

TOWN OF DIXFIELD
Minutes of Meeting
Board of Selectmen
Monday, May 13, 2013
5:00 p.m. Ludden Memorial Library

Board Members Present: Malcolm M. Gill, Scott W. Belskis, Hart L. Daley and Norine H. Clarke, Robert V. Withrow

Board Members Absent:

Administration Present: Eugene Skibitsky (Town Manager), Linda Pagels-Wentworth (New Town Manager), Samantha Hill (Secretary), David Phair, Craig Woods, James White, Chief Pickett

Citizens Present: Dan McKay, Freemont Tibbetts, Walter Newman, Dr. Tom Ward, Todd Blodgett, Jon Holmes, Edward Ellis, Bernard Gielslider

Press: SunJournal, WVAC, Rumford Falls Times

1. Call Meeting to Order: Chairman Gill called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Public Hearing: Special Amusement Permit- American Legion Post #100- Mr. Ellis was on hand to answer any questions. He asked the Board members if the Legion would need to get a Permit for their Cribbage night as well and Mr. Skibitsky informed him that yes he would. No other comments were made.

School Withdrawal Referenda- Members from the Withdrawal Committee were on hand to answer questions. Mr. Withrow recapped that the Committee signed an agreement with the RSU 10 Board that will help to ease the concerns of the Dixfield Residents. Mr. Holmes stated that it is not what the committee originally tried to accomplish but since Dixfield cannot stand alone then this is the best agreement that could be made. Mr. Blodgett wanted to express to the residents that if in the future the Withdrawal process is attempted again, then laws at the State level will need to be addressed so that smaller towns can afford to withdraw. Dr. Ward wanted to stress that the towns with less than 25 students enrolled in the RSU could potentially pay upwards of \$9,000-\$14,000 in tuition per student if they were to withdraw. This is something that the smaller surrounding towns need to keep in mind.

Straw Vote-This will be an informative Referenda for the Board of Selectman to see if the Town would like to move towards determining the budget by secret ballot. No comments were made.

3. Approval of Minutes: Mr. Gill asked that wording be changed on the May 1, 2013 minutes. That was the only change that needed to be made; all other minutes were approved as read.

4. Approval of Warrants and Payroll: No discrepancies were noted and the warrants and payroll were accepted by Chairman Gill.

5. Public Comment: Mr. McKay-

- Wanted to welcome Linda Pagels-Wentworth as the new Town Manager.
- Mr. McKay asked that the Board revisit the idea of changing the voter hours for June 11, 2013 back to 9 a.m.-8 p.m. versus the 9 a.m.-6 a.m. that was approved at the last Selectman's meeting. He feels that he does not stand alone in the fact that it will be too hard for voters to make it into town.
- Mr. McKay wanted to know why the Board was considering having a Special Town Meeting in July when there is never a good turnout. Would like to see the Referenda put on the June Ballot.

6. Department Head Reports:

a. Water Dept. - Jim White:

- Water Main project has a projected start date of June 10th, have 98% of the materials needed and if anyone is interested in seeing the process, Tuesday is the best day to come watch.
- Mr. White informed the Board that the Department received a grant from the State so that they can replace old oil tanks at resident's homes at no cost to them. They have sent out 14 letters at this time.
- The Mill & Fill Project start date is projected for July.
- Water main flushes have been completed and went well.
- Made trip to the scrap metal yard with old fire hydrants. They currently have about \$1800 in the scrap metal for the year.
- Mr. White offered to give a tour of the plant to Mrs. Pagels-Wentworth when she gets comfortable and also the offer is still open to the Selectman as well.

b. Public Works Dept. – Dave Phair:

- Mr. Phair thanked Ms. Charlotte Collins for helping to salvage 30 out of 45 flags by washing them.
- Mr. Phair asked the board if he can use \$7000 from the Road Construction Reserve to repair the damage down to a 600 ft. section of Severy Hill Rd. On a motion from Mr. Withrow and second from Mrs. Clarke, the Board voted unanimously to accept the request to repair Severy Hill Rd.
- All the bigger cemeteries have been cleaned up. Just waiting for the roads to dry up a little to get in to the smaller cemeteries. The Severy Hill cemetery needs to have the granite structure put back in place from damaged caused from the frost.
- Snow Dump-Mr. Phair let the committee know that the Town is now in full compliance with the DEP. All that needs to be done at this time will be the annual training and clean-up of the snow dump site.

7. New Business:

a. Appointments-

- 1.) Linda Pagels-Wentworth- On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and second from Mr. Daley, the Board voted unanimously to appointment Mrs. Pagels-Wentworth to the positions of Town Manager, Road Commissioner, Tax Collector, Town Clerk and Treasurer.
- 2.) Jeffrey Howe-Mr. Skibitsky and Mrs. Pagels-Wentworth have appointed Mr. Howe to the vacant position of Lieutenant. The position will not have a pay increase and the position of Sargent that Mr. Howe is being promoted from will remain vacant. Chief Pickett has been asked to develop a command structure since the Department does not currently have one in place. On a motion from Mr. Withrow and second from Mrs. Clarke, the Board voted unanimously to accept Mr. Howe's appointment to Lieutenant.

b. Town Meeting Warrant- Mr. Skibitsky and Mrs. Pagels-Wentworth handed out updated copies of the Town Meeting Warrant that had new Articles to be approved. Article 28 is in regards to new NFPA Codes for the Fire Department. Article 29 is in regards to seeing if the Town wants the reimbursement received from the state for snowmobile registrations passed on to the Poodunck Snowmobile Club. On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and second from Mr. Withrow, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Town Meeting Warrant with Articles 1 through 29. Mr. Belskis had concerns about the interest percentage charged for abatements and late payments. Mr. Skibitsky and Mrs. Pagels-Wentworth stated that it was State guidelines to have a 3% difference in rates. That it is not a rate set by the Town.

c. Public Works Hours – Per Union contract between Memorial Day and Labor Day the workers can change their hours. The Department would like to change the hours to 6:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. to monopolize on the cooler temperatures for the summer. On a motion from Mr. Daley and second from Mrs. Clarke, the Board voted unanimously to accept the request to change the hours for the above listed times per Union contract.

d. Meadowbrook Terrace Resident's Petition- Board members reviewed a petition from the Resident's on Meadowbrook Terrace to set a speed limit of 15 mph. Mrs. Pagels-Wentworth stated that the MDOT will have to be contacted to be able to set any speed limit. On a motion from Mr. Daley and second from Mr. Belskis, the Board voted unanimously to have Chief Pickett contact MDOT and the resident that started the petition to see about setting a 15 mph speed limit.

e. Odd Fellows Scholarship Committee- Mr. Gill and Mrs. Clarke volunteered their time to sit down and review and award the applicants with scholarships as they did last year. Mr. Gill also volunteered to be present at the Senior Banquet to hand out the scholarships.

f. Special Amusement Permit- On a motion from Mr. Withrow and second from Mr. Belskis, the Board voted unanimously to accept the Special Amusement Permit for the American Legion Post #100.

8. Old Business:

- a. **Election Warrant, Sample Ballot** - On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and second from Mr. Withrow, the Board voted unanimously to rescind the previous approved Election Warrant and change the hours back to 9 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Chief Pickett will sign and post the Election Warrant and the Town Meeting Warrant as soon as they are ready in the Town Office.
Also the Board Members reviewed the Sample Ballot for the June 11, 2013 Election.
- b. **Distinguished Citizen Award** – On a motion from Mr. Withrow and second from Mrs. Clarke, the Board voted unanimously to approve the nominations of Mr. & Mrs. Paul Jones and Mr. Cleon “Kip” Fletcher as the recipients for the Town of Dixfield’s 2013 Distinguished Citizens Award.

9. Other Business:

a. Correspondence-

- A letter from John Madigan was received in regards to an invitation to attend a meeting that was held on May 8, 2013 in regards to a consolidation of services. Municipal Resources, Inc. had representatives from Meredith, NH there to present their program of studying municipal demographics of our communities. This program is similar to the Lean Program that AVCOG has.
- Oxford County Board of Commissioners sent a letter in support of an innovative hunger relief program that has recently come to Oxford County. The Cupboard Collective, a program of the Good Shepard Food Bank is encouraging towns to participate in the described program which would be a yearly donation of \$1500. The Board agrees that they will add this to the Social Services file for 2015’s budget and have a representative from the program come and explain it more next year.
- Mr. Skibitsky provided answers and documentation to the questions provided by Mr. McKay at the last meeting to Mr. McKay and the Board members. The Board discussed Question 1 in regards to Tangible Benefits and on a motion from Mr. Belskis and second from Mr. Daley, the Board voted unanimously to have Mrs. Pagels-Wentworth contact a Representative from the Saddleback Ridge Wind LLC. Company to discuss what if any Tangible Benefits that the Town of Dixfield may have.
- Mr. Skibitsky also handed out a spreadsheet on Housing Units/Population on the RSU 10 Demographic area and what the taxation is based on. Mrs. Pagels-Wentworth is going to provide the Board with the formula and the factors used to make up the Mil rate. The spreadsheet shows that the Town of Dixfield has the biggest percentage.

10. Board Questions/Comments:

- Mrs. Clarke- Announced that Kelsey from WVAC has been chosen to be the Junior Rep from Mt. Valley to attend the Craft Institute in Deer Isle. Also if there are any questions on the Outdoor Flea Market they can contact her or Mr. Devries.
- Mr. Belskis- Wanted to know if we would be attending the meeting set up by Mr. Madigan.
- Mr. Daley-Attended the meeting on May 8, 2013 with Mr. Madigan. The program that was discussed is similar to the Lean Program through AVCOG and they will be having another informational meeting with the other surrounding towns to see if there is an interest in pursuing this program. They are going to look into a price comparison between this program and AVCOG's program.
- Mr. Gill- Thanked Mr. Skibitsky for his years of service and continued help throughout the long hiring process.

11. FYI: so noted.

12. Next Meeting: Board Members set up 2 new meetings for the month of June to be held on June 3, 2013, 5:00 p.m., Ludden Memorial before the election on June 11, 2013 and again on June 24, 2013, 5:00 p.m., Ludden Memorial after the election.

13. Adjournment: On a motion from Mrs. Clarke and second from Mr. Withrow, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha A. Hill
Secretary

/sah
Attachments