

MINUTES OF MEETING

Town of Dixfield

Board of Selectmen/Assessors/Overseers of the Poor

Wednesday, July 15, 2009

5:00 p.m., Ludden Memorial Library

Board Members Present: Bettina M. Martin (Chair), Raymond E. Carlton, Norine H. Clarke, James L. Desjardins, Stephen G. Donahue

Board Members Absent:

Administration Present: Eugene R. Skibitsky (Town Manager), Chief Richard A. Pickett

Press Present:

Citizens Present: Clayton McKay and Freemont Tibbetts

1. Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. **Approval of Minutes:**

A. Mrs. Clarke moved to approve the minutes of June 24, 2009 with the following sentence deleted on page four:

The WVAC station needs funding and will have to start charging a fee for people to tape meetings and events.

Mr. Desjardins seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

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.

4. **Department Head Reports:** Public Works

a. Foreman Leo Jolin reported as follows:

- The crew is trying to keep up with the mowing and patching; between that and the garbage pickup, it is two days work for one man
- Mowing and weed-whacking takes about a day and a half
- The crew mows McGouldrick, Village Green, Municipal Grounds, Sewer Pump Stations
- Plans are to begin changing culverts and hiring a grader to do the graveled roads and to cut off the high shoulders on some of the roads.
- Work has been done on the Valley Road, Severy Hill Road and Rollins Ridge Road

- Replaced a culvert on the Valley Road; the upper part of the road is still very wet, so smoothing it out will have to wait for the grader to arrive
- Checked the banking by the Thaddeus White Bridge; there has been some erosion. An engineer came and viewed the damage and there are a couple of remedies we can use to repair the bank

Selectman Desjardins rode up on Hall Hill and noticed that the catch basins are plugged. There's a lot of material there; he asked when the last time they were cleaned out. Mr. Jolin stated they were cleaned last week and they have to be done after every storm.

Mr. Skibitsky stated that the one on the corner of North and Pine Streets has been flushed out and cleaned.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. McKay asked if the town had a grader. General response was that we used to have one, but no longer.

5. Old Business:

a. Planning Board Appointments: Mr. Skibitsky stated that the town has advertised for the positions, and Mr. Hugh Daley has come forward and would like to be on it. He also said that he has contacted Chair Craig Nash and asked him to let the former members know (whose terms have expired) to contact the Town Manager if they would like to remain on the board. Mr. Skibitsky will also try to find citizens who might like to serve and report at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

Tabled until next meeting.

b. Sewer Force Main Project – Effect on Sewer Rates: Town Manager Skibitsky explained the handout that outlines a mortgage calculator on the loan of \$150,000 to \$250,000, 30-year loan and interest rate of 3.5%. A 30-year loan on \$150,000 will be \$673.57 monthly and \$1,122.61 on \$250,000. So the annual payments will range from \$8,000 to \$13,000 a year. The affect on the customers will an annual increase of \$14.28 to \$23.80 per user.

The sewer budget has included a projected figure of about \$26,000; \$22,000 to repay the town and approximately \$4,000 on a computer system upgrade. We also have our engineering costs of \$16,000 to \$18,000. If we pay the costs of engineering and do not pay the town back until next year, we'll have a much better idea of the cost of the loan.

Selectman Martin asked if the cost of the debt service will increase now that the former loans have been paid, or will they stay about the same. The sewer department has continued to collect the debt service charge even though an old loan has been paid. It was approved to continue so that the department could reimburse the town for money owed. She thinks it was a charge of \$12.50 per quarter.

Town Manager Skibitsky also suggested that the Board look at the costs of installation of new pipes in the operation/maintenance portion of the budget in case replacements need to be done over the next fifteen years. This will be discussed further at a future meeting.

Mr. McKay questioned the Board concerning Dixfield's percentage in the total project. Mr. Skibitsky explained that Mexico bears a portion and that negotiating is on-going at this time. Dixfield may not be responsible for the total cost of the projected \$250,000 project. The Maine DOT would like the towns to come to some kind of agreement by August 4, 2009.

Mr. McKay also asked if grants had been pursued for the project as opposed to bonding. Mr. Skibitsky said that grant funding for this type of project are few and far between and that the State will go forth with the Route 2 project which includes the Webb River Bridge. The towns are responsible for any utility work. Mr. Skibitsky further stated that there is funding from two sources: USDA Rural Development and the bond bank. The town is much closer to receiving the funding from rural development than the bond bank. They will lend us the money to get the project done.

c. AVCOG Representative: Selectman James L. Desjardins offered to serve as the town's representative.

d. CEO Response Letter (Septic Problem): Mr. Skibitsky explained the septic problem that has developed over a number of years. A landowner who borders another home has a septic system located on his neighbor's land that is draining and malfunctioning. A letter has been received from Jennifer Kreckle, PA addressing the homeowner's concerns in remedying the problem immediately. Health concerns are now at play.

Mr. Skibitsky has visited the situation and explained that the town must comply in declaring the situation a nuisance before proceeding. The Board must vote to sign the nuisance form, although it does not obligate us to fix the problem. This gives the homeowner ten (10) days in which to fix the problem or apply for an extension. CEO Beaumier is working with their mortgage company in regards to financing a new septic system. The form will then go to Chief Pickett who must deliver it to the homeowner.

On a motion from Mr. Donahue and a second from Mr. Desjardins, the Board voted unanimously to approve and sign the document.

6. **New Business:**

a. RSU #10 – 2009/10 Assessment: RSU #10 is projecting a \$22,925.40 carry-over for Dixfield. The school's 2009/10 assessment increased by \$56,580.30. The county tax is a \$7,000 increase. Between the two the net increase will be \$41,000, if we approve using the carry over money this fiscal year. We should be okay, but will speak with the Assessor for the final numbers.

Mr. Desjardins moved to approve the \$22,000 carry-over by the school department be applied to this fiscal year. Mr. Carlton seconded the motion that unanimously passed.

b. Fire Department Carry-Over: The Town Manager explained that the library has requested \$1,952.00 be carried-over for the new fiscal year for computer needs. The Fire Department has requested \$7,500 for capital equipment needs.

Ms. Martin requested the final year-end reports, and Mr. Skibitsky stated that they will be ready for the next Selectmen's meeting after the final warrant and deposit for FY2009 has been completed. All figures, however, will be subject to the auditor's adjustments.

On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimous to carry-forward the following figures to the FY2009/10 budget:

Fire Department:	\$7,500
Ludden Library	\$1,952
Police Department	\$11,630

c. Ted Berry Co., Inc. Contract: The Town Manager explained that this company does the town's catch basin cleaning as well as maintenance on the sewer lines. He also pointed out that we need a per unit cost for catch basin cleaning so that only those that need cleaning will be done. After further discussion, Mr. Desjardins moved to approve the contract with the option of cleaning catch basins as only needed. Mr. Carlton seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

d. Police Grant: Chief Pickett explained the process of applying for a stimulus grant that would cover new equipment. The department has applied for training, sites for rifles and tasers. Chief Pickett explained the use of tasers, size of the equipment and the responsibility of each officer for the equipment. The tasers will also have audio and visual equipment installed on them.

On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mrs. Clarke, the Board voted as follows to approve receiving grants funds for the Dixfield Police Department:

Ms. Martin	Yea
Mrs. Clarke	Yea
Mr. Desjardins	Yea
Mr. Carlton	Nay
Mr. Donahue	Yea

7. Town Manager's Report:

- MMA would like the Board to vote for the Vice President, Nominating Committee, Directors, etc. The deadline is in August. Tabled for next meeting.
- Ethel Kelley Award Nominees are also being sought. The Town Manager explained the criteria. Tabled until next meeting.

- Chairman Nash of the Planning Board handed in to the Town Manager numerous ordinances that they were asked to go over. The Planning Board has not reviewed them and decided to turn them back to the Board of Selectmen.
- There will be a disaster declaration declared very soon for this area. Dixfield came through all the rain with little or no damage compared with surrounding towns.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. McKay requested that the Board make available more items on the agenda available for public comment.

8. Board Questions/Comments:

- Desjardins: Mr. Desjardins asked if the town is reimbursed for plowing some of the State roads, and Mr. Skibitsky stated that we are reimbursed. Under the Public Works Budget there is a revenue line for Urban Rural Initiative funds. It is about \$30,000 - \$33,000 per year.

9. Other Business:

10. Executive Session:

a. Personnel Matters: On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second by Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to enter into executive session under MRSA 405 to discuss a personnel matter. Chief Pickett was asked to attend.

The Chairman declared the Selectmen to be out of executive session at 6:53 p.m.

b. Poverty Abatement: On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to enter into executive session at 6:55 p.m. under 36 MRSA §5841(2) to discuss an abatement.

The Chairman declared the Selectmen to be out of executive session at 7:00 p.m. On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to deny the abatement.

The Chairman declared a 10-minute break.

c. Labor Negotiations: On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to go into executive session at 7:12 p.m. to discuss labor negotiations.

The Chairman declared the Selectmen out of executive session at 7:52 p.m. No action taken.

d. Town Manager's Quarterly Evaluation: On a motion from Mr. Donahue and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to enter into executive session at 7:53 p.m. under 1 MRSA §405 for a quarterly evaluation of the Town Manager.

The Chairman declared the Selectmen out of executive session at 8:55 p.m. No action taken.

11. FYI: So noted.

12. Dumas Letter: The Board discussed a letter from Mr. Dumas, the lawyer for the Mexico Sewer District Trustees. The Board authorized the Town Manager to respond to Mr. Dumas and set up a meeting for July, 30, 2009.

13: Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 29, 2009, 5:00 p.m., Town Office

14. Adjournment: On a motion by Mr. Donahue and a second from Mr. Carlton the Board voted unanimously to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte M. Collins
Secretary/Deputy Treasurer

/cmc

Attachments