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Town of Grantham - Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting Minutes October 13, 2010

The regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen was called to order at 5:00pm on Wednesday, October 13, 2010 by Chairman Harold Haddock Jr. The meeting was held in the Grantham Town Building, Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room at 300 Route 10 South.

Present: Chairman Harold Haddock Jr.; Selectman Constance Jones; Selectman Warren Kimball; Town Administrator Becky Newton, Esq.; Fire Chief Jay Fountain; Police Chief Walter Madore; Joey Holmes; Mary Hutchins; Eliza Whipple

ADMINISTRATIVE - APPROVED

- ✓ Notice of Intent to Cut: M/L 218-001; Walker Road
- ✓ Building Permits:
 - a) M/L 212-085-000; 64 High Pond Road – replace septic system
 - b) M/L 216-197-000; 16 Butternut Road - garage

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- ✓ Chairman Haddock asked if there were any changes to the regular and non-public meeting minutes of September 22, 2010. Selectman Jones informed that on page two of the regular meeting minutes, New Business – Motor Vehicle Refund Request, “Robert Woodhouse” needs to be changed to Richard Woodhouse. A motion was made by Selectman Kimball to approve the September 22, 2010 minutes as amended; second by Selectman Jones. ***Unanimously Approved.***
- ✓ A motion was made by Selectman Jones to approve the non-public minutes of September 22, 2010 as written; second by Selectman Kimball. ***Unanimously Approved.***

APPEARANCES

- Resident Mary Hutchins: Mrs. Hutchins discussed her concerns with the appraisal of her property and felt the new value was too high. Mrs. Hutchins requested an explanation of the increase. Chairman Haddock requested that Cross Country Appraisal Group explain the increase in the assessment to Mrs. Hutchins.
- Resident Eliza Whipple: Mrs. Whipple felt that children should be walking to school and be able to use the “walking bridge” (from the parking lot of the Fire Department to Grantham Village School); that the bridge is a safer option than walking down Route 114.

Police Chief Madore stated that there aren't kids that are walking now and asked where they would go if they did use the bridge. Whipple stated there is one child that walks across the bridge. Madore stated he is not aware of that.

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Chief Madore stated that the State of New Hampshire will not allow a crosswalk on Route 10 because of the sight distance and the layout of the road. The only place they could put one in would require shoulder improvements and ADA accessible sidewalks.

Selectman Jones clarified that the bridge is an emergency access only; that it is not meant for children to be using without supervision.

Chief Madore stated if this was addressed with the School Board it would be discovered that the reason all the children are bused to school is because there are no sidewalks for safe walking routes.

Chief Madore reiterated that the bridge was installed for emergency purposes, to get the children off the site in the event of a major disaster. Whipple asked if thought had been given to the fact that if there is a major disaster the Fire Department would be pulling the fire equipment out at the same time the school would be evacuating the children.

Selectmen Jones stated that if there is a disaster there will be Police Officers and teachers to take the children across the bridge safely. Jones went on to say that before the bridge was installed there was only one egress to and from the school. Whipple felt it was a shame the bridge couldn't be used daily. Jones said she hoped that one day there would be another access to the school other than via Learning Drive.

On behalf of Mr. Michael Whipple who could not attend, Mrs. Whipple discussed concern with the administration of welfare assistance. Town Administrator Becky Newton stated that the Town of Grantham has the responsibility to pay bills for people that are indigent; that there is an applicable process that includes the applicant certifying the information they are providing is true and correct. Mrs. Whipple asked if this was routinely done. Newton said yes.

Newton stated that she can only speak in general terms. Chairman Haddock reiterated that State law prohibits publicly discussing specific circumstances in welfare assistance. Newton continued that the Town has a larger responsibility to assist if an applicant for welfare assistance has a child and/or a child in the school system. Newton informed that applicants for assistance from the Town are required to pay it back.

Mrs. Whipple said that most towns have a limit; that they would pay a person's rent one time per year. Whipple asked why the Town of Grantham doesn't have the same limit and stated she felt Grantham has "an open pocketbook". Chairman Haddock and Newton disagreed with Whipple. Newton stated the basic legal duty is that whenever a person in any town is poor and unable to support him/herself, he/she shall be relieved and maintained by the overseers of public welfare of such town, whether or not he has residence there. Haddock stated this could be several times.

Whipple said when the town's welfare has been exhausted the individual would go to the State. Newton clarified and said the Town is a "payee of last resort"; that when an individual requests welfare assistance they are given a list of resources including the charitable organization in Grantham and are encouraged to go to all those other organizations first.

Whipple asked which organizations. Newton stated applicants for welfare assistance are sent to Listen Community Services, the local food bank, the State, Grantham Community

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Crisis Fund before anything is paid.

Whipple asked if the town should set a limit on welfare assistance. Newton stated that the Town has to continue to pay regardless if the budget for assistance is exhausted. Whipple said "That's why our taxes go up, and they will go up over stuff like this because we don't put a cap on it." Chairman Haddock reiterated that the Selectmen cannot put a cap on welfare assistance. Whipple asked who could. Haddock said the state could but the Selectmen can't.

Whipple asked if the state rules have been looked at and stated that she and her husband has looked at them and that the Town is doing it wrong. Haddock said he couldn't speak to that but Newton could provide the Whipple's with a copy of the statute. Whipple said she had it.

Haddock apologized for Mrs. Whipple's frustration. Whipple requested that the Board of Selectmen read the welfare statute. Chairman Haddock said that one of the Selectmen will read the statute. Haddock feels there isn't anything in the statute that they [Selectmen] are unaware of in it.

PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing was opened at 5:35pm to accept the donation of \$100,000 from The Timken Foundation for the development of the Recreation Park. Hearing no comments, a motion was made by Selectman Kimball to accept the \$100,000 donation from The Timken Foundation; second by Selectman Jones. **Unanimously approved.**

The public hearing was closed at 5:38pm.

CORRESPONDENCE

- New Hampshire Broadband Mapping Program – Community Forums: A letter was received from the New Hampshire Broadband Mapping Program informing that there will be two community broadband forums: Tuesday, November 2nd from 6pm – 8pm at the River Valley Community College, Room 226 and Thursday, November 18th from 5pm – 7pm in the Selectmen's Chamber at Newport Town Offices, 15 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH.

Newton explained that the public is being interviewed and areas are being mapped that have poor access or no access to the internet. Chairman Haddock stated that the project has been on-going for about five years with no progress or updates.

Chairman Haddock requested more information on the status of this project be obtained.

- Michael Whipple: Administrator Newton stated that Mr. Whipple had sent several emails asking if the Selectmen had discussed the complaint letter he sent; with the most recent email requesting it be discussed in a public session.

Chairman Haddock stated that in the letter Mr. Whipple suggested that the Town had given legal advice to his tenant. Newton stated she was disturbed by that accusation; that she did not provide any legal advice. Haddock requested that Mr. Whipple be

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informed in writing that legal advice was not provided. Newton stated she has sent Mr. Whipple an email informing him that whenever she talks with someone she discloses that she is an attorney licensed to practice law in the State of Vermont and that she cannot provide legal advice.

- New Hampshire Municipal Bond Bank: A letter was received from New Hampshire Municipal Bond Bank informing that they were able to refinance a portion of their outstanding debt. The savings will be passed on to the various municipalities.

Grantham will realize a one time savings of \$10,701.00 in its next bond payment. Haddock informed the interest rate on the bond was very low initially, approximately 4.04%.

- Jeff Shornick: A letter was received from Jeff Shornick informing of his frustration with the statistical update process. Newton extended apologies for the short notice.

OLD BUSINESS

- Criminal Background Check for Hawkers and Peddlers: Newton stated she has obtained a number of ordinances from various towns.
- Town Hall Flag Duty: Newton informed the State has a "Flag Status Alert" list serv. Selectman Jones suggested Office Assistant Martha Menard could receive the email and she could find someone to lower the flag.
- Sale of the Wien House: Selectman Kimball informed a purchase and sales agreement has been signed pending testing and inspections. Kimball hopes the sale can be finalized in November.
- Request for Qualifications for Engineering at the Recreation Park (RFQ): Newton informed that four firms attended the pre-bid meeting on September 24th and three firms submitted proposals. The three firms will be interviewed on Monday, October 18, 2010. Newton stated the firms have been informed of the tight timeframe in order to get warrant articles written for Town Meeting.
- Sawyer Brook Trees: Newton informed that the contractor is waiting for a crane to become available.
- Conservation Commission - Shack on the Smith Lot: No update.

NEW BUSINESS

- Health Officer Appointment: A motion was made by Selectman Jones to appoint Richard A. Sachs, M.D. as Deputy Health Officer; second by Selectman Kimball. ***Unanimously approved.***

Newton informed that Dr. Sachs will be an additional Deputy Health Officer. Haddock explained that most of the Town's Health Officer duties are performed by Roger Woodworth; that having a health officer with a medical education is needed for administering pandemic type problems.

- Enrollment in the E-911 Mapping Program: Newton informed that she met with Kenny Lynn Dempsey from the State of New Hampshire, Department of Safety, Bureau of Emergency Communications and Fire Chief Jay Fountain, Police Chief Madore, EMD Bob Osgood and Deputy EMD Ken Ryder regarding the E-911 Mapping Program. Newton explained that

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when Grantham was previously mapped, only center-line road data was obtained. Now the NH Department of Safety has enhanced 911 which will map the homes, driveways, fixtures such as fire hydrants and other important features in town.

Newton said that Grantham is one of the last two-dozen towns to be 911 enhanced; that this service provided at no charge and will replace the street numbering service that the town currently pays for.

Selectman Jones made a motion to accept the following resolution:

We, the Town of Grantham, wish to participate in the State of New Hampshire E911 Mapping program. We understand that this will encompass the collection and verification of all existing addressing as it currently exists. We also understand that we will receive maps and digital data for emergency response at no charge upon acceptance of the project.

Selectman Kimball seconded the motion. ***Unanimously approved.***

Newton said there is a two year waiting list.

- Estimate for Town Hall Maintenance Repairs: A quote was obtained from Curt's Refrigeration for \$1,304.00 to install an exhaust fan in the computer server room and to duct the heat to the ceiling area at the northwest end of the building where pipes froze back in March 2007. A motion was made by Selectman Jones to accept the quote from Curt's Refrigeration for \$1,304.00 to install an exhaust fan in the server room; second by Selectman Kimball. ***Unanimously approved.***
- JP Morgan Chase Credit Card: Newton explained that as a result of the audit for fiscal year 2010 the checkbooks held by the Activities and Athletics Departments had to be closed and brought under the control of the Town Treasurer. This has caused the Activities and Athletics Director to pay for purchases out of pocket and then be reimbursed by the Town.

Selectman Jones made a motion to accept the following resolution:

WHEREAS, this Town intends to authorize its employees and agents to use such Cards for and in connection with corporate business on behalf of this Company; and

WHEREAS, the Bank will not issue such Cards unless the Town agrees to obligate itself for the prompt payment of credit extended pursuant to the use of such Cards, including credit extended pursuant to the use of a Card for either purchases, whether such use or indebtedness was authorized or unauthorized by the Company;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Town shall apply to the Bank for the issuance of Cards in the names of such employees and agents of the Company as may be designated to the Bank;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town Administrator, Becky Newton of the Town of Grantham, is hereby authorized, directed and empowered, in the name of the Town, to execute a Business Card Agreement in the form approved by such individual and take such actions as are contemplated thereby;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Bank is authorized to act upon these resolutions until written notice of their revocation is delivered to Bank.

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Selectman Kimball seconded the motion. *Unanimously approved.*

- Revised Personnel Handbook: Selectman Jones informed that in order to obtain a 2.5% discount Primex off the Worker's Compensation and Property & Liability insurance, the Town had to update the harassment policy as well as some other minor changes. A motion was made by Selectman Jones to approve the revised Personnel Handbook; second by Selectman Kimball. *Unanimously approved.*

Jones stated that all employees will be given a signed copy of the revised personnel policy and will have to sign an acknowledgement form.

- 2010 Town Meeting - Article 14: Newton explained that Article 14 at the 2010 Town Meeting authorized the Town to expend \$25,000 from the Athletics Field Capital Reserve Fund. A motion was made by Selectman Kimball to transfer \$25,000 from the Athletics Field Capital Reserve Fund to the general fund; second by Selectman Jones. *Unanimously approved.*

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

- Fire Department – September Report: Responded to 12 calls; 10 fire/rescue calls and 2 EMS calls. Two of those calls were mutual aid to Croydon for a three acre brush fire and a structure fire.

Training, conducted by Deputy Chief David Beckley, was geared for the newer members on personal protective equipment and Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).

Chief Fountain attended the Upper Valley Mutual Aid Association meeting as well as the regional Haz-Mat meeting.

Chairman Haddock asked how the part-time position was working out. Fountain said there are more requests for inspections etc.; that sometimes more coverage is needed. Haddock asked Fountain to keep the Board of Selectmen informed if the need for more coverage increases.

- Police Department – September Report:
 - Scarecrows have a tendency to slow vehicles down but also cause problems when people stop to take pictures of them.
 - Work continues to fill the vacant secretary position.
 - Officer Merrill stopped by for a visit during his two week leave.

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➤ Town Administrator:

- Mandatory employee Harassment Training previously scheduled for October 27th has been cancelled. A new date has not been determined.
- Attending the Web EOC (Emergency Operations Center) training on October 14 in Lempster, NH.
- Local Government Center annual conference will be November 17 – 19th.

➤ Transfer Station – August Report: Administrator Newton informed that the Transfer Station is running well and compliments have been received about the staff.

August Report:

Solid Waste - 9 runs with a total tonnage of 94.7 tons

Construction Demolition Debris - 7 Runs – total tonnage 22.1 tons

Electronic waste - 1 load 3.68 tons - Expense \$922.14

Glass - 1 load 7.31 tons - Expense \$146.20

Metal - Light Iron - 2 run 6.38 tons - Revenue \$1200.58

Bailing Wire ordered through NRRRA – Expense - \$306.75

Fibers - Mixed Loose - (Paper) - 2 Loads 10.6 tons

Revenue \$371.00

Expense \$450.00

Comingle - w/o glass - (Plastic) 2 loads - 2.13 tons

Revenue \$0.00

Expense \$63.90

Total Tonnage of Material taken away 145.9 tons

Tickets collected at Transfer Station \$1,149

Total Revenue from recycling \$1,571.58

Total Expenses from recycling \$1,888.99

Net Expenses from recycling \$317.41

➤ Trustees of the Trust Funds – August Report: The August report was reviewed.

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OTHER

Mrs. Whipple asked why the shack on Smith Lot couldn't be burned. Fire Chief Fountain stated that it doesn't have any training value and is not safe to burn because of the location.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Selectman Kimball moved to adjourn, second by Selectman Jones; ***by unanimous vote, the Board adjourned at 6:12pm.***

The next Selectmen's Meeting is scheduled to be held on **Wednesday, October 27, 2010** at 5:00PM in the Grantham Town Building; Jerry Whitney Conference Room at 300 Route 10 South.

Respectfully submitted,

*Melissa M. White
Administrative Assistant*