



Town of Amherst, NH
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
Barbara Landry Meeting Room
2 Main Street
Monday, March 14, 2016

1. Call to Order

Chairman Dwight Brew called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Attendees: Chairman Dwight Brew, Selectmen Tom Grella, Nate Jensen, Reed Panasiti and newly-elected Selectman Peter Lyon. Also present: Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara, and Suzanne Beauchesne taking minutes.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Citizens Forum -- None

4. Tabled Items

Selectman Grella moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to un-table the motion on the following Land Use Change Tax and Abatement recommendations. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

4.1 Land Use Change Tax

Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to approve the Land Use Change Tax for Map 4, Lot 149 located at 66 Spring Road in the amount of \$4,600. The lot was recently sold and no longer qualifies for current use as its acreage is less than the minimum 10 acre current use requirement. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to approve the Land Use Change Tax for Map 5, Lot 166 (now Map/Lot 5-79-1) located at 75 Lyndeborough Road in the amount of \$1,500 for a one acre portion. A lot line adjustment was completed between this lot and 5-166-3. As the acreage being added to this lot was in current use, a Land Use Change Tax needed to be completed as it does not qualify for current use because it is less than ten acres and is not contiguous with another current use parcel under the same ownership. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to approve Land Use Change Tax for Map 5, Lot 166-3 located at 101 Christian Hill Road in the amount of \$10,900. The lot was recently sold and no longer qualifies for current use as its acreage is less than the minimum 10 acre current use requirement and is no longer contiguous with parcels under the same ownership. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

4.2 Abatement Recommendations

Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to approve the abatement for Map 4, Lot 147-12 located at 9 Victoria Ridge in the amount of \$4,000. The subject property is a vacant two-acre lot. The parcel was in current use with other lots under the same ownership. The sale of the property transferred ownership, which disqualified the lot from current use. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

5. Board Reorganization

A listing of Selectmen assignments to committees and boards was included as part of the Board packet. Chairman Brew suggested voting on the positions of Chair, Vice Chair, and Clerk of the Board tonight, and work through committee assignments at its next Board meeting. All agreed.

Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to nominate Dwight Brew as Chairman of the Board. Chairman Brew accepted. Motion passed 4-0-1 (Chairman Brew abstained).

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to nominate Selectman Panasiti as Vice Chairman of the Board. Selectman Panasiti accepted. Motion passed 4-0-1 (Selectman Panasiti abstained).

Selectman Grella moved, second by Selectman Lyon, to nominate Selectman Jensen as Clerk of the Board. Selectman Jensen accepted. Motion passed 4-0-1 (Selectman Jensen abstained).

Chairman Brew suggested that prior to the next Board meeting, on March 28th at 6:00 p.m., the Board hosts a reception to acknowledge and thank former Vice Chairman of the Board, John D'Angelo, for his service to the town. All Board members agreed.

Chairman Brew asked Board members to review Board goals and strategic initiatives that can be discussed and reconciled at its next Board meeting. Selectman Jensen suggested reviewing the status of the strategic planning process and budget process as described by past Ways and Means Chairman, John Post. Chairman Brew said he would prefer not to constrain one's thinking and perhaps bring to the table five different approaches to be vetted out at the next Board meeting. Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara, offered to prepare a list of Board-funded initiatives included in next year's budget that could provide a starting point for discussion. Board members liked the idea.

Chairman Brew also asked Administrator O'Mara, along with DPW Director, Bruce Berry, to review and develop an action plan for a number of recommendations from the DPW Matrix Report. The plan should denote what page the recommendation is on, the costs (low, medium, high), the term (short, medium, long), and the value to the town. All Board members agreed.

6. Updates

6.1 Finance Software

Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara, indicated that Finance Director, Lisa Ambrosio, will provide a report at the Board's next meeting on March 28th.

6.2 Stormwater

Administrator O'Mara said a meeting was scheduled with U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen on March 30th at 10:00 a.m.

6.3 Pipeline

Vice Chairman Panasiti reported that the Pipeline Task Force voted itself into hibernation, waiting for Kinder Morgan, FERC, or the NH Site Evaluation Committee to do something. It may be necessary to hire more expertise going forward. The approval process could still take up to a year or more what with the multiple reviews and inputs from State commissions. Selectman Jensen said that the FERC will not consider an application until it is complete and the current Kinder Morgan application has not been deemed complete by the FERC. Selectman Lyon asked if there will be opportunities to intervene going forward and was informed that the process could take up to a year once FERC accepts KM's application as complete. Hearings and a series of meetings will be scheduled at the state level. Selectman Lyon asked if the composition of the Pipeline Task Force was made up of people in affected neighborhoods. Vice Chairman Panasiti said that was the case and the Pipeline Task Force has done an excellent job developing a strategy for the town. Selectman Jensen said that the Task Force has done a lot of work pulling together arguments that have been taken up by other towns. The three-pronged strategy has been to: 1) stop the pipeline; 2) failing that have the cost of the pipeline accrue to those who will most benefit; i.e., get it moved back to Massachusetts as originally planned; and 3) failing that if the pipeline must go through Amherst, ensure that the path built is the least disruptive to the town and our citizens. In response to the efforts of Amherst, KM has already changed the pipeline route. Mr. Jensen said we need to prepare to negotiate with KM, if we have no other choice, to ameliorate additional impacts on the town, e.g. damage to our roads from the construction, damage to our conservation lands, and so on.

Chairman Brew adjusted the agenda to take up agenda item

7.4 Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.

Karen Blood, 1st Vice Regent of the Captain Josiah Crosby Chapter of the DAR, came forward to request that the Board authorize/approve a program to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War. Ms. Blood stated that her DAR Chapter is a partner with the U.S. Department of Defense and that in accordance with Public Law 110-181 SEC. 598 the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act authorized the Secretary of Defense to conduct the program. She asked that the Board sign a proclamation and authorize flying the commemorative flag on March 30, the final withdrawal date from Vietnam. Selectman Lyon suggested flying the flag for a week. The Board discussed the matter and agreed to begin the week with a flag raising ceremony at 7:00 p.m. on March 29th and ask veterans to come raise the flag that will remain up through April 4th. Vice

Chairman Panasiti who worked with returning veterans read the proclamation to be signed by the Board members. Ms. Blood provided a depiction of the flag and read through what each color and marking represents.

7. Approvals

7.1 Warrant Article Review

Town Administrator Jim O'Mara said that as an SB2 town it is hard to know why people vote as they do. Article 32, Maintenance Garage Construction Project, failed by a vote of 1379 to 1408. Two warrant articles passed by a 4-to-1 vote, one article by 3-to-1, and the balance by votes of 2-to-1, including the vote on the budget. Chairman Brew said it was pleasing to see that people recognize the needs of the town and respond to the arguments made by the board in support of them. A couple of articles did not have a lot of background, the bridge being one of them. The maintenance garage "did not pass because we did not have concrete plans and voters expect that in the future". Vice Chairman Panasiti agreed with Selectman Jensen that the Board and staff did a good, transparent job and the vote was clearly an endorsement of the direction the board has taken over the last three years. Chairman Brew provided kudos and thanks to the Board, the Ways and Means Committee and town employees who interact with the public daily. Selectman Grella felt that perhaps an open house at the maintenance garage site providing a good proposal, a design, and an estimated cost would have better demonstrated the value of the project. Selectman Lyon said he agreed with everything said and added that people who vote are well-informed and do take the time to educate themselves. He agreed with the Chairman about the value of town employees and the great things happening in the Recreation Department that the Board should continue to subsidize. Chairman Brew said the most challenging thing for the Board is to identify the most important matters and tackle them in a way "we can afford". Administrator O'Mara said there was a 34 percent voter turnout; i.e., of the 8861 registered voters, 3001 voted.

7.2 American Red Cross, Meeting Room Use Request - Cancelled

7.3 Bertha Rogers Trust Fund Representative

Administrator O'Mara stated that the Bertha Rogers Trust Fund was established to fund projects for the betterment of the Town. Its Board of Directors is composed of one selectman, one member of the Trustees of the Trust Funds and a member of the NH General Court from the Town of Amherst. The Directors may recommend to the Select Board, as agents to expend, the award of grants to not more than two organizations serving the citizens of the Town. Grant proposals must be submitted not later than March 25th. Vice Chairman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Grella, to appoint Selectman Jensen to the Board of Directors of the Bertha Rogers Trust Fund. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

7.4 Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day – Taken Up Earlier

7.5 Traffic Signs

Administrator O'Mara said he spoke with Police Chief Reams and was informed that the Davis Lane/Jones Road signs remain up for safety reasons. The one-way status of Courthouse Road needs review, and the Stop Sign at Manchester and Mack Hill was erected in 1988 per ordinance.

To be removed, two public hearings would need to be scheduled. Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to forward the matter to the Safety Committee for consideration and a recommendation. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

7.6 Clerk of the Works - Roads

Administrator O'Mara proposed the creation of a new, part-time, seasonal position in the Department of Department of Public Works (DPW). Selectman Grella moved, second by Vice Chairman Panasiti, to authorize the creation of a part-time Clerk of the Works position in DPW. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0. Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to approve hiring Michael Riccitelli to the newly created position. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

7.7 Conservation Commission Resignation

Vice Chairman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to accept, with regret, the resignation of Bruce Beckley as a full member of the Amherst Conservation Commission, and to appoint Mr. Beckley as an Alternate to the Conservation Commission through the end of this season. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

8. Approvals

8.1 Land Use Change Tax – Taken Up Earlier

8.2 Timber Tax Levy/Certification of Yield Tax

Vice Chairman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to approve the Timber Tax Levy/Certification of Yield Tax for Map/Lot 4-107-1 located at 1 Shepard Lane in the amount of \$599.33. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

8.3 Application for Current Use

Vice Chairman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Jensen, to approve the Current Use tax for Map/Lot 4-71 located at 97 Merrimack Road. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

8.4 Abatement Recommendation – Taken Up Earlier

8.5 Accounts Payable Manifests

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to approve one (1) FY16 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$27,928.37 dated March 10, 2016, subject to review and audit. (Town Clerk Transfers to the State of NH). Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to approve one (1) FY16 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$712,265.43 dated March 8, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to approve one (1) FY16 Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$54,337.59 dated March 10, 2016, subject to review and audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

8.6 Previous Meeting Minutes – March 7, 2016

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to approve the March 7, 2016 Board meeting minutes, as presented. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

8.7 MS-232

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Selectman Grella, to approve the Department of Revenue Administration's form, 2016 MS-232, Certification of Appropriations Voted. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

9. New/Old Business


The Board welcomed Selectman Lyon. Administrator O'Mara will forward Selectman Lyon a current list of Board goals and committee assignments. Selectman Jensen noted that 93 action items were captured since last year and only 7 or 8 items remain pending.

Selectman Jensen moved, second by Vice Chairman Panasiti, to approve a Notice of Intent to excavate Map 2/Lot 34-1. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

NEXT MEETING: March 28, 2016

10. Adjournment

Selectman Jensen moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Vice Chairman Panasiti seconded. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.



Selectman Nate Jensen
Clerk, Board of Selectmen



Date