

## **MINUTES OF MEETING**

Town of Dixfield

Board of Selectmen/Assessors/Overseers of the Poor

Monday, December 14, 2009

5:00 p.m., Town Office

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

**Board Members Absent:**

**Administration Present:** Eugene R. Skibitsky (Town Manager), Charlotte M. Collins (Minutes), David Phair (Public Works), Jim White (Water Dept.)

**Press Present:** Eileen Adams (Sun Journal)

**Citizens Present:** Freemont Tibbetts, Danny McKay, Leo Jolin, Randy Robbins, John Conant

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

2. **Approval of Minutes:**

a. On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of 11/23/09.

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:**

a. **Public Works – David Phair:** Mr. Phair reported work accomplished by the Public Works Department as follows:

- Training is continuing
- Phil Curtis of the Maine DOT was contacted to give advice regarding the repairs to Brian Street and Severy Hill; he also taught about salt priorities that the state follows during snowstorms
- Storm work continues due to the last two snowstorms
- The hockey rink is nearly ready to use
- Mr. Phair has taken his CDL written test
- The crew has been experimenting loading snow into the new truck; worked out well

- Borrowed the school's Kabota snow blower for blowing snow directly into the trucks for disposal to see how well it worked. It was much faster, even though the school's blower is a rear attachment.

b. **Water Department – Jim White:** Mr. White reported the following regarding the Water Department:

- The UPS was replaced at the Town Garage for the SCADA system
- Replaced the inline/online ph probe at the plant and is now back on line
- The daily water sample location has been changed from the Town Garage to Gene Ellis' store as it is more representative of the town; the alternate site is the Town Garage
- All hydrants have been winterized

1. **SCADA Upgrade:** Randy Robbins (who was present at the meeting) has helped out without charge regarding the computer system for the water/sewer departments. Mr. White thanked him for helping out both Mexico and Dixfield when needed.

The Town Manager explained that a new system was put on hold due to lack of funds. However, the money will be available this year from both departments. The bridge project that involves the sewer force main has been delayed for about a year and a half; this is the time to upgrade the equipment.

The computer system we now have was installed in 1998. Should it crash, there will be no repairing it as the computer program is outdated. The plant also needs to be updated. The cost of the project is \$11,740 and will be split between the departments. There is an option to buy a new computer monitor. Mrs. Clarke offered an older monitor that she has and that has seen very little use.

On a motion from Mr. Donahue and a second from Mr. Desjardins, the Board voted unanimously to approve Mr. White's recommendation to sole source purchase the new computer/software system for the Water/Sewer SCADA System from Environmental Instrument Services, Inc.

**Public Comment: None**

## 5. **Old Business:**

a. **Water and Sewer Departments' Budgets:** The Town Manager gave an overview of both budgets. The Water Department Budget has only increased by approximately \$700, and the Sewer Department Budget is about \$7,000 less. Each budget allows for some engineering work to be done if needed.

The Water Department will be investing in new meters and hydrants, programming for Newton Brook well site, valve work on North and Pine Streets and transmission line between the streets. Mr. Skibitsky met with the Water Advisory Committee (which did not have a quorum for the meeting) and reviewed the budgets with the three members who approved of the budget.

The Sewer Department will experience a decrease in revenues due to Irving Forest Products using much less water in its operations. This, in turn, affects the sewer charges. At year-end 2010, the department should be able to reimburse the town \$24,639.

Ms. Martin had concerns regarding the discrepancy in the line items that the Administrative Assistant would be paid for 2010. The hours for this position should be split three ways: Water Department, Sewer Department and Public Works. An update regarding the Public Works Safety Program is also requested. The Town Manager suggested approving the budgets, and he will research the discrepancy in wages. If there is an error, an amended budget can be approved at the next regular meeting.

On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board unanimously approved the 2010 Water Department and Sewer Department budgets.

**b. Sidewalk Plow Presentation:** Public Works Foreman David Phair presented the Board with the research he had done regarding the purchase of a new or used snow plow for the Public Works Department.

Mr. Phair stated that the old plow was using approximately two gallons of oil each time it was needed, thus spewing a great deal of oil smoke and fumes into the air. The parts were getting harder to find, and it was no longer a cost effective piece of equipment.

A lengthy discussion followed regarding the various options presented to the Board with Mr. Phair explaining the pros and cons of each. Mrs. Clarke had several questions regarding the versatility of the plow in removing snow from some of our sidewalks that also had telephone poles imbedded in them. Mr. Phair assured her that shoveling the trouble spots would be a measure that could be taken if needed.

On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted to approve the purchase of the Kabota snowblower/plow, with attachments, as follows:

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

The Town Manager stated that there is a \$58,921.72 balance in the Public Works Equipment Reserve. The sidewalk plow will cost \$58,412; the resale money from the old plow will be placed back in the reserve account after it's sold.

**c. Patriot Renewables:** The Town Manager explained the email/commitment letter from Mr. Todd Presson of Patriot Renewables that states their agreement to pay for Phase A (Advise Client on Approaches to Maximize Benefit of the TIF) of the Eaton Peabody proposal. The analysis will include:

- Introductory session TIFs and Maine Law
- Match client needs and goals to available TIF program options, including tax shift analysis
- Review the purpose and use of credit enhancements and tangible benefit programs

- Define geographic boundaries for the TIF district to maximize benefits
- Hold appropriate public meetings to assist the community in the decision-making process.

Selectman Martin felt that a more professional letter needs to be sent to town officials on Patriot Renewables letterhead and signed by them before the town can commit to the proposal.

The Town Manager stated he requested the 10,000 fee to be “upfronted” from Patriots Renewables to fund the Eaton Peabody proposal and be placed in a special revenue account until such time the town is billed for payment. He also suggested that he will contact Matthew Eddy of Eaton Peabody Consulting Group so that he can attend the Selectmen’s Meeting of January 11, 2010 and answer any questions the Board may have. All Board members agreed, and the Town Manager will request the follow-up letter from Patriots Renewables.

## 6. **New Business:**

a. **FYI: Update from CEO:** Calvin Beaumier is working with AVCOG on map overlays that will outline the town’s floodplain zones, shoreland zoning, etc. There are two openings on the town’s Planning Board. Hugh Daley resigned recently due to other commitments and is unable to attend meetings. The Town Manager will be looking for new candidates to fill the positions.

b. **Online Assessing Information:** The town received a letter from John O’Donnell of O’Donnell and Associates with a proposal to place the assessing file information online for public review. It will cost \$750 for the remainder of our fiscal year. The Town Manager will include this as a budget item.

## 7. **Town Manager’s Report:**

- **Packard Road:** Contact was made with Mr. Jay Twitchell regarding the easement needed for the right-of-way over his land to plow Packard Road. Mr. Twitchell indicated that he was very willing to sign the easement; the Town Manager is awaiting its return.
- **5-7 Year Infrastructure Plan:** The Town Manager will be meeting with the Road Committee, Water/Sewer Departments and Public Works Department to look at the projects that are needed in the infrastructure of the town over the next 5-7 years. A plan will be developed that will include the costs and payment options. On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to form an Infrastructure Committee that will meet on Friday, January 8, 2010, at 8:00 a.m. in the morning at the Town Office.
- **Revenues:** The Town Manager reviewed the expenditures and revenues for the six-month period and found us to be in line with the budget. He also checked online with Maine Revenue Services and found that the projected amount of \$370,000 from Revenue Sharing is well within our budget projected figure of \$365,000.
- **Poverty Abatement Appeal:** The Town has been requested to meet with the Oxford County Commissioners to discuss a poverty abatement appeal due to the denial of a

poverty abatement request by the Dixfield Board of Assessors. The Town Manager will attend the meeting that is scheduled for December 17, 2009 at 1:00 p.m.

- **Handicapped Seating:** Mr. Tom Buotte requested that a small space be redesigned at the Harlow Park seating (bleachers) area. He felt that a small change in design would allow for easier accessibility. This will be included in the new budget requests.
- **New Furnace for Town Office:** The Town Manager has scheduled Monday, January 21, 2010 (Martin Luther King Day) as the day to replace the Town Office boiler as all offices are closed.

**Public Comment: None**

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

**Mr. Donahue:** Mr. Donahue asked when the Fire Department doors will be finished. The Town Manager said that by Christmas time they should be done.

**Mr. Carlton:** Mr. Carlton asked if Officer Charles Beale was still working for the town. The Town Manager reported he has not been used as a reserve police officer, and will double-check with the Chief.

**Mr. Desjardins:** Mr. Desjardins would like a copy of any incidents of taser use.

**Mrs. Clarke:** Mrs. Clarke will be holding a Food Pantry Drive in the parking lot of the Log Cabin Craftworks on Saturday, December 19, 2009. Those who donate food or \$5.00 to the food bank will be awarded a free t-shirt.

9. **Next Meeting:** At the Town Manager's request the Board voted unanimously to cancel their meeting of December 28, 2009 and hold a regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, January 11, 2009, at 5:00 p.m. at the Dixfield Town Office. Mr. Donahue moved, seconded by Mr. Desjardins.

10. **Executive Session:** None

11. **FYI:** So Noted.

12. **Next Meeting:** See above.

13. **Adjournment:** On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Desjardins, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte M. Collins  
Secretary/Deputy Treasurer

/cmc

Attachments