

MINUTES OF MEETING

Town of Dixfield

Board of Selectmen/Assessors/Overseers of the Poor

Monday, March 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), David Phair (Public Works), Jim White (Water Dept.)

Press Present: Eileen Adams (Sun Journal) and WVAC

Citizens Present: Fremont Tibbetts, Danny McKay, Dickie Frost, Michael Hebert and others

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 February 22, 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.
4. **Department Head Reports:**
 - a. **Water Department - Jim White:**
 - Phase II of the SCADA upgrade is nearly 90% complete and everything looks good
 - An audio alarm was needed at the water plant; one was installed for \$200 with free installation charges
 - There are two valves that are being quite problematic and will need replacing in the near future for approximately \$5,000 each. Hopefully, they will last until the new year's budget
 - Selectman Desjardins requested that Mr. White inspect the water shut-off located in the town's right-of-way at the end of Sugarloaf Avenue. The valve is set too high and may be damaged by plowing

b. Public Works Department - David Phair:

- The timber survey at Greenwood Cemetery has been completed with an addendum; staff from Irving Forest Products volunteered to do the job without compensation. Thank you notes have been sent recognizing their efforts to help benefit the community.
- Mr. Noyes has paid for the Holder snowplow and removed it from the town garage.
- An archival storage area for old town records that need to be saved has been completed by the town crew on the third floor of the garage. If anyone would care to see it, please contact the Town Office for an appointment.
- The 2009/10 snow budget is showing a considerable savings of \$16,000 in the salt/sand line.
- The hazardous chemicals on the third floor of the town garage have been removed at no cost to the town.
- An evacuation policy is being written for the town garage so that the town is in compliance with state law as well as with the development of training records.
- The skating rinks are now closed to the public and locked.
- The two air packs that were discovered at the town garage were to be given to Peru Fire Chief Bill Hussey. However, they are not up to today's standards, so Mr. Hussey has volunteered to dispose of them to foreign countries that could use them. On a motion from Mr. Donahue and a second from Mr. Desjardins, the Board voted unanimously to give the packs to Peru Fire Chief Hussey for disposal.
- Approximately 500' of welding wire has been found at the town garage. After a short discussion regarding prices, it was unanimously approved by the Board to sell the wire to Bancroft for \$3/ft. on a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Donahue.
- Selectman Clarke suggested that the trees along the cemetery fence lines be looked at, perhaps by CEO Calvin Beaumier, as they appear to be rotting and dangerous to citizens; the stones as well could be damaged.

Public Comment: None

5. Old Business:

a. MDOT Radar Trailer: Dixfield has been selected as one of the towns to use the State's radar trailer for traffic control beginning May 10, 2010 for a two-week period.

b. Smoking Policy: On a motion by Mr. Donahue and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to approve the amended Smoking Policy for the Town of Dixfield.

c. Surplus Property Policy: The Board requested that a list be presented to the Board of Selectmen before any surplus property is sold from any department. With this addition to the policy, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to approve the Surplus Property Policy on a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Desjardins.

d. Tax Acquired Properties: The Town Manager updated the Board regarding payment of back taxes on the tax acquired properties. The property owner of 37 Coolidge Road has been laid off since last January and is in the process of seeking disability status. A hearing is scheduled for the fall of this year and all taxes due will be paid at that time.

After a short discussion, Selectman Desjardins requested a letter from the owner's attorney stating the facts regarding the above case. This letter is to be received by the town before the next Selectmen's meeting (March 22, 2010). On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to place this property "on hold" until a letter is received from the attorney.

The property owner of 43 Main Street requested an additional amount of time to pay the town all taxes due as an expected check has not been received yet to cover the costs. On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to allow the additional time (by March 22, 2010) to pay all taxes due.

Town Manager Skibitsky passed around three Quit Claim Deeds for the Board's signatures as all taxes have been paid on the properties. Discharges on liens will be forthcoming within the next week.

e. Sewer Contract: Selectmen Martin and Clarke held their final meeting with the Mexico Sewer District Board of Directors and approved wording changes to the contract. No substantive changes were made. The town will bear 100% responsibility of the sewer main to the point of "gravity feed" when it will become 50% Mexico's responsibility and 50% Dixfield's.

On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agreement with the Mexico Sewer District; Selectman Desjardins voted affirmatively although with reservations.

6. **New Business:**

a. Draft RSU #10 Municipal Garage Lease: The Town Manager explained that the current lease will expire on June 30, 2010 and the Parks Agreement will expire in May. Changes include:

- Change name from SAD No.21 to RSU No. 10 through lease/agreements and coordinate expiration dates
- Increase the town garage lease from \$12,000 to \$15,000
- RSU No. 10 to pay ½ of utilities (heat, lights, water, sewer)
- Remove "time is of the essence"
- Town is responsible for capital except costs agreed to mutually

On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to approve the town garage lease between the Town of Dixfield and R.S.U. No. 10.

b. Draft RSU #10 Municipal Parks Agreement:

- S.A.D. No. 21 changed to RSU No. 10
- Expiration date will be 6/30/2015
- RSU No. 10 responsible for clean-up, mowing

- Still share in water costs
- The town will be responsible for capital costs

On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Municipal Parks Agreement between RSU No. 10 and the Town of Dixfield with the noted changes.

c. New Page Resolution: Ronald Hemingway, Secretary of the Union (New Page), presented a Resolution representing New Page regarding the paper industry's decline and its efforts to combat the problem. In addition to New Page Corporation, Appleton Coated LLC, Sappi Fine Paper North America and the United Steelworkers Union are also involved with the fight for a fair market share. Problems have arisen that include the following:

- China and Indonesia are causing illegal "dumping" of paper and artificial subsidies in the United States and Europe (selling paper below costs to produce it in order to gain control of the market share)
- They have terrible human rights problems
- Their environmental regulations are well below standards in the field
- Their employees earn approximately \$113.00 a month

New Page employs people from the surrounding river valley. Tariffs are needed to combat this growing threat and allowing a true competitive market to emerge. Boards of Selectmen in the towns of Rumford and Mexico have both endorsed the resolution. It is non-partisan and will be taken to the Maine State Legislature and the U.S. Congress.

On a motion from Mr. Carlton and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to endorse the resolution.

d. Michael Hebert – Road Issues: Mr. Michael Hebert of 6 Chapel Road, Dixfield, was present to address the Board of Selectmen with some of the following issues:

- The roads were graded too late in the fall; Chapel Road was not done
- No crown to the road was made as well as no ditching
- There was over 6" of wet, heavy snow on the Common Road and no plowing done
- We pay the Police Department for 24/7 coverage, yet no officer patrols the Common Road
- There has been excessive plowing on Sunday, but none on a Monday
- The crew should be doing road maintenance, not building roads
- Culverts are plugged
- Roads are washing out
- Trees need to be trimmed
- Where did the funds come from to pay the Road Foreman's salary

These were some of the issues presented to the Board. Mr. Hebert requested that before the next Town Meeting, the warrant should be made available two weeks in advance.

7. Town Manager's Report:

- Maine Municipal Association and United Insurance are reviewing our current insurance policies so that a choice can be made
- Revenue Sharing figures are falling in line with those that were projected; next year the town is projected to lose an additional \$40,000
- Wright Pierce Engineers contacted the Town Manager regarding the Webb River Bridge project seeking approval of an amendment to the contract. On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Carlton, the Board voted unanimously to approve the amendment.
- Linda Walbridge of the Western Maine Economic Development Council offered another type of bond that the town can apply for. The Town Manager stated that the town is approved for USDA funding.
- The Water and Sewer Departments' audit has been completed with a draft soon to follow.
- The Board of Selectmen received a petition to change the Annual Town Meeting from the last Thursday night in May to any Saturday in June at 10:00 a.m. at Dirigo High School. This item was tabled for the next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen

Public Comment: None

8. Board Questions/Comments: None

9. Executive Session: On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to enter into executive session to discuss labor negotiations (1 MRSA §405(6)(D) at 6:35 p.m.

The Board came out of executive session at 7:50 p.m.

10. FYI: So Noted.

11. Next Meeting: March 22, 2010, 5:00 p.m., Ludden Memorial Library

12. Adjournment: On a motion from Mr. Desjardins and a second from Mr. Donahue, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Charlotte M. Collins
Secretary/Deputy Treasurer
/cmc
Attachments