

ASHLAND BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
Wednesday, December 9, 2015
Ashland Fire Station
7:30 AM

MINUTES

Chairman DeWolfe called the meeting to order at 7:36 AM with a roll call. Norm DeWolfe, Fran Newton, Steve Felton, Norm DeWolfe, Leigh Sharps and Phil Preston were present.

Others present: H. Thibodeau

S. Felton made a motion to go into non-public session according to RSA 91-A:3, II (a), personnel, at 7:36 AM. N. DeWolfe seconded the motion and with a roll call vote, all voted yes.

Public session resumed at 7:45. No decisions were announced.

The Board briefly discussed the audit proposals. All board members are to read the proposals and be prepared to select a vendor at the next meeting. H. Thibodeau will check references, especially those towns that changed firms, before the next meeting. The board will discuss the possibility of sharing the selected vendor with the utilities for potential cost savings.

We received a request from Ann Barney at Parks and Recreation to approve an expenditure of \$597 to have the locks in the Booster Club replaced. Several keys are out and it is not clear who all has them. We discussed the possibility of having DPW purchase new locks and install them, which would likely be significantly less expensive. A call was placed to T. Paquette, who said he would work with Ashland Lumber, the TA and Ann Barney to determine needs and have new locks installed.

H. Thibodeau reported that DPW is looking for winter projects. She suggested some repainting of walls in the town hall. This will be considered. She also reported that she confirmed that both utilities must be on the warrant despite the fact that their budgets are paid for by rate payers, not tax payers.

P. Tucker appeared before the board by request to discuss a personnel complaint filed against her. She elected to have the session in public. The board presented her a letter written with legal advice stating that should any legal action be taken because of a hostile environment issue, the town would not defend her. She has asked to see the written complaint. We stated that our goal is to ensure civil discourse and that business is conducted professionally in the town hall.

H. Thibodeau provided an update on the Smith Hill septic issue. She discussed the situation with DES (Dick DeSeve), who visited the property. He determined that the system is not failing but is stressed. The residents will consult with a professional septic designer to have the system evaluated.

The board discussed the December 7 presentation by Virtual Town Hall. We agreed that the system is impressive. N. DeWolfe will discuss the possibility of cost sharing with the utilities so that they can also use the system for web pages. H. Thibodeau will ask the vendor to set up some demo email accounts for evaluation.

Campground leases were discussed. H. Thibodeau has researched other campground leases for comparison. Ours is the only one on a lake, which makes it unique. She will work with Ann Barney to study other leases to ensure that ours meets is appropriate. Our current lease calls for a \$100 per month for off-season storage, which has never been charged as far as we can determine. We will be charging this in the future. A new agreement is to be completed for review and approval at the next work session.

The current issue log must be updated for review at our next meeting. The campground lease should be on the log. The land use process should also be included.

The board received a letter from the town Trustees requesting that all capital reserve funds (CRFs) be deposited by December 15. All CRFs have been funded in a single check with a written listing of appropriate allocation of funds. The trustees would like separate accounting for each CRF. H. Thibodeau will follow up with Tom Peters, chair of the Trustees, to ensure we are currently in compliance.

H. Thibodeau requested permission to have a staff Christmas party at the Booster Club, likely on December 18. The board approved this request by consensus. She further requested permission to close the town hall at noon on December 24th. There was agreement to do this.

She will further request input from appropriate departments for the town report. This should be provided by month's end and be ready for print by mid January. S. Felton and F. Newton agreed to provide the summary for the Board of Selectmen. Each member should provide a list of issues to Felton and Newton that they feel are important for inclusion. The board agreed to dedicate the report to the town volunteers without listing names or organizations to ensure inclusiveness.

Budget issues were discussed. N. DeWolfe made a motion to reduce the general assistance line from \$30,000 to \$25,000. F. Newton seconded the motion and all approved. N. DeWolfe will inform the Budget Committee.

The board agreed to include the suggested revisions (updating RSA references) to the Disorderly Conduct ordinance on the warrant. We will also include the Recycling ordinance.

Brenda Paquette came before the board per request. P. Preston made a motion to go into non-public session according to RSA 91-A:3, II (a), personnel, at 9:22 AM. N. DeWolfe seconded the motion and with a roll call vote, all voted yes.

Public session resumed at 9:47. No decisions were announced.

Finance issues were discussed with B. Paquette. The board agreed by consensus that she, as a permanent part time employee, is eligible for holiday pay, prorated based on average number of hours worked per week. She was told that we need a list of all encumbrances for approval by next work session. She told us that we could encumber legal expenses for ongoing cases. We provided her with the update for the general assistance line. She confirmed that we do pay a deputy treasurer but this expense is included in the treasurer salary line. We asked her to split this out for transparency. She will confirm the stipend amount and H. Thibodeau will inquire about duties and hours worked per year. Brenda will send out electronic copies of the final budget to the board and provide a printed detail report to N. DeWolfe. She will provide the revenue worksheets and revised budget to the Budget Committee by December 15. She also provided her thoughts and experience with the auditing firms who sent proposals. She will suggest additional areas for exploration with a new firm.

P. Preston made a motion to adjourn at 10:14 AM and S. Felton seconded the motion. All approved.

Next meeting will be Wednesday, December 16th at 7:30 AM at the Fire Station.

Respectfully Submitted,

Fran Newton
12-9-15