

**TOWN OF DIXFIELD
Minutes of Meeting
Board of Selectmen
Wednesday, June 24, 2009
5:00 p.m., Dixfield Town Office**

Board Members Present: Bettina M. Martin, Norine H. Clarke, Raymond E. Carlton, Stephen G. Donahue

Board Members Absent: James L. Desjardins

Administration Present: Eugene R. Skibitsky (Town Manager), Charlotte M. Collins (Minutes), Fire Chief Scott Dennett

Mexico Sewer District: Anne Young, Lisa Gallant, Crystal MacKinnon (Trustees) and their legal council Paul Dumas, P.A.

Citizens:

Press: Eileen Adams, Sun Journal

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

4. **Meeting with Mexico Sewer District:**

Chair Martin thanked the Mexico Sewer District Trustees for attending the meeting and outlined the Town of Dixfield's objectives for discussion:

- a. Come to an agreement for a long-term contract with the sewer district
- b. Come to an agreement regarding the force main project funding

At the last meeting, the Dixfield Selectmen were in agreement for a long-term contract with similar percentages and the Town of Dixfield paying for the force main project. At this point, Attorney Dumas spoke of a point-of-order regarding discussions among both boards in the presence of the press. Ms. Martin stated that the Board of Selectmen could not hold a private meeting. He advised that both towns should have an attorney present due to the nature of discussing a contract, and private discussions could be held under those circumstances.

Attorney Dumas explained again that negotiations should be kept private for the time being as they will affect the towns for years to come. This should not be done on the front page of the newspaper. Dixfield Selectmen disagreed, pointing out an attorney was not necessary at this stage of negotiations, and the meetings should be public. Attorney Dumas felt that the contract needs to be amended.

Dixfield Board Members felt that the Town Manager should consult with our attorney and Maine Municipal Association before proceeding further. Flow issues are also very important.

Town Manager Skibitsky stated that there were many, many questions to be asked, not only the flow measure, but also customer connections, pipe design, costs involved in the pipe maintenance, potential growth factors, etc.

Both boards agreed to potential meeting dates of Monday, July 13, 2009 or Tuesday, July 14, 2009 at 5:00 p.m. at the Ludden Memorial Library

2. **Approval of Minutes:** On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mrs. Clarke, the Board voted unanimously to re-approve the minutes of 5/4/2009, 5/11/2009 and 5/18/2009.

On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of June 10, 2009.

3. **Approval of Warrants and Payroll:** On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to approve the warrants and payroll as listed on the agenda.

6. **Old Business:**

a. **Appointments:**

1. **River Valley Growth Council:** On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Bettina Martin and Montell Kennedy as Dixfield's Representatives to the River Valley Growth Council.

2. **MedCare Ambulance:** On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Daniel Mitchell as Dixfield's Alternate Representative to the MedCare Ambulance Service Board.

3. **Reserve Police Officer:** Town Manager Skibitsky explained that Mr. Grinnell does DARE training at the high school free of charge and is a mentor for the reserve officers. He fills several roles voluntarily. On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Robert Grinnell as a Dixfield Reserve Police Officer.

4. **Planning Board:** Town Manager Skibitsky explained the need for appointing Planning Board members due to the following openings:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| (2) Positions Available | (3) Year Terms of Office |
| (1) Position Available | (2) Year Term of Office |
| (1) Alternate Position | (2) Year Term of Office |

The Board suggested that all previous members whose terms have expired should re-apply for the position. On a motion from Mr. Donahue and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to advertise the openings in the Rumford Falls Times and re-address this issue at the next meeting.

b. **Time Warner Cable:** Town Manager Skibitsky explained that he had spoken with a Time Warner Cable representative about town departments receiving internet services as some other towns do. He and the Board felt that the franchise agreement was fine with this exception. Mr. Skibitsky will continue with the negotiations. He also explained that he had spoken with Dr. Ward of RSU No. 10 and they have no further needs at this time.

c. **Sewer Force Main:** Mr. Skibitsky has received a “boiler plate” agreement from the Maine DOT that outlines the requirements for the sewer force main project. He recommends applying for \$250,000, although the town will probably not need the total amount. The loan will probably affect the sewer rates, and Mr. Skibitsky will do a rough calculation for the next meeting. Mrs. Clarke suggested that the Town Manager contact Woodard & Curran who initially engineered the project in 1980 for possible assistance with the new force main project.

Public Comment: None

5. Department Head Reports:

a. **Police Department:** Chief Pickett is on vacation; Sergeant Howe was not present at the meeting but the Board received the Police Department Report.

b. **Fire Department:** Chief Dennett reported as follows:

- Chief Dennett has composed a draft agreement with the East Dixfield Fire Department for the use of the fire truck in East Dixfield and Wilton.
- Chief Dennett would like the Board to consider establishing a reserve fund for “big ticket” equipment items that the department would not include in their annual budget request, i.e., SCBA equipment. Money will be leftover from this year’s budget (2008/09) that could be carried forward to establish this account.

On a motion from Mr. Donahue and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to recommend the creation of this account at next year’s Annual Town Meeting.

Chief Dennett also commented that the last sentence in the agreement between the Dixfield Fire Department and the East Dixfield Fire Department should be struck as the East Dixfield Fire Department will be responsible for the insurance *cost*, but cannot place the truck on their policy as the Dixfield Fire Department holds the title.

On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Fire Department Agreement (with the above correction) with the East Dixfield Fire Department for the use of its truck.

7. New Business:

a. **Year-End Closing:** On a motion from Mr. Donahue and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to close the Town Office at noon on June 30, 2009 for annual book closing.

b. **Sewer and Water Depts. Checking Accounts:** Mr. Skibitsky explained that the town's auditor has strongly suggested that the Water/Sewer checking accounts be combined to avoid bookkeeping nightmares. The Sewer Department Checking account will remain open. This will begin 7/1/2009 at the beginning of the town's fiscal year. On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to approve the closing of the Water Department Checking Account as of June 30, 2009.

c. **Safety Committee:** The Town Manager explained the need for a good workplace safety program. The committee would be comprised of a representative from each department and two Selectmen. The committee will meet during normal working hours on a monthly or quarterly basis and report to the Town Manager. There will be seven members in all. On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted to approve the formation of a Safety Committee for the Town of Dixfield.

8. Town Manager's Report:

- Passed around a thank you note from a student who received a scholarship
- The town received correspondence from Maine Municipal Association regarding the nominations to its Executive Committee

Public Comment: None

9. Board Questions/Comments:

Mr. Carlton: Mr. Carlton asked if the town had a curfew ordinance. Ms. Martin explained that an ordinance had been placed before the town for approval two years ago at the Annual Town Meeting, and it was voted down. Mr. Carlton feels that a curfew is needed and requested that all Selectmen re-visit the proposed ordinance before next meeting.

Mrs. Clarke: Mrs. Clarke reported that the members of WVAC were very disappointed that the town did not support them at the Annual Town Meeting. The appropriation would have been made from franchise fees and not taxation. The station needs funding and will have to start charging a fee for people to tape meetings and events. She requested that the following year support be given to this valuable cause.

10. **Other Business:** None

11. **Executive Session (1 MRSA 405 (6)(D) Labor Negotiations:** On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to go into executive session a 6:12 p.m. to discuss labor negotiations.

The Board came out of executive session at 7:00 p.m.

12. **FYI:** So noted.

13. **Next Meeting:** MONDAY, July 13, or TUESDAY, July 14, 2009, 5:00 p.m., Library,
with Mexico Sewer District
WEDNESDAY, July 15, 2009, 5:00 p.m., Town Office (Regular Meeting)

14. **Adjournment:** The Board adjourned the meeting after executive session.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte M. Collins
Secretary

/cmc

Attachments