

**TOWN OF DIXFIELD**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Board of Selectmen**  
**Monday, February 23, 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), Police Chief Pickett

**Citizens Present:**

**Others:**

**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 2/09/2009.
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.
4. **Department Head Reports:**
  - a. **Police Department:** Chief Pickett presented the department's report to the Board and Town Manager, and reported on the following:
    - Burglaries are on the increase due to the economic climate and financial distress that is sweeping the country. Chief Pickett felt that this trend would continue. Reported burglaries have already surpassed the total for last year.
    - A check from the River Valley Healthy Coalition in the amount of \$760 was received by the Police Department as grant funds to be used in targeting underage drinking. The total amount the department will receive is \$4,560 which can be used for educational and enforcement purposes. The Chief asked for suggestions in educating students about the dangers of underage drinking, and Selectman Clarke suggested getting an alcohol-related car wreck to demonstrate to the students.

Chief Pickett related to the Board that his department has readily agreed to receiving no raises this year due to the economic climate in the area. Keeping a job was more important to them at this time.

**Public Comment: None**

**5. New Business:**

a. **River Valley Agriculture Commission:** The River Valley Growth Council is promoting a new River Valley Agriculture Commission and needs representative from the surrounding communities. A shared kitchen and farmers market are some of topics that will be addressed. Dixfield citizens that are interested should contact the Town Manager. This item was tabled for the next meeting.

b. **Floodplain Management Ordinance:** The Town Manager stated that the Floodplain Management Ordinance is administered by the town’s Code Enforcement Officer and the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance is administered by the Planning Board; both need updating.

The Floodplain Management Ordinance has been studied by the town’s CEO based on a state model. Sigrid Houlette, Code Enforcement Officer, recommends that the town approve the new State’s model ordinance and institute fees that would help defray costs for research and inspections. She suggests a \$50.00 fee to inspect new buildings and a \$25.00 fee for building improvements be incorporated into the ordinance.

On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to include the recommendations of the CEO in the Floodplain Management Ordinance: approve the new State model ordinance, charge a \$50.00 fee to inspect new buildings and a \$25.00 fee for building improvements.

A public hearing will be held at the Selectmen’s Meeting of 4/13/09; it will also be included for a town meeting vote thereafter.

c. **Oxford County Sheriff’s Office Report:** The town received a report from the OCSO regarding the activity in Dixfield by county officers for the year 2008. The report generated discussion about the cost of Dixfield contracting with the county for police coverage.

On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted as follows for the Town Manager to seek the costs of funding police services through the Oxford County Sheriff’s Department and to have the figures available before Annual Town Meeting:

Chair Martin	Yea
Selectman Clarke	Yea
Selectman Desjardins	Yea
Selectman Carlton	Yea
Selectman Dyer	Nay

Vote passed: 4-1

6. **Old Business:**

a. **MMA Unemployment Compensation Fund:** The Town Manager reported that having studied MMA's unemployment compensation fund, he recommends that the town join and add the requested funds to this year's annual town meeting warrant.

On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to approve the town's entering into the Maine Municipal Association Unemployment Compensation Fund beginning July 1, 2009 for the next fiscal year.

b. **Campground Appeal:** The Town Manager explained to the Board of Selectmen the Planning Board's denial for a resource protection area variance for Mr. Thomas J. Gerrie of West Farmington, Maine. His property is identified on the town's tax maps as Map 2, Lot 69A (lower Main Street along the Androscoggin River). This land will impact the State's right-of-way along the new highway.

Mr. Skibitsky stated that our CEO spoke with Rich Baker of the D.E.P., and it appears that a hearing with the town's Appeals Board is in order. *(The town's Planning Board has voted to deny the variance; therefore, an appeal must be the next step for Mr. Gerrie. If the Appeals Boards upholds the Planning Board's vote, court will be the next step.)* The town does not currently have an active Appeals Board, so one must be appointed by the Board of Selectmen.

Chair Martin presented a letter received by the Board from an attorney that stated the Board could waive land classified in resource protection, but that they must take the request to town meeting for approval. As Mr. Skibitsky had not seen the letter, additional advice will be sought by the Town Manager and presented to the Board at their next regularly scheduled meeting.

c. **Special Town Meeting:** This item will be discussed at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

7. **Town Manager's Report:**

a. **Sewer Main Over Webb River Bridge:** The town must replace the sewer force main that runs along under Webb River Bridge when the State replaces the current structure. The town's sewer contractor, Ted Berry Co., has recommended the engineering firm of Wright Pierce to engineer the job. The DOT has sent schematics to Wright Pierce who will then let the town know about costs. Two grants are available: USDA Grant/Loan combination and a state loan through the clean water state revolving fund.

On a motion from Mr. Dyer and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to allow the Town Manager to apply for both types of funding so that the town can choose the best scenario.

b. **2009/10 Budget Update:** The Town Manager passed out the revenue summary and will have notebooks ready for everyone (including the Finance Committee

members) by March 23, 2009. The notebook will be departmentalized (1-21) and will include the budgets and projected revenues for each department together with supporting documentation.

On the budget meeting list there is a change: No town meeting will be held on March 16, 2009.

- Jay Bernard of Dixfield has expressed a desire to be appointed as the town's Emergency Management Director. The Town Manager will review his application for possible appointment for July 1<sup>st</sup> or before. On a motion from Mr. Dyer and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Jay Bernard as the town's Emergency Management Director for July 1, 2009 or before.
- The Water/Sewer Audits have been completed with many changes made to the general ledger. Some numbers will be deleted in 2010. The Sewer Department held its own and the Water Department is in good shape. The audits will be available in March.
- Kyes Insurance Agency has stated a 5% savings for the coming year. On a motion from Mr. Dyer and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously for the Town Manager to sign the insurance binders.

**Public Comment: None**

## **8. Board Questions and Comments:**

**Selectman Dyer:** Complimented the town crew for doing a great job during the big snow storm.

**Selectman Clarke:** Mrs. Clarke expressed concern about changing the town's status from contractual with the Mexico Sewage District to that of becoming part of the Rumford-Mexico Sewerage District. She felt there were too many "hoops to jump through" thus costing the town more money and time. She felt that as the town had been under contract for the past twenty years, perhaps we should remain contractual. Although joining the district would allow for representation from Dixfield on their board, she felt that is really wasn't worth changing things. The Town Manager will put the possibility of Dixfield joining the district on hold and see what the contract with Mexico will be for the town. He'll report at the next meeting.

## **9. Other Business:**

**10. Executive Session:** On a motion from Mr. Dyer and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted to go into executive session at 6:25 p.m., 1 MRSA, 405(6)(D), Town Manager's evaluation.

The Board came out of executive session at 7:12 p.m.

**11. FYI: So noted.**

12. **Next Meeting:** Monday, March 16, 2009, 5:00 p.m., Town Office

13. **Adjournment:** The Board adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte M. Collins  
Secretary

/cmc

Attachments