrants and Payroll:** On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Dyer, the Board voted unanimously to approve the accounts payable, payroll, water and sewer warrants as listed on the agenda.

6. Old Business: (Out of Order)

a. Holman Estate: The Town Manager explained the breakdown of all charges assessed against the property belonging to the Lyman and Lucille Holman estate. The total came to \$30,778.47 and was paid by three (3) checks from Jeffrey Dill, representative of the estate. On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Dyer, the Board voted unanimously to accept the checks in full payment of taxes, costs, interest and water/sewer charges on the property. A quit claim deed will be issued to Mr. Dill as soon as possible. Atty. Paul Dumas thanked the Board for their consideration in all matters.

4. Department Head Reports:

a. Water Department: Superintendent Jim White spoke of the annual audit in water usage and the costs involved of unmetered water customers. The town

pumps 49,000,000 gallons annually or 135,000 gallons daily (see attachment). Twenty-five percent is unaccounted for each year. The PUC would like to see that number reduced to 10-15%.

The cold weather has caused a water line to freeze on Pine Street. The customer's side of the line was frozen, but was able to tie into the main and will have to run water until spring. On Brackett Street a frozen water line was thawed; frost is to blame as it has sunk very deeply into the ground this year due to the cold weather.

A control valve at the water plant is acting up. Mr. White has found parts for it, and it will be working again soon.

Red Flag Rules: Maine Municipal Association has notified the town that a new policy must be in place by May 1, 2009 that covers identity theft for utility services. The Town Manager has Portland's and will modify it to serve Dixfield and will bring it to the Board for approval at a later date. The Water Advisory Committee was asked for their input by the Town Manager.

b. **Public Works:** Lead man Leo Jolin reported the following on the department's work over the past month.

- Approximately ½ of the winter overtime funds have been used.
- Salt usage is on budget (300 tons) for the year.
- The loader broke down and has since been repaired.
- The crew is still moving snow.

Selectman Clarke suggested that snow banks at street intersections need to be removed.

Public Comment: None

5. **New Business:**

a. **Central Maine Power Reliability Program:** Mr. Larry Benoit presented the Board with a power-point presentation about Central Maine Power Company's 2007 Maine Bulk Power Transmission System. Approximately 2000' of transmission lines that run through Dixfield (at the end of the Canton Point Road) will be affected. This program will increase Maine's electricity availability as well as the ability to sell excess power to other states. New lines will be strung on larger, and higher electrical poles, following the current route. The program should be completed by 2012 with 485 miles of new transmission lines.

b. **Oxford County Emergency Management Agency:** The Town Manager explained the letter from OCEMA regarding an exercise to test the town's response to emergencies.

c. **Oxford County Regional Communications Center:** The center is asking for members on this board. Police Chief Richard A. Pickett and Fire Chief Scott Dennett may be included.

d. **Closed Landfills:** The Town Manager received information regarding the State's request for the town to inspect its landfill (old dump). Mr. Skibitsky will direct the Public Works Department to do the inspection that should take from 20 minutes to an hour to complete.

6. Old Business: (Continued)

b. **Mitchell Land Offer:** The Town Manager received a call from Hirschial Noyes of Carthage who stated that there is a land dispute that abuts the right-of-way in question to the Mitchell property. The Board felt that this dispute must be settled before they could take any action. The Town Manager will contact Mr. Mitchell.

c. **Thaddeus White Bridge:** The cost over-run on the Thad White Bridge came to \$27,345.66 for both Mexico and Dixfield. Chair Martin suggested that the Board place before the voters the use of surplus to fund the over-run. Other issues were also discussed in regards to over-spending accounts. Town Manager Skibitsky will contact the auditor for direction with these issues.

d. **Rumford-Mexico Sewerage District:** The town's contract with the Rumford-Mexico Sewerage District has expired and a new contract needs to come before the Board. At this time, the RMSD has asked if the town would like to become part of the district instead of being a customer as it would allow a voice on their Board regarding expenditures, etc. This new organization of the district might have to be brought before the Legislature. The Town Manager will gather additional information for another meeting.

Due to the new bridge over Webb River, the sewer force main will have to be re-engineered and parts of the main replaced. Ted Berry Company who presently maintains our sewer system can engineer the project for about \$2,500. However, the scope of the project is unclear at the present time. A meeting will be held tomorrow evening at the Mexico Town Office when further details will be given.

7. Town Manager's Report:

a. The State projects that a 4.6% decrease in revenue sharing for the 2009/10 budget year will lower our projected revenues about \$31,329 and a citizen initiative proposes a 50% cut in excise taxes. These amounts will directly affect the budget and the 2009/10 tax bills.

b. The NORSWB has assessed our fees for 2009/10; they remain the same with no additional increases.

c. The Career Center will be hosting a meeting to coordinate service providers for those who will be facing lay-offs in the area due to the economic decline that the entire country is facing.

d. The Dixfield, Mexico and Rumford Town Managers have met twice to discuss regionalization efforts. No decisions have been made or new directions to follow have been suggested at the present time.

e. A formal letter from the Teamsters Local #340 Union has been received to begin the bargaining agreement between the Town of Dixfield and the Teamsters for the Public Works Department. The union's representative will meet with the public works employees and will contact the Town Manager to schedule a meeting with the Board of Selectmen.

f. Donna's Gift Emporium of 48 Weld Street will host an open house on February 11, 2009 from 4:30 p.m. until 6:30 p.m.; raffles and door prizes offered.

g. The town received a quote from Maine Municipal Association Unemployment Compensation Fund. Volunteer firemen and elected officials are not covered. If the town joins the fund it must wait five (5) quarters before unemployment coverage will become effective through MMA. This item was tabled until next meeting for more discussion.

h. The Town Manager reported that possible FEMA grant funds could be submitted for Hall Hill, Holt Hill or other places that are continuously causing washouts, etc.

Public Comment: None

8. Board Questions and Comments:

Dyer: Selectman Dyer asked why the Common Road would not be plowed until there was approximately 6" on snow on it. He had to contact the Public Works Department before they would plow it.

Desjardins: Selectman Desjardins commented on the property that was filled with garbage. The owner has until February 13, 2009 to clean up the mess before additional actions are taken.

9. Other Business:

10. Executive Session: On a motion from Mr. Dyer and a second from Mrs. Clarke, the Board voted to go into executive session at 7:00 p.m.

The Board came out of executive session at 7:58 p.m.; no action taken.

11. FYI: So noted.

12. Next Meeting: Monday, February 23, 2009, 5:00 p.m., Town Office

13. Adjournment: On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Dyer, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte M. Collins
Secretary

/cmc

Attachments