

MINUTES OF MEETING

Town of Dixfield

Board of Selectmen/Assessors/Overseers of the Poor

Monday, February 8, 2010

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), Jim White (Water Dept.), David Phair (PWD)

Press Present: Eileen Adams (Sun Journal)

Citizens Present: Dan McKay, Fremont Tibbetts, Another Citizen

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

2. **Approval of Minutes:** On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes of January 25, 2010.

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. Also unanimously approved (not listed on the agenda) were Utility Department Warrants #28, #29 and #1.

4. **Department Head Reports:**

a. **Water Department (Jim White):** Mr. White reported as follows:

- The CL17 approved for purchase has been installed and is working very well
- The SCADA Phase I update is now in place with the new computer installed; all updates have been installed
- Phase II (plant upgrade) will be finished on or about the 15th of February; it will take four days to complete
- A hydrant was broken at McGouldrick Park skating rink; the Water Department replaced the parts

b. **Public Works Dept. (David Phair):** Mr. Phair reported as follows:

- Bids for the old Holder snowplow will be opened later in the meeting. Mr. Phair requested that the money received from the winning bid be placed in a holding account to repair the town's Ford F550. Chair Martin explained that any money

received through a bid process must be placed in the Public Works budgeted revenue account. It can possibly be used if the amount is raised and appropriated for the Public Works Equipment Reserve Account at the annual town meeting in the spring.

- Permission was sought to inventory the trees at Greenwood Cemetery for possible harvesting. Mr. Phair explained that many of the trees are now at their peak in value and will only deteriorate in the future, possibly causing damage to surrounding properties. Adjoining property owners are also willing to donate their trees to the harvest for the town’s benefit if and when approval is given to move forward.

After discussion by the Board, Mrs. Clarke suggested that a study be made of the trees, their value, listing those that are dangerous and those that threaten power lines. On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted as follows to grant the study of the trees:

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

- Many of the violations listed on the Bureau of Labor Standards Audit have been addressed; the crew is presently working on the chemical inventory
- The town’s bench grinder is well over 20 years old and has run its course; Craig Woods has obtained a quote for replacement at \$50-75.00; they will be ordering a new replacement
- The town ordered 500 tons of salt and has approximately 200 tons left; the crew has been called out to plow 14 times on a winter average of 24-25 storms
- The Town Manager and Public Works Foreman have created a Weekly Work Schedule that is working well. They meet with the town crew on Friday mornings and plan for the new week—with some jobs carried over to the next week.
- The crew will be painting the Post Office in the spring when ventilation is possible (as requested by the Post Master)
- The Town Office will be painted shortly by the crew; the only expense will be the cost of the paint

Public Comment: None

5. Old Business:

a. **Safety Program Update:** The Town Manager updated the Board regarding the new Safety Program instituted at the Public Works Department. Mrs. Brann reported that the crew had undergone a refresher course in fire extinguishers on town vehicles and that other training will be necessary. She will also monitor all departments so that the town remains in compliance with state regulations. Mr. White added that the Water Department will also undergo a safety standards inspection.

Mr. Desjardins requested that safety program reports be made available to the Board of Selectmen at the end of each quarter.

b. **Sidewalk Plow Bids:** Chair Martin opened the bids, reporting as follows:

Warren Smith, Livermore Falls	\$3,122.00 (Holder and Parts)
Noyes Sand & Gravel (David Noyes), Dixfield	3,450.00

On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to accept the highest bid: Noyes Sand & Gravel for \$3,450

c. **Tax Acquired Property (see attachment):** After concerns from Mr. Desjardins that all properties be treated equally, Town Manager Skibitsky explained that each property should be analyzed individually as there are varied circumstances surrounding these properties such as mortgages, renters, old payment agreements, etc. He also explained the guidance he had received from Maine Municipal Association in the handling of tax acquired properties.

A list will be compiled of all properties the Board chooses to bid out for taxes owed; outstanding water and sewer balances will also be included on the list.

Accounts **#106 and 324** have old payment agreements which must be honored.

#729: On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#1206: On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to table the disposition of this property until the next regular Selectmen's Meeting.

#993: On a motion from Mr. Donahue and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#894: On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to table the disposition of this property until the next regular Selectmen's Meeting.

#737: On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Desjardins, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#590: On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Desjardins, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#106: On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to table the disposition of this property until such time as the mortgage company has resolved its problems. This property also has an old payment agreement which must be honored.

On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to accept payments in full (through June 30, 2010) for any taxes, interest and costs, including Water and Sewer outstanding balances, through 4:00 p.m. on the day before bids are to be opened at a regular Board of Selectmen's Meeting.

#966: On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mrs. Clarke, the Board voted as follows to retain this property for the town:

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

#685: On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to table the disposition of this property until the next regular Selectmen's Meeting.

#324: On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mrs. Clarke, the Board voted unanimously to honor the old payment agreement with the property owner.

#1051: On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Desjardins, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#25: On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#1415: On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#682: On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#631: On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Desjardins, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#1213: On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#415: On a motion from Mr. Donahue and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#317: On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#592: On a motion from Mr. Donahue and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#1473: On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#632: On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to table the disposition of this property until the next regular Selectmen's Meeting.

#1413: On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

#1456: On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to place this property out for bid.

The Town Manager will supply the Board with an updated list of the tax acquired properties at their next regular meeting.

d. Water Department Loan Refinancing: The Town Manager explained to the Board the various ways in which the town could save money by refinancing the Water Department Loans that total approximately 1.5 million dollars. We currently are paying interest rates of 4.75% and 4.85% on two different loans.

1. Farmers Home: this option is not available
2. Bangor Savings Bank or Androscoggin Saving Bank: will not loan for the length of time the town needs
3. Our own bond sale through Gorham Savings Bank, with costs and fees, would net about a \$48,000 savings
4. MMA Bond Bank would offer an approximate rate of 3.27% with a savings of \$213,000 over 17 years. This method has some risk, however.

Mr. Desjardins suggested that we wait a while longer and look at the projections in the fall. Tabled.

6. **New Business:**

a. Budget Cuts: The Town Manager presented a list of proposed budget cuts in all departments that would help soften the revenue sharing cuts that have been forecast by the State. Ms. Martin questioned why the DARE Program was one of the items in the Police Department Budget that was earmarked to be cut.

b. Hazard mitigation Plan Updates: The town needs to identify and include any problem areas that might cause trouble during times of flooding, ice storms, heavy rains/snow, etc. in its mitigation plan. This will allow for the possibility of federal funding in the future.

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

a. MMA Insurance: The application has been submitted to MMA so that a comparison can be made with Kyes Insurance.

b. **Police Department Radio Grant:** The Chief has submitted a grant to Homeland Security Administration for the replacement of radios that do not meet acceptable standards.

c. **Union Contract:** Mr. Carl Guinard, representative of the Teamsters Local No. 340, will meet with the Town Manager and Public Works Foreman on March 1, 2010 to discuss the Public Works Labor Contract. Mr. Skibitsky will update the Board at a later meeting.

d. **Municipal Parks & Garage Agreements with RSU No. 10:** Agreements with RSU No. 10 to use municipal parks and its rental space at the town garage will expire on June 30, 2010. The Town Manager and Public Works Foreman will meet with Dr. Ward and Kenney Robbins on March 24, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. and report to the Board at a later date.

e. **Route 2 Bridge Project:** The State DOT will begin the Webb River Bridge project in October of this year. If the money becomes available, the project may go out to bid sooner.

Chair Martin reported that an agreement with the Rumford/Mexico Sewer District is nearly complete. A meeting has been scheduled for February 23, 2010 with final approval expected by May.

- The Town received a letter from Susan Collins updating her position on various state and federal issues
- Received the annual report from the Oxford County Sheriff's Department
- The Roads Committee is looking at new "roads" software that could be available to the town through a grant from AVCOG for \$1,200; the Town Manager will report to the Board at a later date
- Received an email from Mia Percell listing attendees at the recent windmill debate; the Town Manager added some names for her
- The scheduled windmill TIF meeting will be held at the library and not at the high school as previously stated
- Received an email from the State Planning Office offering assistance in planning ordinances for wind power in towns throughout the state

Planning Board Positions: Two Planning Board positions need to be filled; Dan Mitchell and Randy Hotham have offered to serve. On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Dan Mitchell and Mr. Hotham to fill vacancies caused by the verbal resignations of Terri Mitchell and Hugh Daley.

- MMA is offering a vision plan that will be solely paid by employees. It helps pay for exams, glasses, etc. The Town Manager requested that the Board approve the benefit for Dixfield employees that are in the MMEHT plan. On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board approved offering the Vision Plan from MMEHT to town employees currently enrolled with the trust.

- Mr. Len Greany has invited the area Town Managers, Selectmen, etc. to attend the WVAC TV budget meetings.

Public Comment: None

8. Board Questions/Comments:

Selectman Desjardins: asked that the Water and Sewer billing return address be changed to reflect the town's mailbox of 808 and not the street address.

9. Executive Session: 1 MRSA, §405 Personnel Matters; Town Manager Contract

On a motion from Mr. Donahue and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted to enter into executive session at 7:25 p.m. to discuss the Town Manager's contract renewal.

The Board came out of executive session at 8:00 p.m.

On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to renew Mr. Skibitsky's contract for one year.

10. FYI: So Noted.

11. Next Meeting: Monday, February 22, 2010, 5:00 p.m., Town Office; TIF presentation follows the meeting at Ludden Memorial Library.

12. Adjournment: The Board adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte M. Collins
Secretary/Deputy Treasurer

/cmc

Attachments